

“ON DUTY.”

A RIDE THROUGH HOSTILE AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL.

DOUBTLESS for many years to come it will remain a subject of dispute, whether the annexation of the Transvaal was right or wrong. Those who hold the latter view, I am inclined to believe, are ignorant of the circumstances which transpired among its Boer population previous to the date when Sir Theophilus Shepstone raised the British flag, to indicate to all beholders that this distant region in the interior of South Africa had been adopted by the mother country, and from that day forth owed its allegiance to Great Britain.

My reason for asserting that the enemies to annexation were ignorant, arises from the circumstance that I travelled through the country a year previous to the time when it was decided that the Boers were unable and incapable of self-government; and I am convinced that no man with an ordinary amount of knowledge of the world, and

gifted with even a limited stock of common sense, could fail to see that the constitution of this little Republic was rotten at the core, and that it was only a matter of months—nay, possibly weeks, before it would be invaded by hostile tribes of natives, whom it could not oppose, and who would massacre, regardless of age or sex, all of European descent who might fall into their hands.

A person would imagine that, with such certain destruction threatening it, the inhabitants would have stood together determined to fight or die in defence of their adopted land. But such was not the case; for politics, that bugbear of all new governments, had created three different factions among the people, each of which had a candidate for the Presidency at the coming election, whom they were determined should be returned in spite of all opposition.

During my sojourn among the Boers at that date, I have frequently asked members of the Transvaal population, What would they do, in case the candidate they had selected for the presidential chair should be defeated, when the result of the ballot should become known?

The reply invariably was, “Take to our rifles, and fight it out.”

From this it will be seen that anarchy was rife, weakening to a minimum a population which at the best of times could scarcely hold its own against the aboriginal races that surrounded it.

It was about this date—viz. four years ago—

that it was decided by the Boer authorities, then presided over by Mr. Burgers, that they should chastise Secocoeni, an adjoining chief, who, they asserted, had become "cheeky."

To carry out this purpose all available men throughout the territory were *commandered*.

The novelty of the war, particularly as the enemy were black, made it most popular; and little difficulty was experienced in obtaining what was considered a sufficient number of levies to conduct it to a successful termination. But the descendants of Holland had calculated without their host, and firmly believed that the same invariable success granted to their forefathers, in nearly every engagement which had taken place between them and the native tribes, would be accorded to the present generation.

It never appears to have arisen in their minds that, in the sundry engagements fought by the past generation, their progenitors possessed fire-arms—weapons which their opponents were destitute of at that period—but that now not only were their coloured antagonists provided with them, but also are thoroughly cognizant of their use.

I had arrived *en route* from the interior at Klerksdorp. Numbers of these embryo soldiers were halted at this village to rest themselves, previous to their march to Pretoria. Drinking-bouts and shooting-matches apparently were the favourite amusements of all; thus bottle after

bottle of boer brandy was consumed, and as each flask was emptied, it was set up at a distance of a hundred yards, as a target for the votaries of Bacchus to fire at.

The precision of their aim was fairly good; and when the mark was shattered by a hit, a chorus of voices would ejaculate, "There goes another nigger!"

A solitary Briton, I stood amongst this crowd; and doubtless from my unprotected position many a word of chaff or sly innuendo was pointed at me. At length a Boer, who spoke English perfectly, informed me, in answer to an inquiry I made, that the boys were only remarking, that if the redcoats had another war with them they would treat them very much in the same fashion as they were treating the unfortunate bottles! At this I smiled, and begged him to communicate to his companions that I had a high opinion of their marksmanship, but doubted very much if they would hold their rifles as straight had the black bottle but a similar weapon pointed at them!

Bunkum and braggadocia predominated among these fellows. Their manner was all smoke and no fire; and inwardly I felt, although I did not express it, that when the day arrived for their courage to be tested, the majority would be found singularly deficient in that necessary virtue, without which no war can ever be carried to a successful termination. Not many weeks after

the above episode, Mr. Burgers, then president, had addressed them, and upbraided them as cowards; and the force which had assembled to humble Secocoeni had dissolved, like snow before the sun, and was scattered over the land, each individual which had helped to compose it having returned to his homestead or the domicile of his parents.

At this date I returned to England.

Among my fellow-passengers were several leading Cape politicians, also Sir Theophilus Shepstone. When I told the former that I felt convinced the Boers would be worsted in their present war, they invariably differed from me in opinion, for they would answer, "The Boers have always beaten the natives, and therefore will do so again!" The latter gentleman, however, listened to my arguments, said little, but, I have no doubt, thought the more.

I cannot say I like the Boer, and I am unwilling that this should be put down to prejudice, as many would imagine. For has not one of our most popular writers, who travelled from Natal to Pretoria, thence to the diamond-fields and the coast, strictly adhering to the post route, and obtaining his information from the canteen keepers, hotel keepers, *et hoc genus omne*, lately written that they were 'an innate race of gentlemen'? But if so, their qualifications to that appellation differ widely from what I have always understood the term to mean. Let the

reader judge for himself, when I fearlessly state that the Boers are dirty, ignorant, inhospitable, prejudiced, and cowardly; and I may add, that except upon rare occasions, indolent in the extreme. But one virtue they possess, and that is their love of wife and children. The former I have frequently imagined to be dictated more by jealousy than the holier sentiment of natural affection, as they invariably give indication to every male visitor that they suspect him to possess less morality than they credit to themselves. Of course, however, there are exceptions to every rule, and the educated and travelled Boer is the ‘biggest’ exception to his countrymen that can be imagined. I have heard people assert—persons who love the Boer—that they were the best pioneers to civilization that the world knows. This I deny, for they are no more to be compared to the descendants of Great Britain, who were the forerunners of civilization in North America, than are the original missionaries who were digested by the Fiji islanders, to the more recent adventurers, who instituted by force the first educational practices of civilization.

Revenons à nos moutons !

Not long after this Sir Theophilus Shepstone returned to South Africa, and becoming aware of the danger that the inhabitants of the Transvaal Republic ran of being utterly exterminated, he proceeded at once to their capital, and to prevent a massacre, which doubtless would have taken

place, raised the British flag, and annexed the country to England, thus declaring that all who invaded the land would be considered and treated as enemies of our Imperial Government. That this was necessary cannot for a moment be denied, by even those most determined to cavil at our policy, when they are informed that the treasury of the republic was empty, and scarcely a soldier remained to enable it to make even a feeble resistance against a much less powerful force than that which would have been brought in opposition to them.

Within the last few months I have heard persons in South Africa say, that the grand mistake we made in reference to the annexation of the Transvaal was, that we did not permit the native hordes to invade the country; for that after the savages had ravaged the land with fire and assegai, the survivors would most assuredly have anxiously sought our protection, and been for ever after grateful for the aid we had afforded them in their hour of tribulation.

But would such a cold-blooded and calculating policy have been the duty of a Christian people? or could we have hoped for a blessing at the hands of the Supreme Power, had we delayed the needful succour to so late a period? No! emphatically, no! further adding, in my belief—the belief of one who knows the country—the action of Sir Theophilus Shepstone neither occurred too soon nor too late, and that the

course he adopted was dictated by the purest and most unselfish motives, a proof of his knowledge and appreciation of the people he dealt with.

Now that the Transvaal has become a part of Her Gracious Majesty's dominions, I would take this opportunity of chronicling my opinion—an opinion formed upon personal experience obtained during a lengthened sojourn within its limits—that this country has before it a future more glorious than by any possibility it could have attained under its former circumstances and government.

Two months ago I stood in the streets of Porchesbroom, and travelled from it many, many miles in different directions; and so great are the changes that have taken place, that the person who knew it four years since would not recognize it now. For why? the land that was once barren and unproductive veldt, has in many places become cultivated; and where the wild laugh of the jackal and doleful note of the hyæna were heard, the bleating of sheep and goats, with the lowing of cattle, greet the ear.

If in so short a space of time such changes have been made, what may not be in store for this favoured land in the illimitable ages of futurity?

CHAPTER II.

FELLOW-PASSENGERS.

THE Transvaal is bounded on the west and north-west by Great Bechuana Land, a country equal in extent to France and Spain combined. Its people are called Bechuanas, have a strong resemblance to each other, and possess the same superstitions, legendary stories, and religious ceremonies. This nation is not governed by one monarch, but by a number of chiefs, the principals of whom rule over no less than from 100,000 to 150,000 subjects. Their villages are generally denominated by the traders "stations," many of which have a population of 20,000 or 30,000 souls. They possess large herds of cattle, numerous horses, and cultivate mealies and kaffir corn to a considerable extent. Polygamy is universally practised among them, and the wives not only perform all domestic labour, but cultivate the soil, their lords and masters considering it beneath their dignity to perform manual labour; nevertheless they are indefatigable hunters, and most expert makers of

carosses. Rather strange, and exactly opposed to European ideas, is it not? the males sitting at home the live-long day, sewing together the various skins they have obtained, while the females go forth, with their hoe upon their shoulder at early morn, to till the land. Yet the men of this nation can work—aye and work hard if they choose, for it is from this race that the Diamond-fields are supplied with the greater number of their workmen.

From this nation it was that the Boers of the Transvaal formerly procured their slaves. The *modus operandi* was simplicity itself. Half-a-dozen farmers of the late Republic required additional folks (for by this name they designate their slaves), so they picked a quarrel with the head of a kraal, asserting that some action or assertion of his had insulted them; so, as reparation, they attacked the village by night, shot a few of the mature or aged men, and carried off into captivity as many children as they desired. If the hills, koppies, and kloofs of western Transvaal could speak, they could tell of tragedies as cold-blooded and demoniac as ever occurred in any other part of the earth.

At the same time one cannot feel much pity for the Bechuanas, when one learns that they are slave-holders themselves, and have been from time immemorial, and that they are the hardest task-masters that can be imagined. The few white men that visit this distant region see or

know nothing of the existence of this institution among them, for the victims are kept out upon the Kalihari desert, toiling day and night, enduring, unsheltered, every variation of temperature, to procure for their masters ivory, skins, and feathers. These unfortunate beings that are thus employed generally belong to the Bushman tribe, a race which, with the exception of the Digger Indians of the Rocky Mountains, may be considered the lowest in the scale of the human family.

The country of the Bechuanas is, generally speaking, flat table-land, the elevation of which is almost 5000 feet above sea level. However, these plains are in portions intersected by mountain ridges of considerable elevation, while koppies—a solitary excrescence from the surface of the plain, regular in outlines, although composed of a jumble of gigantic fragments of rock—are ever in sight after the 27° of latitude is passed. The vegetation naturally in so extensive a tract of country varies; in the south the veldt is covered with the ivory needle thorn, but as you progress further towards the equator its place is usurped by mapani brush, a dark green luxuriant shrub, with a very fleshy leaf and destitute of prickles. One species of timber predominates over the whole region, viz., different varieties of the acacia, which in the higher latitudes grows more frequently in clumps, giving a park-like resemblance to the landscape—while to

the north the trees are scattered, giving the scene a much more monotonous appearance. In the spring months of September and October—for the reader must remember we are in the anti-podes—grass grows everywhere in the greatest abundance, so much so that cattle may be seen while grazing actually flank deep in its luxuriant vegetation; but later on in the season, the brilliant green which was formerly the dominant colour has given place to the most sombre of russet brown, for the powerful uncompromising sun has scorched the grass to its very roots, and deprived it of every particle of moisture.

The great and insuperable drawback to this country is a want of water; while in no portion of the land abundant, in many parts it is totally devoid of this necessary of life. Rains also are irregular, whole seasons having been known to pass without the fall of a single shower.

At one time game of nearly every description known in South Africa was exceedingly abundant here, but the introduction of fire-arms among the natives has greatly reduced its numbers.

A very few years ago I wandered about the country I have been attempting to describe, and, as my conveyance was a bullock waggon, seldom did I accomplish more than fifteen miles a day, hunting, and hunting alone, being my object; thus I neither excited the jealousy of traders, or the opposition of missionaries. So the former often supplied my wants at reasonable prices,

while the latter introduced me to chiefs, procured veldt for me to shoot upon, and obtained information for my guidance, viz. where the game was principally congregated.

Thus it was that I became acquainted—I may say, intimately so—with many of the chiefs, numbers of the people, and a very great portion of this, comparatively-speaking, little known land.

When the details of the Insanwala disaster reached England, my former military experience and knowledge of South African travel told me at once that the weak point of our army was the transport department; and, after due consideration and thought, I came to the conclusion that from the Bechuanas a number of people could be obtained to act as drivers, forelopers, or in any other capacity in which we might choose to employ them.

This idea I communicated to the authorities. Soon after I was honoured by a command to call at the War Office. At the second interview I was asked would I go to South Africa? Having answered “Yes,” I was dismissed. That evening an impress for my passage was delivered at my lodgings, with orders to report myself to Lord Chelmsford. The next day but one saw me on board the Donald Currie steamship, “Warwick Castle,” cleaving through the muddy water of the Thames on our course to the ocean.

Our passengers were a very mixed lot, I soon discovered. The majority, however, were candi-

dates for military glory, who panted for battle-fields, and never would be satisfied till they had met the formidable Zulu. One evening, between Dartmouth and Madeira, I entered the smoking-room; tobacco smoke was so dense that it was some time before its occupants could be recognized. However, the tenour of their conversation could not for a moment be mistaken, and, to my surprise, I discovered that I was in the midst of, not only the bravest of the brave, but the most learned and positive of critics. Ever after, during the remainder of the voyage, I shunned that room, lest I should be questioned on some intricate solution in drill, or examined on some of the details of Vauban's first system. I shall never forget seeing one of these gentlemen unpack his traps a few days after we started; in one portmanteau he had two distinct sets of uniform, the one of a militia, the other of a volunteer corps. To have got this gentleman's baggage to the front would have taken a buck-waggon and a full span of sixteen oxen. Another of the heroes studied the Infantry Manual morning, noon, and night. I envied the man that he enjoyed that style of literature! One day he left his precious volume in his chair, so I hid it; it was really quite distressing to note with what a hungry look he prowled about, searching for his treasure.

There was also a broth-of-a-boy from the Emerald Island; his stock of reading had evi-

dently been confined to Lever's novels. Judging from his language he had resolved to rival the exploits of Charles O'Malley. Lord bless you ! he did not care what the odds were ; give him but a sabre, and a good horse, he would meet the Zulu ten to one, twenty to one—aye, if needs be, thirty to one ! Two or three nights in succession I drew upon my imagination. I described the Zulu as a giant in size, and the most ferocious and cruel savage in the world ; in fact, I was not prepared to say that he was not actually a cannibal. A day or two before we reached Cape Town, this worthy informed me that he was a married man, that his wife was a lady of fortune, and that, under the circumstances, he did not consider he was justified in running the risks attached to a soldier's life.

When we arrived at Durban, not one of the fire-eaters remained ; the attractions of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth were evidently too great to permit of their leaving them without paying a prolonged visit !

The weather during our voyage was all that the most fastidious could desire. Madeira and Teneriffe were passed in due time, and the long stretch of the Atlantic Ocean entered, that extends almost uninterrupted to the South Pole. Altogether we were rather a slow lot ; the ladies, for there were some of the fair sex on board, did not dovetail. A good deal of this was caused by a newly-married lady, who was young, saucy, and mischief-making.

It was perfectly refreshing to see how she was hated by the others, and really invigorating to hear the spiteful things they said against her; but the little one always paid them off in their own coin.

This young wife had a baby. I am not a judge of babies, but I should not think it much of a baby, as babies go; and I think the majority of the ladies on board were of the same opinion, for they used frequently to utter, when the interesting child was in sight, "Poor thing! poor thing! But what could be expected with such a mother?" After these sweet terms of condolence, a couple would trip up to the mamma, and give her some hints on baby cultivation in general, and on the rearing of this one in particular. Immediately afterwards there would be an angry passage of words, when the belligerents would separate, the parent giving vent to her wrath, the well-wishers of the little innocent groaning over the degeneration of the girls of the period.

On the twenty-second day from Dartmouth we were safely moored in the dock at Cape Town; and, although we had a lot of squalls on ship-board, nothing approaching a breeze had we while traversing the mighty ocean.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAPE.

CAPE TOWN ! often as I have visited you, yet am I not prepared to say whether I admire you or otherwise ! Like Constantinople, Naples, and other cities I wot of, when beheld from the sea your appearance is charming ; for the numerous buildings which line the shores of the bay are invariably sparkling white, with an abundance of the greenest trees cropping up in every direction among the various edifices. Table Mountain, which backs the landscape, is of itself a wondrous sight ; in outline and characteristics nothing can be imagined more suitable for the barrier which terminates the old continent to prevent the ingress of the pathless ocean. In the old Titan days of fire and force, before the flood, when all this world was young, we could imagine these herculean beings labouring to construct such a wall to repel the power of the waves and winds. When the sun at evening is about to dip the western horizon, his golden light appears to be reflected from every rock and cranny, and to sparkle with the brilliancy of innumerable gems.

To the southward of Table Mountain is situated the lion's head and rump, the former a picturesque pinnacle of rock, so perpendicular on its western face that the observer would fain believe its summit had never been desecrated by mountain goat, let alone human foot. To the north of Table Mountain extends a long flat and uninteresting shore, covered with Cape Pine and numerous dwarf shrubs; while across the bay, in long and uninterrupted line, will be found the Blue Berg range, little exceeding in height the Malvern hills; again these are backed up by the Hottentot-Hollands—mountains that rise in many places to an altitude of seven or eight thousand feet, which not unfrequently, in June and July, have one third of their summits covered with a draping of snow.

A little to the northward of seaward is to be observed Robin's Island, a flat and uninteresting piece of land, which seldom can be gazed upon without creating a shudder, for here the maniac and leper are incarcerated. As Dante wrote at Hell's Mouth, so at the landing-place of this island might we write, “All hope abandon, ye who enter here!”

But from the doleful let us jump into pleasanter scenes. You have got your ticket, the polite guard shows you to a carriage, the engine whistles, and the train is off. First, the castle—an attractive yet strongly fortified edifice—is passed. Then green fields surround you on either hand; soon after follow trees and bushes, refreshing alike to eye and landscape from their luxuriant foliage.

Rapidly villa after villa is sighted, each structure having a strong resemblance to another, and characterized with more of the type of Indian bungalow architecture than approximating to the dwellings of man in Europe.

Many were the visits I paid. Some to friends that I had not seen for eighteen years!—and what changes had that lapse of time made! The members of a family in particular, I may mention, when last I enjoyed their hospitality, the head of the house was a hale middle-aged man; now, years had stamped their impress on his brow with no light or gentle hand. The daughters, when formerly I saw them, were handsome, joyous girls, entering into womanhood; now they were all married, with families surrounding them—fit prototypes of their mother when I knew them previously. Sights such as this are not the most pleasant to witness, for an inward monitor whispers—nay, that is not the word—tells you point blank that you have not yourself passed through the period scatheless.

On Mr. Molteno, the late premier of the Cape Parliament, whom I had met in former years, I called. His residence was simply charming; surrounded by a garden and shrubberies so well kept as to tell distinctly that they were under a lady's care. The avenue approaching his house was margined on either side by a line of venerable oaks, that would have done credit to the domain of any English nobleman.

Dreaming over the past, and gazing with fond memory on each succeeding house that I recognized, I slowly pursued my way to the railway station; but my wits were wool-gathering, and thus, forgetting the passage of time, I missed my train. For an hour I paced the platform. At first I censured myself for my dilatoriness in no measured terms, but everything is for the best. Lady Frere had had a garden-party that day, and soon a number of her visitors, on their return to Cape Town, appeared at the station. Among them was one whose beauty I may have seen equalled, but not surpassed. Her face was perfect, and imbued with that expression so attractive to all, denominated by the French "*Sympathique*." Nor was her figure less remarkable for its beauty of outline. The planks which her foot pressed were to be envied for the honour done them. She did not walk, but glided like an ethereal being; in Andalusia I have seen the same graceful mode of progression, but never in any other part of the world. Was she married or single? For truly such a rare gem was worthy of a king's ransom! I am aware that there are many pretty girls to be found in Cape Town, but I did not know that it possessed such a priceless gem.

The next day I called upon the Colonial Secretary, and from him I heard that Commandant Lonsdale was residing at the Civil Service Club, and had lately arrived from the front, for the purpose of raising a fresh corps of irregular cavalry.

To see this gentleman, who had had so narrow an escape at Insanwala, I turned my steps in the direction of that well known and hospitable establishment. The Commandant is about five feet nine in height, strongly built, with a remarkably pleasant and intelligent expression of countenance. He was surrounded with candidates for military honours, many of whom, I should think, would look more appropriately placed behind the counter of Marshall and Snellgrove, measuring ribands by the yard, than decked out in war-paint, and bestriding the prancing steed that scents the battle afar, and impatiently expresses his desire to be mixed in the fray.

Afterwards I visited the camp of these irregulars, to see them at riding drill. A sorrier display of Rosinantes I never beheld. In many particulars they had a strong resemblance to the human visitors at Bethesda's Pool, being halt, maimed, and, so to say, "*Myope!*"

One of the officers requested me to examine a beast which he proposed selecting for a charger.

The first question he asked was, "Do you think he is spavined?" I "*smole,*" as Artemus Ward says, for the brute possessed the most undeniable spavins, the most undoubted splints, with wind-galls and capped hocks you might have hung your hat upon!

"Do you think he is lame in the off fore-foot?" was the next inquiry; "he certainly appears to me to go tender upon it."

“ If anything,” I responded, “ I think *that* particular leg the best of the lot ! ”

Soon after the above colloquy, drill commenced. The recruits were, without exception, the most strange collection of men I ever saw assembled on a parade-ground. Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, and Germans, with a sprinkling of English, Irish, and Scotch, could be found in the ranks ; and a certain air was to be discovered in all, more characteristic of the sailor than of the landsman.

When the order to mount was given, some terrible struggling ensued ; horses were seen curvetting, rearing, and jumping, dragging all over the drill-ground their would-be riders, with one foot in the stirrup. At length order was, in some degree, restored ; for sailors have a happy knack of accommodating themselves to circumstances. Thus, each man hoisted his neighbour aloft, till only one remained dismounted ; and an amiable bystander, taking pity on the forlorn position of this unfortunate individual, gave him an energetic heave, so willingly and muscularly administered, that the horseman, instead of remaining in the saddle, fell over it on the opposite side in an incompetent heap. However, the son of Mars, though slightly disfigured by the catastrophe, was resolved that he would not be vanquished, and his perseverance was rewarded on a second attempt. No way discomfited, and evidently proud of his exploit, he joined the ranks, with the tip of his toe just resting in the stirrup-irons, the leathers

of which were evidently six inches too short for him; this, however, did not prevent him turning out his feet at right angles to the flanks of his gallant charger. But the fun now became fast and furious, as the orders "Walk!" "Trot!" &c., were given; troopers fell off right and left. The on-looker would have imagined that they were in action, under a fearful fire, while those that retained their elevated position could be found anywhere between the horse's tail and its ears.

The following day I embarked on board the S.S. "Dunkeld," for Durban.

One of the old troopships of former years used to be said to roll so fearfully that she went completely round, and came up on the other side. The vessel I was now on board of did not do this, but evinced a strong disposition to make the attempt.

On the third day we reached our destination. The bar was a seething cauldron of snow-white spray; nevertheless, the steam tug-boat pressed through the rollers, and, in an hour and a half afterwards, we were landed at the Point, where confusion, from the amount of military stores collected, and the number of persons employed in their transshipment, reigned paramount.

A drive of a couple of miles brought me to the old club-house, where I was glad to rest after the fatigues I had suffered in the latter part of my journey.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THREE-YEAR SYSTEM.

THE old club at Durban is situated in the principal thoroughfare, and is called "old" in contradistinction from an opposition establishment, which has lately been started, and is designated the "new" club.

A gentleman who came with me from Cape Town in the "Dunkeld" kindly proposed, and had me seconded, as an honorary member of the former, during my residence in the town. This consideration of my friend saved me no end of trouble, and effected a great economy in my expenditure. What I saw of the members I liked much. Their manner was marked by that *bon-homie* which is the characteristic of the travelled gentleman; in which I differ strangely from that veracious historian, Mr. Archibald Forbes, who has described them as very much the reverse. True, no two people see things alike; in fact, I do not doubt that we form our estimate of persons by comparing them to those we have been in the habit of associating with, particularly during the

early days of manhood. The predominant subject of conversation was, of course, the war. All had friends who had seen service in it, many had actually served themselves; and it afforded me great delight to listen to the praises and high encomiums which were lavished upon that kind-hearted nobleman, Lord Chelmsford.

When I left England, more than one of our leading periodicals censured his conduct in no measured terms. These severe comments, I have reason to believe, were written by persons unaware of the difficulties attending upon a campaign in South Africa.

How different is the tone of those who have spent the majority of their lives in the country, and are well acquainted with the obstacles that must ever surround one who handles a large force in this infant colony, or in the territories which surround it.

A political controversy between a well-known newspaper correspondent of Cape Town, and an old resident of Natal, was most amusing, and at the same time instructive. The former gentleman—who was young, clever, and possessed of a good command of language—belonged to what I should denominate the Radical, or rather, Liberal school, the latter being an uncompromising Conservative.

My sympathies, I need not say, were with the last; but, I regret to state that the superior talents of his antagonist worsted him at every

point. Up to the wee small hours the battle raged with increased violence, and but for the interference of friends—but for their assurance that it would be better to renew it upon a future occasion—I doubt not that, if the desire of the combatants had been consulted, the strife would have been continued until the golden rays of light illuminated the eastern horizon and indicated the advent of another day.

Major Butler, the well-known author of that fascinating book "The Great Lone Land," being quarter-master general, immediately after breakfast next morning I went to his office to report my arrival. To my surprise he had received no instructions in reference to me. However, he promised to telegraph at once to head-quarters, as it was possible the communication from the War Office that referred to the subject had been forwarded there.

As no answer could be received for many hours, I visited the camp and remount stable—the former being situated upon an uninteresting flat and under the shadow of the Berea, a spot which to my mind appeared to be singularly unhealthy, as it was little elevated above high-water mark, though I never heard that it turned out to be so. During the summer months I fear it would have proved itself untenable. The remount stables were close at hand; and it was not without feelings of grief that I saw many a noble English charger in the buildings devoted to

the use of the sick. Poor animals, they were destined never to see their native land again. The green meadows, hedges, and trees, that their eyes had been accustomed to, would never more greet their sight. But man—proud son of earth, deny it if you will—they, as well as you, have died in doing their duty.

From there I directed my steps to the transport agent, to make arrangements for my baggage to be taken to Pietermaritzburg.

The proprietor I met at his office-door.

He was an old acquaintance, and recognized me at once; however, much as he was disposed to show me favour, he could not hold out the faintest hope of being able to forward my kit for at least seven or eight days. In the course of conversation I questioned him on the cause of the high rate of transport. His response was a painful one for an Englishman to listen to. I will endeavour to give it, as nearly as possible, in his own words.

“You see, sir, the teamsters don’t feel safe; those ‘bits of boys’ you call soldiers won’t ‘stand,’ but skedaddle at the first sight of a Zulu; and when that’s the case, what is to become of a driver? If he follows suit, he loses his waggon and oxen; if he don’t, he gets assegaied! I, nor any of us, hain’t a word to say agin the officers. Poor gentlemen! before they’ll show their heels, the knobkeerie has spoilt their chance of doing so. You must have a pesky lot of fools at home

to think that young 'uns like that can fight Zulus! It takes a man for the work, and a good man too.”

As I wended my way to the club, I felt truly sorrowful at heart at what I had heard. But how can it be otherwise since Cardwell's bill has had effect, and men are selected for privates, regardless of physique, and officers chosen if able to pass an examination which none but an old bookworm or an overstrained brain-power could possibly accomplish. When I look back in the retrospect of my memory, and my mind conjures up before me the soldiers that fought in the Crimea, bronzed, weather-beaten men with bearded faces, I feel assured that they never would have shown their backs to the foes, let their nationality be what you will. Inkermann proved this; for, but for the dogged determination of the rank and file, what has been accredited to us as one of the most glorious victories our arms ever obtained, would in future history have been denominated a defeat.

Later on in the day I called upon a friend at the Royal Hotel. The establishment was so crowded that numbers of the visitors were compelled to sleep upon the floor. This hostelry—the principal one of the kind in Durban—is agreeably situated, with a large tree in front, around and about which are numerous seats and tables, recalling vividly the gardens in some old German country town. Add the coloured lamps amongst the foliage, and the illusion would have been

complete. This was a favourite place of assemblage after dinner, and the corks of soda-water popped frequently in chorus to the strains of some lively air. Here also were told the most marvellous stories of hairbreadth escapes, and were narrated deeds of prowess that really startled and overpowered soldiers of the old school, such as myself; for never yet has it been my luck to kill five—nay sometimes ten—of the enemy in one engagement. Thank God, it has not been so; but the rising generation far surpass their predecessors, in fighting, or in relation of their deeds of valour. Strange as it may appear, volunteers were always the persons who had such sanguinary reminiscences to record.

Another attraction possessed by this establishment was a collection of wild animals, almost amounting to a menagerie. In one cage were a couple of tiger cats, beautiful silky-coated creatures, with brilliant skins, decorated with markings of the jettest black. They appeared to feel their captivity sadly, and, although some time prisoners, had lost none of their original ferocity. Man, who had deprived them of liberty, they could not and would not recognize as a friend, but were prepared to defy his authority at any moment with tooth and claw.

Turning from them, you discover an aviary filled with all the most brilliant birds this part of the world produces—bright orange, green, and scarlet, being the dominant colours.

Out of doors, in a perfect state of freedom, either on the grass in front of the house, or in the vicinity of the stable-yard, will be observed by the visitor Madagascar cats, strange specimens of the quadrumana, with eyes so large and tail so long that one cannot help wondering at nature being so bountiful in this respect to so small an animal.

But while puzzling our brains on this subject, hop, hop, hop! goes something in our rear. Naturally we turn round to look, and discover it to be a kangaroo from Australia, and so domesticated that the timid-eyed creature immediately endeavours to make friends with you. But there is another creature equally desirous of notice. It is a meer-kat—an animal much resembling the mungoose of India. They are easily tamed, and make most charming pets, never being so happy as when they are taken notice of.

In front of the hall-door stands a spring-bok; a yelping little cur employs its utmost exertions to frighten it, but the graceful antelope only lowers its horns to meet the aggressor when he approaches too near.

Possibly the reader may say that I am straying from my subject; if I am, I must ask pardon, and offer in excuse my passionate affection for the animal creation.

That evening a telegram was forwarded to me by Major Butler, in which I was ordered to proceed to Maritzburg, and report myself to Major-General Clifford, Commander of base and lines of

communication, also the head of the Intelligence Department.

At nine o'clock a.m. I entered the train, *en route* to Botha's Hill, where travellers have to change to the post-cart or 'busses, as the railroad is not yet constructed to its termination.

The scenery along this line is remarkably pretty; plenty of timber, often growing on the steepest slopes, while the grass that carpets the soil is as green as green can be. In no portion of the world can be found so many beautiful sites for villas and country residences.

Locomotion upon this line of railroad is not fast. The gradients are too steep for such to be the case, and I fear the outlay for its construction must be so excessive that it never will pay the stock-holders. I am aware that Natalians differ from me upon this subject. The future will prove who is right and who is wrong.

At Botha's Hill I changed to the post-cart: four apparently unbroken horses are attached to it, for a Zulu boy hangs to the head of each.

On the driver learning that all are seated, they receive the order to "Let go," and away we pelt o'er hill and valley, at a pace that cannot fail to strike the new arrival with wonder, possibly with fear. Sunset sees me deposited at the Royal Hotel, its worthy host and his wife subtending me a courteous welcome.

Thus the last of my journey by public conveyance has terminated.

CHAPTER V.

MEMORIES.

MR. DOIG, proprietor of the Royal Hotel, I had known in former years. It may be that this was the reason that induced him to give me one of his best rooms, and that all to myself, although in almost every apartment there were two beds, each of which was occupied. In fact, the establishment was so much crowded, that it was no rare occurrence for several guests to sleep nightly on the drawing-room floor.

It was late that evening before I retired to rest, for many were the old friends I met; so that old battles had to be fought over again, and new projects discussed. I made several attempts to steal away, but in each I was thwarted; in vain I pleaded fatigue, but no excuse would be accepted; thus I was compelled to make a virtue of necessity, and submit. Our host, finally, seeing the plight I was in, came to the rescue, and most successfully put a stop to the conviviality by closing the bar. After six hours sound sleep, I turned out fresh and fit; and as I gazed from out

of my chamber-window while dressing, numerous memories of the past were recalled, for I occupied the same room in which my dear old friend Morris and myself had been domiciled four years back, when we were on our way to the Elephant Country.

Invigorated by a thoroughly good breakfast, I started to report myself to the Honourable Major-General Clifford, V.C., C.B. Early as the hour was, he was in his office and hard at work.

This officer's appearance would be certainly prepossessing, if there were not an occasional harsh satirical expression in his look that much mars the attractiveness of his otherwise handsome features. As I left head-quarters, a person I did not at first recognize saluted me, and held out his hand. The countenance was familiar; still, for the life of me, I could not recollect where we had met; but a momentary explanation sufficed, for he it was that, three years ago, had supplied me with a dinner at Hartebeest Fontein, when on my homeward journey from the interior.

Having the whole day before me, I paid a few visits; afterwards I returned to the hotel, which I reached about half-an-hour prior to the tiffin hour. No portion of the day was more favourable for seeing military celebrities; for parades, drills, and orderly-room duties, were concluded for the forenoon. The porch was crowded with warriors; you elbowed warriors on the left and on the right, and in front of you they blocked the way. I was

proud to be in such company. Might not the passer-by take me for a warrior too, although garbed in the plainest of mufti; for I was big enough, bronzed and bearded enough, to be supposed the hero of innumerable campaigns? Yes, there was some satisfaction in this thought; so I remained among the warriors. There was one characteristic common to all. The hair-cutter had plied his shears most effectually on the heads of every one; so that the stumps, which had once been locks, stuck out in every direction like the quills on the back of an angry porcupine. The costume of each individual was no less remarkable; if any of them—with very few exceptions—had made their appearance on the parade-ground at Aldershot or the Curragh, a few general officers would have immediately afterwards been carried to their quarters in a fit.

The only garbs that reminded me of home were those of a couple of cavalry-men, who had lately arrived from England; but the engineers, gunners, and linesmen were habited in *such* tunics—stained, soiled, and bleached—that it would be difficult to say, in many instances, what were their original colours. Moreover, breeches had taken the place of trousers—breeches of every colour that these useful garments are ever endowed with; while boots, that either buckled, laced, or did not require any superfluous additions, covered their lower extremities to the knee.

But leaving the regulars, we come to the auxiliary forces. I have seen pictures of buccaneers, banditti, and burglars. Take a third of each of the above-mentioned, simmer them over a slow fire, and add plenty of cayenne-pepper to give them complexion, and you will have a full fledged volunteer "all of the modern time." Each wore a slouch hat with a puggery of blue, red, or some other colour around it, according to the corps he belonged to; then came a short frogged jacket, buttoning from the throat to the waist. This garment, to say the least, was convenient, for neither friend nor foe could tell with certainty whether you had a shirt on or not; and this article of clothing was reported to be remarkably scarce in the front. Next come the breeks—yellow cords, with one or two stripes of black braid along their outer side. Boots among them were various in their construction; but in this point they did not differ—that each was ornamented with a spur, which, for length of neck and size of roller, would have beaten all creation.

There is no denying the fact that they were an extremely fine-looking lot of young men, and that they did good service; but for frightening timid ladies and nervous old men, their equal could not have been found. Conscientiously, I do not think that I would have any hankering myself to meet any of them on a dark night, particularly if it was in the vicinity of Hounslow Heath, for I am certain

that, without hesitation, I should take to my heels, and never halt till I got shelter under the roof-tree of some respectable family, and decline to go forth again any more that night; no, not if I knew it!

I was told upon my return from the interior that I looked the greatest villain of the lot—looking-glasses were not abundant, nor did I go in search of one—still I should be unwilling to deny that such was a fact; but if this assertion was true, then I can only say that I am sorry for myself.

As far as physique and fitness to endure fatigue went, the officers of the volunteer corps far outstripped those of the regulars; and I am of opinion that they could have withstood much more exposure.

Pietermaritzburg at this period reminded me much of Washington during the late civil war in North America. A story was current there at that time, that a horse, attached to a buggy hitched in front of Willard's hotel, broke loose, and ran madly down the avenue. The frightened animal, in its flight, knocked down thirteen generals and twenty-one brigadiers; and yet it was not much of a day for generals or brigadiers either! I feel certain that if a restive steed had played the same pranks in the capital of Natal, that the number of heads of departments and other distinguished officers that would have been injured would have been fearful, for warriors

here—at the time I write of—were more than abundant.

To stand on the porch of the hotel and watch the trains of waggons passing was ever a source of amusement. The coloured drivers of oxen are a race nowhere to be seen out of South Africa. For conceit and self-estimation I will back them against any people in the world. Note this fellow coming along; he walks as if he were the pink of fashion, and every eye were centred upon him; a self-complacent, self-satisfied smirk is conspicuous in his countenance; while he drags his feet after him, as if walking were an exertion to which he was unaccustomed. Over his shoulder he carries a whip, the handle of which is probably eighteen feet long; to the tip of it is attached a lash nearly double the above dimensions, made out of the hide of the giraffe. The waggon has just crossed the gutter in front of the house; for a moment all the cattle are not pulling together, and one in the centre of the span hangs back from the yoke; in a moment the driver has perceived the delinquent's conduct, and an instant after he is within reach of the culprit. Prefacing his language with an extraordinary yell—half-screech, half-Indian war-whoop—and terminating with "Englând, Akermân," as the case may be, finally concluding with "*amāgā treck*"—the lash of the instrument of torture all the time describing rapid revolutions in the air—down comes the thong with the report of a pistol-shot, and the

skulker has received a cut that he will remember till—well, the next time.

Pietermaritzburg is a very pretty town; in it are many handsome shops and private residences, while through nearly every street flow streams of water. Luxuriant trees and handsome shrubs grow along the coping of the side-walks, or in the numerous gardens. The walls of the dwellings are generally white, and the roofs red tile; this contrast, when seen from a short distance, has a most harmonious effect. As viewed from the Town Hill, few prettier domestic scenes can be gazed on. It is situated in and on the edge of a valley, and is surrounded by a perfect amphitheatre of grass-clad hills, gradually increasing in elevation as you get further from the town. Again these are backed, in many directions, by mountains of no inconsiderable elevation.

When the country surrounding Natal's capital—for here is the seat of government—was first settled, I doubt very much if trees were to be found numerous in the vicinity; but now they are to be seen in every direction—evidence of the excellence of the soil, and of the thrift, patience, and taste of the agriculturalist.

One thing I must not forget to mention, for never in any part of the world have I seen their like, viz. the sunsets. They are simply gorgeous—surpassing imagination, surpassing description. At evening the rays of the departing luminary are reflected from peak and crag, throwing golden

rays over the landscape, and lighting up the cold inanimate crags as if they were composed of burnished copper. When clouds float over the sky and their shadows fall upon those verdant hill sides, another charming effect is given to the scene. In the Lake District, Scotland, in the states of Maine and Virginia, I have indented into my memory the delight I have felt when viewing this effect. There, they are but as the positive degree in comparison to the superlative, which is witnessed here.

Can it, then, be wondered at that the early settlers selected this lovely locality for one of their first resting-places? Most assuredly, if I had been among them, I should have counselled them, with all the eloquence my tongue could command, and with all the enthusiasm my nature could exert, to do what they have done.

CHAPTER VI.

ON DUTY.

THE following morning I again reported myself, when I received orders to return in an hour and a half for instructions.

Having this time to spare, I directed my steps towards the fort, and paid a visit to Commandant Marshall, commanding the troop of irregular horse which bore his name. The men were of a superior stamp to any of the irregular corps I had previously inspected, many being Boers and consequently passable equestrians, with a tolerable knowledge of the management of horses. My reception was most hospitable. The chief introduced me to his adjutant; and if I mistake not, when the history of this war is written, it will be found that Marshall's Volunteers did good service.

When returning towards head-quarters, on the side of the slope of the hill, which severs the fort from the town, I observed a particularly neat encampment composed of several tents. Upon inquiry I learned that General Sir John Bissett, long a resident in the colony, and whose name is

associated with many of the early Kaffir wars, resided here; so I jumped my horse across the ditch and called upon the veteran soldier. At a glance one could see that the occupant was an old campaigner, for everything was arranged with that view to comfort only to be obtained by a very lengthened experience. Having "chin-chinned" one another over a glass of "square-face," I bid my host *au revoir*, and returned to headquarters, where I found my instructions completed, and only awaiting the signature of Sir E. Strickland, the General, and myself.

The principal commissariat officer being at hand, we proceeded to him to obtain his autograph. After this was affixed, I was detained some minutes, and in that time learnt the herculean task, and the unheard of difficulties, that that department had to contend against in their efforts to obtain sufficient transport for the army. The Commissary-General had been informed that a *ring* existed among the owners of waggons, to force the Government to pay them higher prices than the exorbitant ones they were then receiving.

Naturally, he was very irate upon the subject, and in the plainest terms, told one of the confederacy, that if such swindling attempts were continued, he would advise, or rather request, the Commander-in-Chief to place Natal under martial law.

My own idea is that this should have been

done at the commencement of the war ; and, if such a step had been taken, I have little doubt that much trouble and expense would have been avoided.

On returning to head-quarters, I was handed my instructions, and verbally ordered to be prepared to start upon my expedition to the interior on the morrow. An impress for a considerable sum of money was provided me, also 160*l.* to purchase four horses ; an after-rider also had to be procured—no easy matter, as every white and coloured man that I informed of my destination prophesied that I would never return.

It may not be out of place to mention here, that, in visiting distant Kaffir-land, to obtain labourers to assist in the transport of the service, another object, doubtless, was in view, viz., to learn the animus of the chiefs towards our Government. Thus, those who were willing to give help might safely be deemed friends ; those who refused, the reverse.

As may be imagined, I had now no idle moments on hand. From a publican I bought a dark-bay horse, with brown muzzle and black points. In the receipt for the money paid, I found him designated "Tommy," so I retained the name. From Captain Farrar, of the Guards, I purchased a powerful dappled cream-colour, with black points. His eyes denoted vice ; but the only approach to it that I ever became cognizant of was a tendency to lay down in the stall

when girthed, or in the street when mounted; also a predisposition to buck-jump. Him I christened "Bobby." From Mr. Doig I obtained two animals, both bays—the one sixteen hands and a half high, the other fifteen-two.

Quite a little episode took place when trying the paces of the larger animal.

A lad had been put upon his back to trot him out. At first the brute was sulky, and would not go, so I provided the boy with a cutting whip. The rider did not spare it, and the result was that the horse bolted, with all the police in the neighbourhood in pursuit. At length the runaway was captured, and taken to the station-house, the unfortunate rough-rider being incarcerated for endangering the safety of the community by violent riding.

I at once paid the fine, and engaged the delinquent as my attendant in my approaching expedition.

Being now provided with horses, the afternoon was spent in obtaining saddlery, arms, and ammunition, not forgetting two blankets for myself and two for my after-rider. This was my entire kit. I had not even a change of clothes, for such superfluous additions to one's baggage it is impossible to carry on horseback during so lengthened a journey as I was about to undertake, and which would probably exceed eight or nine weeks, over three thousand miles having to be traversed. Thus, having settled my business

arrangements, I would leave serious matters alone for the present.

"Commandant Gillmore!" I hear a voice exclaim behind me. I turn round to know who addresses me, when I discover it to be Mr. Doig, who tells me that an old friend is in the sitting-room waiting to see me.

At once I proceeded there, and, with pleasure, recognized my former acquaintance, Mr. Alexander Prefer, late proprietor of the Royal Hotel, and my host on the occasion of my former visit to it.

"Ah! my friend," said he, subtending his hand, "I am very glad to see you. I did not expect to meet you once more in this life; we must drink—champagne! what you like, de very best; for you know money is no object." So we had a pint of champagne.

The wine loosened his tongue, and so pleasantly and rapidly did time fly in the society of this worthy, although eccentric man, that I almost regretted the velocity with which it passed.

At length he exclaimed, "I loave you ver mooch indeed, for you haf made me a celebrity! When Sir Bartle Frere and de General com to my house—I keep de Castle Hotel, at Howick, now, you must understand—they say, 'Where is Mr. Prefer?' I answer, 'I am dat man.' 'The Mr. Prefer mentioned in the Great Thirsty Land?' 'De same, gentlemen; at your service.' Then dey say, 'It am unnecessary to ask de question, for dere cannot be two Mr. Prefers!' Den dey

treat me as friend and gentleman. Ah, Colonel, you have made me one celebrity !”

If I had drunk all the champagne this kind-hearted acquaintance wished me to, I fear I should have been incapable long before the dinner-hour.

To see the wealth, beauty, and fashion of Pietermaritzburg, I borrowed from the landlord a charming thoroughbred mare, and directed my course towards the Park—for know, gentle reader, that this town has not only a Park, but, I may add, a very charming one—where the military band of the garrison regiment plays every Saturday afternoon.

The evening was balmy and refreshing. At each turn in the road, and along the highway, numbers of equestrians, and conveyances of various descriptions, many of them filled with fair occupants, were to be met.

Natalians are decidedly “horsey” in their tastes, and there are few ladies who do not possess their own hacks. To an eye accustomed to Rotten Row, and the perfection of every equipage in the Hyde Park mile, exception might be taken to the *tout ensemble* of the turns-out here ; but the genial cordiality and goodnature of their owners very soon puts a stop to an idea of invidious comparison.

If the equipments and housings of many of the fair equestriennes do not, in the majority of instances, entirely please the eye of a fastidious

observer, there is one among the crowd whom it would be difficult to match in perfection, even among the fashionable frequenters of Melton Mowbray.

Her mount—a thoroughbred mare, imported from England, and rejoicing in the name of "Spangles"—would unquestionably be able to hold her own in the first flight with the Quorn. The fashionable dinner-hour has arrived, however; and with much bustle, and not a little confusion, every one is making the best of his way to his respective home.

People here are not satisfied to go at a pace such as the staid and stay-at-home Englishman affects upon a London thoroughfare, but rather indulge in the furious *sauve qui peut* and devil-take-the-hindmost mode of procedure.

At ten next morning I was ready for my start, and habited in the costume of a buccanor. In favour of its becomingness I can say little; of its extreme comfort and suitability to the work, much.

Numerous shakes of the hand, and as many voices to say "God speed you," plainly indicate that I leave a host of kind friends behind, who wish me success on my perilous journey—from which I may never return. One vaults into the saddle, and a glance to the rear, to wave a parting adieu, and I am once more "on duty."

CHAPTER VII.

EN ROUTE.

My *cortège* attracted considerable attention, and many were the persons who stopped and gazed upon it as I passed on towards the Town Hill.

In front of the post-office were assembled half-a-dozen military men of my acquaintance: to have passed them without a shake of the hand and a "good bye" would have been a lack of courtesy I did not wish to be guilty of. Thus I halted for a minute.

When about to resume my progress, Mr. Preffer, panting and blowing from unusual exertion, rushed up to me, and gave me the information that he was unable to obtain a conveyance to take him to Howick, although he had offered an unprecedented price for the desired accommodation. Would I, therefore, if he borrowed a saddle and bridle, give him a mount, so far, on one of my horses. The distance to his residence, the Castle Hotel, being only fourteen miles, and my acquaintance being very light, I unhesitatingly acceded to his request.

We therefore returned to the yard of the Crown hotel, where Bobby was saddled and bridled.

My worthy friend complained that he felt very unwell. I would not for a moment have the reader to imagine that he was suffering from the potations of the previous night; however, that he was not himself was apparent, for his language was hurried and his intonation guttural. With some difficulty, and the assistance of two grooms, he was ultimately seated in the pigskin, and my journey was resumed.

All went well until the flat was reached which extends between the suburbs of Maritzburg and the commencement of the Town Hill. Conversation had not flagged. Reminiscences of former days were recalled, and many a laugh had been enjoyed over the eccentricities of mutual friends.

At length my comrade commenced to tell me a lengthened story, about a person of the name of Gregory, who professed to have been in the army for many years, and who unquestionably was a Bohemian of the first water. The object of his visit to Natal no one was aware of, although it was frequently whispered, *sotto voce*, that he was a detective from Scotland-yard sent in pursuit of one of the Corries. Whether this was true or not, one thing I can safely assert, that I never met a person in my life who could dispose of more brandies and sodas in the course of the day than this same Captain Gregory. My com-

rade had suffered at his hands, and got excited over his wrongs, as he narrated them.

“One hundred and twenty pounds he owed me, mein Gott, and I never see one thaler of his money. He drink two bottles of brandy every day; and as to soda vater, it take one machine, all de time, to make enough for him. He always thirsty—never sober; mein Gott, what for a thirst that man have!” and here Mr. Prefer became excited, gesticulating violently with his hands. It would be impossible for me to say whether the horse became imbued with the feelings of the rider, or that it supposed he was about to administer to its flanks a severe castigation with his stick, but the animal did something—what, I cannot say—and my poor companion immediately afterwards lay upon the sward on the broad of his back.

I dismounted, and endeavoured to raise him, but he was limp as an unstarched piece of linen.

I addressed him, and he answered me as if he were solving a conundrum. My strongest sympathies were roused in his behalf; therefore I wished to replace him upon my horse, but neither the exertions of self and servant could accomplish the task.

It was painful to leave a friend under such circumstances; but what other alternative was there? The General already supposed me to be some miles upon my road; and as staff officers have a happy facility for turning up when least