couraging, for writing again from London he says, 'I hope to be in Ireland at the end of next week. I hope you will not be away just then.' And then he goes on to analyse the mental effect which the last two years of arduous work in India had had upon him:

. . . When I met you, only just entering on womanhood, my mind was naturally far ahead, and I had travelled over most of the country you were just entering on, and could tell you a good deal about it. Now in many directions you have caught me up, probably passed me, and that mind which then struck you as big will now seem dwarfed, just as the house and rooms which seem so large to us in our childhood do when we see them again after we are grown up.

In practical thought, dealing with business and great administrative questions, my mind probably has developed; at any rate my confidence in myself has. But I doubt whether I could take as thoughtful a view of a purely intellectual work as I could have done some years ago.

As regards practical work, I may tell you privately that I heard yesterday I had been urged upon the Colonial Office from two different directions as 'the one man' to be sent out to the Cape now, to take command of all the forces being collected there, and stop or quell the Kaffir insurrection, which threatens to assume very formidable dimensions. Lord Carnarvon, I believe, was very favourable to the idea, but the . . . were furious at the thought of a junior colonel being suggested for an appointment always held by a lieutenant-general![4]

In the few weeks following arrival in England, his life was an incessant round of interviews with men whose place among the political leaders of a time which has now become almost historic adds interest to the following sketches:

I have been doing a good deal of business and talking since my arrival. . . . I have seen Lords Northbrook and

[4] London, 1878, to Miss Hamilton.

G. Hamilton, Sir Louis Mallet, and other Indian authorities, and am to see Lord Halifax to-morrow, and dine with Lord Northbrook to meet the Duke of Argyll next week. Nothing can exceed Lord Northbrook's kindness, both to myself personally and in his desire to give every assistance he can to H.E., and save him from troublesome Parliamentary interference and opposition.

My interview with Lord Salisbury went off very satisfactorily on Friday last. He was very pleasant and courteous, and a little more communicative and less purely official than last time. It is a very pleasant face to talk to, there is such a quick intelligence in it, and response, especially to any touch of humour.

And now to my personal matters. I am sending off a telegram to-day announcing my approaching marriage, and asking to be allowed to delay going to India till you reach Simla about the end of April. I feel very much ashamed of asking this, but I hope you and H.E. will pardon me; we could not well arrange matters earlier. The lady's name is Edith Hamilton, daughter of General Hamilton. We propose to be married about the 20th, travel out leisurely, spending perhaps a week in Italy and another in Egypt, and reach India towards the end of April.

She is staying here now with us, and has got over the first formidable introductions. It was not, however, so formidable as might be, as her family on both sides are Irish, and not far from our part of Ireland, and so we have numerous friends and distant connections in common. What she really fears is the Simla introductions!

. . . She complains rather that every one thinks it necessary to impress on her that she is such a fortunate person, and, of course, every letter of congratulation in which that idea is expressed I give her to read—but she bears it meekly, and accepts her fate as a 'fortunate person'![5]

On March 14, in the little country church of Leix, in Queen's County, George Pomeroy-Colley

[5] London, 1878, to Lady Lytton.

was married to Edith Althea Hamilton.[6] During all these weeks war appeared imminent, and Colley's post in the event of a campaign had been already determined.

Throughout the period of his leave of absence Colley received by every mail from India letters from the Viceroy, written in terms of close and intimate friendship and affection such as can but rarely exist between men whose relations in life are those of Governor-General and secretary. I will quote one or two extracts from these letters, giving something of that peculiar charm of expression and manner which made the writer so beloved by those who came in close contact with him. Another memorial of this friendship is found in the inscription written by Lord Lytton in a copy of his poems, 'Fables in Song,' which he had given Colley a few months earlier on his birthday.

Brave and wise friend! The day that gave you birth
Gave you a nobler birthday gift thereby
Than I can give you; since it gave the worth
All honour in you, and none more than I.
But take my birthday gift—these songs; and give
Song leave to link the future to the past,
Bidding our friendship thro' our lifetime live,
Bequeathed to each new birthday by the last.

LYTTON.

SIMLA: *November* 1, 1877.

Barrackpore: February 22, 1878.

DEAREST COLLEY,—I cannot sufficiently thank you for your exceedingly interesting and instructive letter of January 25. . . . As if this letter ever reaches you at all it will reach

[6] Her father, General Meade Hamilton, C.B., belonged to that branch of the Irish Hamiltons of whom James Hamilton, 1st Viscount Clandeboye, was the original representative. General Hamilton's wife was the daughter of Sir Erasmus Dixon Borrowes, of Gilltown, 9th Baronet.

you at Aden, on your way back to India, I may now tell you, without fear of my motive being misinterpreted, how terribly I have missed, and continue to miss you, my dear Colley. No one can replace to me in the slightest degree the strength I derive from your assistance, or the comfort of your friendly and helpful presence at my right hand. I have passed the last two months in a mental and moral condition of profound discouragement, and constant dread lest the warlike turn of affairs at home might drift you irrevocably away from me. But till now I have endeavoured to repress the confession of such feelings in my letters to you, lest you should attribute them to a selfish indifference to your professional interests, which, believe me, are quite as dear to me as my own.

I am full of curiosity about your visit to Knebworth. I fear the place will have looked greatly to its disadvantage in this season. It is so essentially a summer place; you should see it when the gardens, in full bloom, are like sheets of blazing colours—when the trees in the park are in leaf.

God bless you, dear friend. How glad I shall be when you return to your affectionate

LYTTON.

Calcutta: March 1, 1878.

I am rejoiced by the good news of your matrimonial engagement, the details of which have not yet reached us. I think it took everybody by surprise except myself, who had a lurking suspicion when you went home that something of this kind might 'come off' before you returned. I am thoroughly glad that you have come over to the matrimonial side of the social frontier, on which I have myself been so long established, for three reasons, two of which are purely selfish. First, because I hope that having now 'given hostages to fortune' your 'wandering and extravagant spirit' will be less adventurous, less locomotive, more disposed to fix its habitat for a while in India, where warm and grateful friends await your return, and less attracted by those distant trumpet calls which still threaten me every day with the irreparable loss of your assistance in my ever anxious task out here. Secondly, because I feel sure that *your* wife will

be a great resource to *my* wife; and last, though really not least, because whatever makes you happy makes me happy. The longer I live on into an age with which I find myself sadly out of harmony, an age whose tastes, hopes, and beliefs I do not share, and whose political proceedings fill me with disgust, the more my sources of personal happiness concentrate themselves in every form of happiness to my personal friends which does not involve the loss of their friendship or the interruption of my relations with them. . . .

I hope you will be able at least to return to India at the time indicated in your telegram. Afterwards, if there be a great European war, you know of course that you will always be free to 'go where glory waits you.' But if we *do* go to war with Russia, who can say whether there may not be an Indian campaign as important as the European one?[7]

Plevna had fallen in December. By the end of January 1878, Russia had taken Adrianople, Turkey was prostrate, and the Russo-Turkish war was practically at an end. It was at this time that anti-Russian excitement in London reached its height, but Lord Lytton did not miscalculate its strength when, writing to Colley after the news that a mob had broken Mr. Gladstone's windows, he said: 'I don't think the great heart of the English people is likely to do more than break windows just at present, and therefore I still hope to see you back amongst us ere long.'[8]

Then came armistice, treaty of San Stefano, Congress. 'In spite of all the warlike news,' wrote Lord Lytton to Colley, 'I still disbelieve in war on our part till after the Congress, if it comes off, and then God knows what may happen. The Congress is an egg which may be hatched into any number of cockatrices.' The Viceroy was right. The fighting

[7] From Lord Lytton. [8] Barrackpore, February 10, 1878.

hour had passed. Turkey was for the moment crushed; a result had been reached of greater future consequence than could easily be estimated at the moment. When Server Pacha declared at the peace negotiations that in future Turkey would be the ally of Russia, he opened a new phase of the Eastern question. On the very day that Lord Lytton was expressing his opinion to Colley that the great heart of the English people would not rise above the level of window-breaking, the Turkish envoy was practically saying to the Russian peace negotiators: 'Better the Russian enemy than the English friend.' The convention of Cyprus and the occupation of Egypt soon gave point in Turkish eyes to Server Pacha's prophecy.

Colley started for India full of the political issues then uppermost in men's minds at home. At Rome, on the outward journey, he takes a final look at the shifting field of diplomatic struggle:

Sir A. Paget gave me Lord Salisbury's circular despatch to read. It certainly is a clear and admirably written State paper, but seems to me to fail, as all our policy has failed, in not indicating a shadow of a definite view or line of action on our part. Personally I am an utter disbeliever in the possibility of propping up the Turk. I believe the attempt to do so can only lead to a series of failures and apparent humiliations on our part; but whether our idea is to attempt this, or to create a strong Bulgaria under European instead of Russian tutelage, or to take up Greece, or to secure certain 'material guarantees' for ourselves, and let Russia and Austria settle matters afterwards as they like, I cannot gather. I am glad to see the Greeks being apparently taken up, because that, at least, is a definite and intelligible policy, and one in which the Government could count on general sympathy from both sides at home. One is equally curious as to what our military policy is to be.

Whether we go to war or not, we shall have acquired some very useful experiences in our preparations, and especially in calling out the reserves; and I do hope that measure will be carried through at any rate.[9]

Diplomacy had now a busily pretentious time of it, and though opportunity for fighting was unlikely to recur, it was under considerable preparation for war that the Congress of Berlin opened. India was to have her share in the show of military activity. When Colley reached Bombay at the end of April 1878, the order to send Indian troops to Malta had just been received, ships were being hastily engaged, the war excitement was again to all appearance running high. 'It is useless speculating on anything,' Colley wrote, 'with this uncertainty of war still hanging over. I am beginning to believe the strain will go on for ever.' The move of the Indian troops into the basin of the Mediterranean was an intimation to Russia that strife between her and England meant war with English Mohammedanism in Asia too. The hint was readily taken. It was Eastertide when the news came that Indian troops were to be moved to Malta, and now, in July 1878, about two months following their departure from Bombay, all India rang with the tidings that a Russian mission had entered Kabul.

Yet perhaps few moments during the past two years of political anxiety had held less real danger of hostility between England and Russia than the time of the Berlin Congress. A secret agreement already existed between Russia and England, before the Congress met, defining exactly the chief points in dispute.

[9] Rome, April 6, 1878, to Sir Garnet Wolseley.

To Indian officials, from the Viceroy downwards, the next few months were full indeed of business and anxiety, and among the rest Colley, of course, was working at full pressure. His letters are numerous; he is busy on all sides at once. It is not only in the composition of long and comprehensive papers, such as that upon 'Russian Action in Afghanistan,' or his 'Note on the Kabul Mission, and our Future Policy in Central Asia'—documents covering many closely printed pages—that he is engaged; a whole host of public telegrams and official, semi-official, and private letters are also his work. Among his papers are many interesting letters from persons representing various shades of Indian opinion—from Sir Alfred Lyall (then Foreign Secretary in India), whose wide and sympathetic knowledge of Asiatic thought and life made so valuable any expression of opinion; from Colonel Roberts, whose natural talent for war Colley was quick to recognise; and from the Deputy Commissioner at Peshawur, Major Cavagnari, already mentioned in these pages, and now, during the last year of his life, destined to be always in prominent action.

It is impossible to even summarise the rapid interchange of ideas between the man at the look-out on the frontier and the private secretary at Simla. Colley and Cavagnari seem to have held many opinions in common, especially with regard to the security of our Indian Empire. One who knew them both at this time has noticed in this correspondence 'the interaction of Cavagnari's frontier experience and practical conversance with the border races, and of George Colley's more varied life and keen sense of administrative exigencies and restrictions. The

patriotism, too, which in him had all the force of a religion, is expressed in these letters with less than his usual reserve.'[1]

From the first rumour of a Russian envoy coming to Kabul, Colley recognised the gravity of the news and its bearing upon the whole Central Asian question:

It will be a bad day for the Amir when a Russian officer openly enters Kabul. Russia at present cannot give him any real assistance, while it will place him hopelessly in the wrong as regards us.

The home telegram of yesterday regarding the discussions in the German Parliament is to me most interesting. What with Russia exhausted and threatened with internal struggles, Austria timid, France determinedly quiescent, and Germany suddenly convulsed by dread of socialism, it really seems as if England were going to take her (to my mind) proper place as the most powerful, the richest, safest, and most united nation—notwithstanding Parliamentary claptrap—and that Beaconsfield will quietly supplant Bismarck as the arbiter of Europe What a wonderful position he will close his career with, if he carries this conference successfully to an issue![2]

After news of the doings at the Berlin Congress, the acquisition of Cyprus, and the quasi-protectorate of Asia Minor, he writes again:

The cession to Russia of Batum, for which I think she would have fought, and our occupation of Cyprus have, I think, settled the Eastern question for the present. . . . Crete has long been a hobby with many people, as covering the Suez Canal better than any other station can do; but it is open to the serious objection that it contains a particularly troublesome, discontented population, with strong Greek instincts. In Crete we should immediately have had to face

[1] Biographical Notes, E. P. C.
[2] June 10, 1878, to Major Cavagnari.

a strong agitation for annexation to Greece; and if we resisted this, as we should have been bound to do, we might have found ourselves in the same unsatisfactory position as the Turks, continually putting down insurrections and hanging our own subjects. Moreover, it commands no part of the coasts of the Mediterranean, though it is a good naval station. Cyprus, on the other hand, though a little off the direct line, possesses many advantages—a quiet peaceable population with no strong national proclivities, being made up almost equally of Christians and Mahomedans, and having generally, like Malta, been an appanage of some distant Christian country, at one time owned by Venice, at another by the Knights of Malta; while its position, without so directly covering Suez, much more directly protects the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

. . . But, after all, the Afghan question is the really interesting one for us out here.

. . . It seems to me very desirable that we should try and have some policy of our own, shadowed out at least, against the event of a disruption of Afghanistan, whether by the Amir's death, or by internal revolution, or external invasion. I don't see at present that we have ever considered seriously what we should do if we heard to-morrow that the Amir was dead, and Yakub, Abdulla Jan, and Abdul Rahman all contesting the vacant throne. I don't suppose one can lay down a definite policy beforehand. But I think we should collect and put together all possible information.[3]

Another of these letters to Cavagnari comments on the diplomatic arrangements just then telegraphed from Europe:

The most important point of all in the new treaty seems to me to be the substitution of an individual guarantee for European guarantees. As I understand it, Austria, which was the country most directly interested in the European provinces of Turkey, personally guarantees those provinces; and England, whose interests lie entirely in the Asiatic

[3] July 8, 1878, to Major Cavagnari.

provinces, guarantees those. Any further advance of Russia must be a direct slap in the face to one of these two countries, and there is a vast difference between ignoring Europe generally and slapping a particular country. Lord Lytton had a good story recently about poor Lord Leitrim, who, shortly before his murder, talking with a countryman about some cases of landlord shooting, asked, 'Why don't the rascals shoot me?' 'Ah! thin, yer honner,' said the man, 'it's just this—what's everybody's business is nobody's business!' and I think this applies peculiarly to a European guarantee.[4]

The report of the presence at Kabul of a mission headed by Russian officers of rank was confirmed early in August. Although the mission was the openly avowed reply of the Russian Government to the move of Indian troops into the Mediterranean, it was nevertheless a breach of the existing arrangement which precluded Russian interference in Afghanistan, and it was therefore deemed imperative to despatch a counter embassy from India after notice had been given to the Amir. That mission, perhaps the most important ever sent from India, had as its chief one of the most distinguished officers of his time. Thirty-eight years earlier, Sir Neville Chamberlain had marched from Kandahar to Kabul in the army of General Nott; he had served under Napier in Sindh, had fought at the Sutlej and in the Mutiny, and was, at the moment of which we write, Commander-in-Chief in Madras. In the memoirs of the great Napier his name can still be read, marked early for fame as one of the finest swordsmen and most brilliant soldiers of that now distant day.

[4] July 19, 1878.

Cavagnari, Bellew, St. John, all well-known frontier names, were attached to the mission, and two Indian nobles—one of the old order, Pertab Singh, a Rajpoot prince of a thousand years of pedigree, the other a Mahomedan of less ancient blood. Two hundred of the Guides formed the escort. The Amir's Warden of the Pass, Faiz Mahomed Khan, acting in the name of the Amir, refused the passage through the Khyber. Cavagnari withdrew to Jamrud, and the next day Sir Neville Chamberlain dissolved the mission. The turning back of the embassy was regarded by the Home and Indian Governments as an open affront, rendering war practically inevitable. Indeed, for some months the course of events had been trending in that direction. As early as August 5, Colley had written: 'The Russians have sent a mission to Kabul headed by General Abramoff,[5] the Governor of Samarkand, and the Amir has received them with honour. This seems to me a fatal mistake, both on the part of Russia and of the Amir.' Two days before the turning back of the English embassy from the Khyber he said: 'When I first heard of the reception of a Russian mission at Kabul, my exclamation was, "The Lord hath delivered him into our hands," and every day has confirmed me in this impression.'

But hostilities were not to begin just yet. Many things had to be thought of before the campaign could be undertaken. Three columns of invasion were to be prepared; enormous transport trains organised; supplies collected from all parts. 'The last Afghan war began,' writes Colley, 'by the Com-

[5] It turned out afterwards that General Stolietoff, not Abramoff, was the Russian envoy—a soldier of marked individuality and distinguished bravery.

mander-in-Chief resigning, because he considered the Government did not sufficiently comply with his demands, and afterwards nearly came to disaster because the forces sent were much larger than the country could feed. I hope we are not going to repeat the same programme.'[6]

We take from the mass of papers dealing with this time of preparation for the advance into Afghanistan one letter written by Colley to Sir Garnet Wolseley in November 1878, which summarises the military and political objects of the moment:

I am indeed sorry, both for your sake and ours, that you should be at Cyprus at a time when we have such interesting work in India; and it does seem a cruel bit of bad luck that you should have gone there instead of taking the Bombay command, which latter would probably have resulted in your commanding the southern line of advance into Afghanistan. Had you been at Bombay I am very certain that the Viceroy would have insisted on your appointment. . . .

Our great anxiety all through has been to avoid if possible a military occupation of Afghanistan, a measure from which it would be very difficult to withdraw, and which would land us in heavy political and financial embarrassments. It was stated some time ago that had we not been driven out of Kabul in 1841 we should in any case have had to evacuate it very shortly, or India would have been bankrupt. This may be an exaggeration, but considering the financial difficulties India is already suffering from, owing to the fall in the value of silver, the recent famines, and other causes, I seriously believe that the cost of an armed occupation of Afghanistan is more than we could bear. Our aim, therefore, was in the first place to try and come to an amicable arrangement with the Amir; failing this, to bring such military pressure to bear as would either bring him to his senses, or upset him and cause him to be replaced by a ruler more friendly to

[6] October 28, 1878, to Colonel Villiers.

ourselves, without at the same time involving us in any grave responsibility. . . .

Our original operations were therefore designed to apply the greatest amount of pressure with the least risk of responsibility regarding permanent occupation of country, or of involving ourselves in a national war with the people; and we have every reason to believe that we can advance both up the Kuram Valley and to Kandahar with the good will of the inhabitants, and with no opposition except such as we shall meet from the Amir's regular army. . . .

We have secured the co-operation of the great bulk of the Khyber and Mohmund tribes, and it will be an easy task to expel the Amir's garrisons, and then in concert with the Khyber tribes keep the pass open. For this purpose we propose to advance as far as Dakha, but not beyond. We cannot in any case reach Kabul this winter, nor do we wish to, for our earnest desire is to avoid an occupation of Kabul. We could go to Jellalabad and winter there, but to do so would entail feeding a large force, in a barren country, at some distance from its base, during the winter months. It would put us to very heavy expense, might involve us in inconvenient friction with the surrounding Afghan tribes, and would in no way really improve our position; and this idea has accordingly been abandoned. Our winter operations, therefore, are limited to the occupation of the Khyber and Dakha on that line; the expulsion of the Amir's troops from the Kuram and the occupation of that valley by Roberts's force; and an advance as far as Kandahar. During the winter we shall lay in large supplies at Quetta and Kandahar, in the upper Kuram Valley, and at Peshawur; and if operations have to be continued in the spring we shall be able to push forward rapidly from all points. It is very difficult to judge as yet what will happen next spring—whether the Amir will be dethroned by his own people before that time, as many hope; whether he will still hold on at Kabul while Kandahar and Western Afghanistan pass under our protection; or whether we shall be in for a great war with Russia.

Meantime an ultimatum was sent to Sher Ali, and,

by the direction of the Home Government, he was informed that, unless a satisfactory reply was received by November 20, he would be treated as a declared enemy. No reply having been received by November 20, orders for the advance were issued that night, and on November 21 the Khyber, the Kuram, and the Quetta columns crossed the frontier at their several points. Except at the fort of Ali Musjid, which was quickly captured, the Khyber column met with no opposition, and a few weeks later Jellalabad was entered without resistance.

Advancing up the Kuram Valley, the column under General Roberts reached the foot of the Peiwar Kotal on the evening of December 1. Next day the Afghan position was carried after arduous operations extending over eight hours. All the enemy's artillery and stores fell into our hands. This victory was decisive so far as the fortunes of Sher Ali were concerned. Four days later General Roberts telegraphed to the Viceroy that the Amir had fled from Kabul towards the Oxus.

The column under General Donald Stewart operating against Kandahar had met with no opposition and entered that city early in January 1879.

CHAPTER XII

INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Treaty of Gandamak—Inspecting the passes—With Sir Garnet Wolseley in Zululand—Cetewayo—Transvaal affairs—Recalled to India.

Sher Ali died in February at Mazar Sherif, one march from the Oxus River. For more than a month preceding that date various rumours of his death had prevailed. Before his departure he had nominated his son Yakub Khan to the succession, and left him in authority at Kabul. But rival claimants were appearing in different places, and disturbance was spreading throughout the country. Holding the three great passes leading from India to Afghanistan, we were in a position to rest upon our successes and treat—but with whom, that was the difficulty. Ultimately negotiations were opened with Yakub Khan, and conducted by Cavagnari with dexterous diplomacy and untiring energy. In order to hasten the progress of these overtures for peace proposals, preparations were made to push forward, from Jellalabad to the Kuram Valley, two columns threatening Kabul. But after some correspondence Yakub, on April 17, proposed to visit in person the representative of the British Government.

Our camp now stood near Gandamak, on the road between the Khyber Pass and Kabul. Here, on May 8, Yakub, with his retinue of notables and

about 400 followers and escort, was greeted with a royal salute and received in great state by Cavagnari on behalf of the British Government as the recognised Amir of Kabul. 'It must have been a gratifying moment to you,' wrote Colley to Cavagnari, 'when you received Yakub on his arrival in the camp. I can imagine nothing that will help the Government more in its present difficulties.' The news was in fact especially welcome at home, arriving, as it chanced, amid preparations to avenge the disaster of Isandula, which had marked the opening of the Zulu War.

Yakub, while objecting to proposals for cession of territory, was willing to accept conditions as to European agents and foreign relations, subject to the stipulation that the European officers should reside only in Kabul, and should abstain from interfering in the affairs of Afghanistan. After some negotiation the Treaty of Gandamak was signed on May 26. This document gave us control of the Amir's foreign relations; the residence at Kabul of a British representative, and the right to send British agents on occasion to the Afghan frontiers; the control of the Khyber and Michni passes, and the assignment of the Kuram, Pishin, and Sibi valleys.

The article stipulating for the control of the northern passes was so framed as to secure us the command of the three great roads leading out of India into Afghanistan. But as the adjacent territories were to be treated as assigned districts there was no cession of the territory, which was only placed by the treaty under British protectorate.

At the foot of the document Cavagnari wrote his name, little imagining that it was his own death-

warrant he was signing. 'It will be beneficial to our future dealings with Yakub Khan,' he had written a few days earlier, 'to let him thoroughly recognise his present weakness, so that hereafter he may not be able to talk so much about his "God-granted kingdom," without realising that "man" has had something to do with his position as Amir, and that this man is the British Government.'

The news of the Treaty of Gandamak was received with immense enthusiasm.

Colley's views on the military principles which should determine our frontier line are still of interest. The following extract from a letter written shortly before peace was concluded expresses them:

> The great point under discussion now is, what territory we should permanently hold. Probably you will have read Hamley's lecture and the many other opinions that have been expressed by writers at home. There is a large party, among whom I see is now included Lord Napier of Magdala, who strongly advocate the retention of Kandahar; but I am dead against this. My theory is that in a country like this, where our action must necessarily always be offensive not defensive, when we do fight we should always have difficulties behind us and open ground in front. I have a strong objection to being in the position of a dog who is at the end of his chain, and consequently can be chaffed by small boys without possibility of retaliation. I like to have the full length of a good long chain to charge if necessary. For this reason, the principle which I have persistently advocated throughout is that we should just hold the passes and no more, giving ourselves the greatest possible extent of easy country in our front. If we occupy Kandahar we must necessarily protect the district of which it is the capital also; otherwise we shall be starved out of it. To do this we must push as far as Ghirishk on the one hand, and Khelat-i-Ghilzai on the other, and take up a new line of frontier posi-

tions nearly 200 miles in extent and mostly abutting on a very difficult country. We should then find ourselves with precisely the same class of frontier that we are now anxious to abolish—namely, one in which our posts would be at the foot of wild mountains, subject to constant insult, without much power of punishment; and we should probably involve ourselves with some of the most powerful and warlike of the Afghan tribes, with whom so far we have been able to keep on very good terms. On the other hand, if we confine our occupation to Pishin and the Kojak Pass, we have an excellent natural boundary in a broad tract of desert land which extends from the Amram Mountains to near Kandahar. It would be extremely difficult to plunder or harry us there, for our cavalry from an advanced post at Chaman could ride sixty miles in almost any direction in pursuit, and we have Kandahar at our feet, absolutely at our mercy, as a pledge for the good behaviour of Southern Afghanistan.

About the Kuram there is little difference of opinion. Everybody admits the value of this road and the suitability of the Peiwar for a military cantonment. There is wood, water, an excellent plateau, and the climate not very different from that of England, never very hot and covered with snow for a month or two in the year. Here British troops would thrive, just as much as they now deteriorate at Peshawur and our present pestilential frontier station.

The Khyber line, however, offers exactly the same points of dispute as Kandahar does. Hamley and a very small following propose to abandon it altogether, and remain in a defensive position at the eastern extremity. This, however, shows utter ignorance of the character of the hill tribes, and the way in which they are controlled, for so long as we do this we can gain no influence whatever over the tribes in the pass, and if ever an adversary came against us by this road our position opposite the mouth would soon be untenable, the country all round being harried by the mountaineers. The only way of getting control over these tribes is to occupy the two debouches of their country and so command their trade; for they cannot live entirely in their hills, which do not produce all the necessaries of life, and the way to keep

them in order is simply to blockade them and cut them off from salt and other things which they have to purchase in the plains, until they behave well again. . . .

The discussion *here* is whether we should hold Jellalabad or even go on to Gandamak. I have not yet visited the ground personally, though I hope to do so in a few days, but from all I can learn I am most distinctly in favour of falling back from Jellalabad and occupying Lundi Kotal, which is a small plateau about ten miles from the western end of the pass, and would practically give the command of that debouch, as from this point the pass falls and widens until it opens into a great plain which leads with little interruption to Gandamak. This point, being only thirty miles from Peshawur, would add little to our communications, but it would give us effective control of the pass, and at the same time a fairly rich province, a considerable town, and a sweep of about seventy miles of open country in our immediate front.

The home Intelligence Department are more ambitious than we are out here, and wish us to occupy Kushi also. Theoretically speaking, this undoubtedly would complete the system of holding the western debouches of the passes, but from all that I can learn we practically command the Shutargardan without going so far, and to occupy Kushi would practically be to occupy Kabul itself. It would entail almost as heavy responsibility upon us, for it is only forty miles distant from that capital, while it would be separated by 150 miles of country, some of it extremely difficult, from our present border; and we should have to keep a proportionately large force at Kushi itself, entailing a considerable struggle in the maintenance of communications.[1]

Notwithstanding certain acknowledged advantages belonging to the Kuram Valley, a question had arisen as to the retention by us of the Khyber instead. Cavagnari was in favour of our keeping possession of the Khyber Valley as far as Ganda-

[1] April 5, 1879, to Colonel Macgregor.

mak, and giving up the Kuram to Yakub Khan. Towards the end of April Colley had been sent to inspect both routes and report on their respective merits. The Viceroy was then at Lahore, a convenient situation for conference with the Punjab Government and army headquarters. Starting thence and riding rapidly through the Khyber, Colley reached Gandamak in three days from Peshawur, had interviews with Cavagnari, Sir Samuel Browne, and others, and started back the same day for Peshawur. Thence he turned for the Kuram Valley, and, riding hard, reached Ali Khel and the Shutargardan Pass again in three days—an expedition which he thus describes to his sister:

I started from Peshawur with a very light kit indeed—only a pair of wallets and a few things wrapped up in a waterproof which my orderly carried on his saddle. . . .

At Jamrud I was given a small escort, as there were rumours of some men of the Zakha Khel tribe being about and up to mischief. . . .

I reached Ali Musjid about ten, having had a good look on my way at the position from which the artillery first opened fire on the fort, and from which Sir Sam. Browne directed the attack. I afterwards walked over the whole extent of the position held by the Afghans. . . .

At Barrikhal, as I entered the gate, an English sergeant said to me: 'It is well you are here in time, sir; a few minutes more, and it might have gone hard with you.' He pointed to something on the hill, and said that the tribes were coming down in large numbers to attack the post. There was a great deal of mirage at the time on the stony waste, and it was very difficult to make out objects at a distance. There certainly were a number of objects moving about, whether sheep or camels or men it was almost impossible to judge, though I declared very positively for either sheep or camels. I believe the commanding officer

still imagines they were men, but I am perfectly certain that they were sheep, for I afterwards saw a flock of sheep not very far from the post, and when I got some distance away from them they became elongated by the mirage and presented exactly the same appearance.[2]

On the return journey down the valley, he visited the ford where the 10th Hussars had been swept away.

It was not easy to make out much from the ford itself as to the cause of the accident, but I met at dinner in the evening Captain Spottiswoode of the regiment, who had actually led the squadron across the ford, and was one of those swept down but saved. Even his account, however, failed to make it clear to me how so large a number could almost simultaneously be swept off and drowned. He said that the tail of the squadron in front of them had partly got off the track, and that some mules that were following were swept away altogether, and he, not noticing that they were off their legs, followed them into deep water, when he suddenly found that his horse was being carried down, but being a powerful spirited English horse he was able to turn it up the river, and make it swim against the stream. As he did so, he found the men, who had rather crowded on him, all being swept down past him into the rapids.[3]

The same letter contains an account of his ride to the summit of the Shutargardan Pass in company with General Roberts, and gives a picture of life and scenery in those Afghan-Alpine regions. He rode through the Kohat Pass to Thul:

Next morning I started for Kuram, riding up the new road which Roberts has made through the valley—an excellent road in most places. . . .

Roberts's camp was full of old friends, and I had a very pleasant time there, as you may suppose; but I had no time

[2] Simla, May 7, 1879. [3] May 7, 1879, to his sister.

to lose, and the next morning before daylight I started for a long ride up to the front, to see what was being done towards the Shutargardan. From Hubid Killa, the old Afghan cantonment, we rode to the top of the Peiwar, and on the road passed one of the most interesting sights I have ever seen—a large nomad tribe of Ghilzais on the move. It brought to my mind, more vividly than anything else could have done, what might have been the appearance of the children of Israel on their march. I think we passed quite six miles of sheep, goats, camels, cattle, mules, and people. The men were distributed at intervals along the line as escort with their arms. The women were some walking, some on camels. The camels carried the tents, made of that peculiar camel-hair cloth, and great bags, often of very rich barbaric colour, and on the top of the camels were strapped hundreds of children and kids promiscuously, rivalling one another in their cries.

These people were both surprised and grateful for the treatment they received in our country. At first they thought they would not be allowed to pass through our posts, and intended regaining their summer headquarters by some very difficult and circuitous mountain paths. General Roberts, however, had notice sent to them all that they might pass through our lines and would be left unmolested, and as we rode by, many of them came up to thank him for the good treatment they had received. They also were much pleased with the new roads, over which they declared 'even their lame sheep could walk.' Since then he has received several letters from the chiefs of these tribes, expressing their gratitude for our treatment of them, and saying that so long as they were within our posts they lost nothing, but as soon as they got among their own people they were heavily plundered.

Roberts was very anxious that I should see the entrance of the great Hazardarkt defile, the worst part of the Shutargardan Pass. We got fresh horses, and started up the bed of the river. The road is still all loose shingle, and crosses the mountain stream about twenty times in its course. Finding time was short, Roberts led up at a hand

gallop. I think we must have looked the wildest party conceivable as we tore up this road, scattering the stones in every direction. To add to our haste, a heavy hail storm and then a thunder storm, with rain, hail, and sleet combined, broke on us, and as the mountain torrent soon began to rise, we had to run a race with it, or it would have been impassable.

However, we managed to reach the point at which the defile begins, and rode a little distance up it to the west point, from which we could judge very well of the general character of the road. This road is being made under curious conditions. The hill tribes reserve to themselves full right to fight us or not as they may feel inclined, but they have no objection to taking our money for making the road and have contracted to do so. The story goes that for every mile of road they make they throw up a certain number of breastworks from which they will be able to shoot down on whoever may attempt to use the road. However, it is a great advantage getting the road made by native labour, without any protection or any supervision beyond that of an officer now and then riding up with a small escort.

From this we galloped back to Ali Khel even more wildly than we went up, perfectly benumbed with the hail and sleet.[4]

Next day a visit was made to the scene of the fight on the Peiwar of the previous December:

We followed the exact route taken by the turning column, which started at 9 o'clock at night, and marched for six hours up the stony bed of a dry torrent; then turned up the steep, almost precipitous spur on which the Afghans had built their barricades, and followed step by step the movements of the column. I dare say you have heard how, as they were advancing up the ravine, and just as they approached the barricade, two shots were fired in the middle of the column. You may imagine it was an anxious moment

[4] May 7, 1879, to his sister.

for General Roberts. He had observed that the 29th Native Regiment (which consisted mostly of Afridis and Pathans), and which originally was to have led the attack, straggled and delayed very much. He had just halted the regiment and was talking to the colonel when he heard the two shots. Almost everything, of course, depended on a surprise. Then a native officer whispered to the colonel, 'Treachery.' There was not much time, however, to think, so he (Roberts) immediately ordered up the next regiment, which happened to be the Gurkhas, an admirable fighting corps; put two companies of the 72nd in support of the Gurkhas, and in advance of the 29th, and two more companies behind, so as practically to enclose them, and then pushed on as rapidly as he could.

Fortunately, everybody in the enemy's position seems to have been asleep, for the shots were unnoticed, and they got to within 100 yards of the first barricade before they were discovered. Then a sentry, standing behind a big tree which still remains there, fired off his gun into the advanced party and gave the alarm. The little Gurkhas, however, rushed the place almost before another shot could be fired. The Afridis then retreated to another barricade about 300 yards further up the hill, closely followed by the Gurkhas and 72nd. Here there was a sharper fight, the Gurkhas losing several men but ultimately carrying the position at the point of the bayonet and killing most of the defenders.[5]

The last scene on this ridge is thus described:

Roberts halted for a time on a little plateau which opened out near the point, and then, wishing to give the 29th another chance, led the attack again with them. This seems to me to have been rather a mistake on his part, due probably to his own plucky and over-chivalrous disposition. He led the attack in person, and the 29th followed him well enough so long as there was no serious opposition, but as soon as the Afridis showed again in force they fell back. He immediately sent his staff-officers and others about him

[5] May 7, 1879, to his sister.

to bring up reinforcements, and for some time was actually the only European officer in front, getting together little groups of men, and trying to show fight with them until the others came up.

You may imagine how interesting it was, going over the ground and discussing every point—what he did do, what his objects were, what he might have done—with Roberts in person.[6]

Colley rejoined the Viceroy at Simla, about the 1st of May. The letter describing his ride through the passes had been written chiefly for his father's benefit, but this last message from the son he was so proud of never reached the old man's ears. 'One day,' writes Lady Colley, 'we had been dining at Government House. It had been an especially pleasant evening. Affairs were well on the road to peace. Coming home to our own bungalow we were in great spirits. There was a delightful sense that the strain of the last twelve months was over. Presently he turned to the usual pile of telegrams upon his table. Amongst them was the announcement of his father's death.'[6]

The Viceroy at Government House seems to have heard some rumour of his friend's bereavement, and, late though it was, he would not wait to give his sympathy till the morning's work should bring them together. He wrote at once:

DEAR FRIEND,—I learn to-night that you have received sad news from England.

I ask not what it is, for how few of the troubles that touch our affections can ever be explained even to those who are nearest to our inner life!

But with your place in my heart widened and deepened by the knowledge that there is trouble in yours, I cannot let

[6] Biographical Notes.

the day close without assuring you of my tenderest and most loving sympathy now and always, dear Colley.

Take this line as a silent pressure of the hand of one to whom nothing that affects your life, for joy or sorrow, can ever now be indifferent, and believe me

Your affectionate
LYTTON.

On May 22, a letter congratulating Cavagnari on his conduct of the negotiations has this concluding paragraph:

I am sure you will be sorry to learn that a telegram a few days ago brought me the news of the unexpected death of my father. Though over eighty he was as keen and his intellect as clear as with most men of fifty, and I know no mind to which I would so gladly refer any difficult political or other practical questions. When I saw him last in England, he was so well that I had every reason to expect that I should see him again on my return; and though I have now made a home of my own, I still feel very keenly the loss of the home to which during many years of a tolerably rough and very wandering life I had always returned.

He took the keenest interest in you and your doings, and I know no one to whom the news of the successful termination of the negotiations brought about by you would have given more real pleasure.

The telegram announcing the signature of the Treaty of Gandamak reached Colley on May 26. Closing the campaign of 1878 and his work in relation to it, it set him free to act upon another telegram which was put into his hands only twenty minutes later—a request from Sir Garnet Wolseley, then about to proceed to Natal, that Colley would join him there at once as chief of the staff. 'Accept gratefully,' he replied; 'leave here in three days.' On the same day,

May 27, the Viceroy despatched the following message to the Secretary of State for India:

My private secretary, Colonel Colley, has accepted appointment as chief of Sir Garnet Wolseley's staff, and will leave for Natal immediately. For successful conduct of Kabul War, and satisfactory conclusion of peace, I am more indebted to his assistance than even to that of Cavagnari or any one else, and his name would have been first on my list of recommendations for K.C.S.I. in War Gazette.' I earnestly solicit this reward of his important services in India as a personal favour to myself, and shall be most grateful if you will authorise me to assure him before he leaves me that it will be granted. He already has C.B. and C.M.G. I telegraph this without his knowledge.

A few days later Colley started for South Africa. Congratulations and farewell good wishes flowed in upon him from many directions. The rapid transfer from one scene of trouble to another of a man whose name was already identified with so much that had been successful impressed the public mind. The value of the services which the Viceroy had so generously acknowledged was widely recognised. The idea of Fortune—that most potent factor in success—had also begun to attach itself to Colley's name and personality. Men spoke of how the scene had changed in Ashanti when he took in hand the broken and disorganised business of the transport and supply. And now this sudden call to a distant portion of the Empire in which the fortune of war had so far been unfavourable, seemed to emphasise the fact that among the military servants of the Crown few abler brains or steadier hands for dangerous work could be found. But that which is even of more importance to a man's career than outside opinion—namely, some

inward sense of his own fortune—had now come to Colley. In a pencilled note which he wrote his wife the day following his departure from Simla, while the train was carrying him towards Kurachi, he says, referring to the heat, then at its worst in the plains: 'With that extraordinary run of luck which seems to accompany me in everything—from getting my little wife downwards—*and at times almost frightens me*, we ran into a heavy fall of rain at Amritsur which has accompanied us so far and made everything cool and delightful.'

The allusion which I have marked by italics comes only in parenthesis to a trifling matter, but it shows the drift of thought in a mind that was always thinking.

Up in the Afghan Hills Cavagnari telegraphed from camp Safed Sang: 'Hearty congratulations on your appointment. May your new work be as successful as your former service at the Cape was.' He too with the laurels thick upon him, yet with doubt as to it all peeping out through the leaves. For he writes two days after the treaty had been signed:

> I am very sorry (selfishly speaking) that you are going away, though of course I am glad you have got such a good appointment and have the chance of earning fresh laurels, a chance you are sure to make the best use of. Sometimes I feel rather low about Yakub Khan, and doubt whether he will turn out well, but generally my sanguine feelings get uppermost.[7]

On June 5, Colley sailed from Kurachi for Aden, Zanzibar, and Natal, a long monotonous voyage in the teeth of the monsoon, and against the strong current which runs from Mozambique along the

[7] May 28, 1879.

eastern coast of Africa. While the voyage was still in progress, Lord Lytton writes to tell him how much he is missed in India:

I begin a letter to you under a sad sense of discouragement, caused by the knowledge of the length of time which must elapse before it reaches you, and the uncertainty as to where, when, and how it may find you. For much of what occupies my thoughts, as I write, no room will be left in yours by the important and anxious work now claiming your attention, and all the news I can send you about public affairs, or official matters in India, will be stale news before it reaches you. Nor can I hope for many a long month to receive from you that apt and ready response never before withheld to the thousand questions I daily wish to ask you —with what is now a daily sigh. However, *Patientia est portus miserorum.* So now to my chronicle. Your poor little wife looks so sad and forlorn, with her wistful eyes and eager face, that my heart aches to the core when I see her. Never since the days of the Odyssey was absent hero more missed and mourned and longed for by his faithful spouse and forsaken friends.

Cavagnari is now at Simla. All I have yet heard from him about Yakub, &c., is quite satisfactory.[8]

At Zanzibar the news of the fresh tragedy in Zululand, the death of the Prince Imperial, reached him. He was deeply affected by it. 'To me,' he writes, 'it seems the most painful and unfortunate thing that has happened for England for many years past. At Isandula at least our men died like Englishmen; but here!'[9] Four days later, writing from Mozambique, his mind is still running on this catastrophe:

I cannot get that poor Prince's death out of my head; it seems a sort of national disgrace that we can never throw

[8] June 22, 1879 [9] June 28, 1879, to his wife.

off. I had rather we had lost another fight like Isandula, for that at least can always be wiped out, and is not disgraceful.[1]

A later letter describes the first reception of the news:

I am afraid the more one hears of the circumstances of the Prince Imperial's death, the more sad and discreditable to our name it appears.

I had a graphic account of the meeting between an officer who was with him and Buller, from a man who was present. Evelyn Wood ('Sir Evelyn' he is now, I see, and right well he has earned it) and Buller were riding ahead of their column as usual to look out for good camping ground, when suddenly they saw an officer riding furiously towards them —so furiously that Buller observed, 'Why, the man rides as if he thought the Kaffirs were after him.' As he came nearer he gesticulated wildly and beckoned to them to go back, but they rode on till they met him. 'What the devil is the matter with you?' said Buller. 'The Prince, the Prince Imperial is killed,' was all the man could gasp out, breathless and wild. 'Where?—where is his body?' asked Buller sharply. The man could only gasp and point to a hill about three miles off, from which they could now see some twenty Kaffirs going away in the opposite direction with three led horses. 'Where are your men, sir? How many did you lose?' said Buller sharply and sternly, now thoroughly roused. 'They are behind me—I don't know,' stammered the unfortunate man. 'By God, sir,' said Buller, turning on him savagely, 'you deserve to be shot, and I hope will be—I could shoot you myself,' and turned his back on him.

Had it been either Wood or Buller, they would have turned had there been a thousand Kaffirs, and probably would have brought him away; but this wretched officer seems to have raced with his men who should get away first, and was actually leading his men in their flight, and still

[1] July 2, 1879, to his wife.

galloping wildly though three miles away from the scene of action.[2]

On July 7 they are at Delagoa Bay. 'Once more on old familiar ground,' he wrote. It is South Africa again—that land to him so full of memories—the nursery ground of his ambitions, the scene of his early labours, the country of his first hopes. He writes to his wife:

At sea. 9 P.M. A wild wet stormy night, the wind howling as I have seldom heard it howl, the sky black as ink, the sea white and gleaming with foam and phosphorescence. The sea is unnaturally calm, as if surprised and overmastered by the fury of the wind; and the ship, almost as steady as if in harbour, only gives a little uneasy shiver every now and then, as if it thought there was something uncanny in the extraordinary absence of waves. I have been walking the deck as long as it was possible to do so for wind and rain, and am now driven for shelter to the unpleasant atmosphere of the saloon.

Do you know what I often think of, dear, as I walk up and down at night? . . . I cannot help feeling that a long course of dry hard practical work and thought has prevented my responding to the more intellectual, inquiring, and imaginative part of your mind as fully as I should have done had we been married some years ago when we were at Aldershot together. And I wonder whether the change is permanent or temporary only. . . . It seems to me that part of it is permanent and the necessary consequence of increased years and experience—of the partial satisfying of that curiosity which Froude considered was the great stimulus of thought and spring of pleasure in early manhood, getting to know how much is known by man and where the limit is reached. But I do think and hope that much of it is temporary only, for I find myself now (when not too much put out by the perpetual pitching!) thinking and speculating almost as I used to in old days—and all my thoughts at once stirred by

[2] Port Durnford, July 21, 1879, to his wife.

any book or anything at all out of the common. However, my thoughts soon come back to the one subject—what you are doing and how you are.

It would seem as though the leisure of the voyage, and the first sight after eventful years of South African mountains, had released his mind from the dry reality of affairs and stirred his imagination to the weirdness of the welcome given by the winds and waves upon his return to the scenes of early soldier life. Next day he landed at Durban, and began again a life of busy action in Natal.

The three and a half years that had elapsed since Colley left these shores had been eventful in the history of South Africa. The annexation of the Transvaal was followed by events which culminated in our invasion of Zululand. Of the three invading columns, the principal one had been partly destroyed at Isandula. Reinforcements had been despatched from England. Four months later Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent out to assume chief command, and, as we have seen, Colley had accepted the post of chief of the staff. The new commander reached Natal on June 28. He intended to push on with the coast column towards Ulundi and join the main force halted near that place. But the violence of the surf made it impossible to land at Port Durnford, and he had to return to Durban and thence make the journey by land. These movements lost six days. Meantime, on July 4, the decisive action was fought by Lord Chelmsford at Ulundi.

Thus, when Colley reached Natal four days subsequent to the battle of Ulundi, he found the war practically over. Much still remained to be done, for Cetewayo had not surrendered and the greater por-

tion of his soldiers were still in the field, but resistance on any large scale was at an end. Much as he regretted 'the cruel disappointment' of this news, he rejoiced in Lord Chelmsford's victory. He writes to Sir Evelyn Wood on July 10:

A line to congratulate you on your last great success, and on your grand services and successes all through the campaign. It was a pleasure and a pride to me in India, as your name kept appearing, to claim you as an old friend and 'Ashanti man.' Of course for my own sake I am sorry to have arrived too late for the fun, but I am real glad that Lord Chelmsford should have had the chance of crying quits with the Zulus, and, as I suppose, practically finishing the war.

And to his wife he wrote:

I am glad that Lord Chelmsford has had this brilliant success. Many things in connection with it have also given me pleasure—first and foremost that Bill Beresford distinguished himself, and has been, I believe, recommended for the Victoria Cross. . . .

Every one is loud in Colonel Buller's praises, and speaks of him as having made his name in this war, and impressed men with his talent for war, and especially as a leader of irregular horse. Although stern enough in maintaining discipline, his men worship him. He has on several occasions brought men out under fire, and saved lives; he is everywhere himself, leader in every charge, rear-guard in every retreat, and seems to combine an admirable military eye and very cool judgment with wonderful courage and dash. He is an old friend of mine, originally a Staff College pupil, and one of whom I always formed a very high opinion; and I am pleased to think that I had something to say to bringing him out here, as he had considerable doubts, and came to consult me when I was in England last. I have fallen among a perfect troop of friends here, and am tumbling into somebody's arms every five minutes.[3]

[3] Durban, July 9, 1879, to his wife.

This and other letters written soon after landing tell some of the more ludicrous incidents of the campaign:

This place, Durban, is full of absurd stories about X. At a time when transport is above all things precious, he has had a waggon fitted as a movable hen-house, with coops and places for the hens to lay, so that he may always be sure of his fresh eggs for breakfast. He dresses, or did dress (I fancy Sir Garnet has altered matters), in the most absurd costume, with a sombrero hat and a long peacock's feather, and an imitation of a puggaree tied in what he considers a picturesque and artistic carelessness on one side.

He telegraphed to Major B. for six milch cows among other supplies, but Major B., while meeting all his other demands, telegraphed back, 'Must draw the line at milch cows.'

The streets are full of all sorts of military and naval types. The wonderful number of straps and dodges that some of them have about them is a sight, and every one seems to try how many odds and ends he can possibly carry about him. Y. is said to beat every one, and a man describing him to me said 'he only wanted a few candles stuck about him to make a Christmas-tree.' [4]

Colley joined Sir Garnet Wolseley at Port Durnford (having suffered the usual couple of days' delay on account of the surf), and took up his duties as chief of the staff. The whole party then pushed inland to St. Paul's, where the flying column under Sir Evelyn Wood and Lord Chelmsford's headquarters were established. The object was to stop the downward march of some portion of the troops from Ulundi. Returning to Natal from Zululand with Sir Garnet Wolseley, Colley set to work at Maritzburg to disentangle from the two columns which had been engaged

[4] Off Port Durnford, July 11, 1879, to his wife.

in the Zulu War, two small fighting forces with which to penetrate the Zulu country in various directions, capture the king, and subdue the outlying Zulu clans. The great bulk of the army was ordered to move to the coast and embark for England. The generals and their staffs were also sent home, and by the end of July Sir Garnet Wolseley was on his road to Ulundi, there to meet the Zulu chiefs, and to inform them of the intentions of the English Government. Some scenes of the recent disasters were passed on the road. The marvel of how a large hostile army could have remained in the vicinity of Isandula unnoticed grows upon Colley:

> The more one sees the ground, the more unintelligible the whole affair is—not only that such a force as was left in camp could not make a better stand on ground exceptionally favourable to defence, but also that everybody should have been unaware of the approaching Zulu army and its force, and in entire ignorance of what was taking place in camp, seeing that the whole country is such that half a dozen well-posted scouts could have seen everything for twenty miles round.[5]

As they ride by the field of Isandula, 'the great peak, standing up as a monument over the scene of that terrible slaughter,' strikes him as deeply impressive. 'From some points of view it is more like a gigantic column than a mountain,' and all its gloomy significance is heightened 'by the *débris* of the camp and of the battle' still remaining at its foot. Before the party reached Ulundi, a wild storm broke at night upon the camp; the loss of draught oxen was enormous, the tents were blown to pieces. 'As soon as it was daylight,' wrote Colley, 'I turned

[5] Fort Marshall, August 5, 1879, to his wife.

out, and a queer sight it was; about two-thirds of the camp was blown down, the people scrambling among the ruins for their kits. I went to Sir Garnet's tent, and found him, jolly as ever, holding on to his tent-pole with might and main, and laughing heartily.' Then follows a passage illustrating those hazards of South African transport which sixteen months later were to aggravate so seriously the difficulties of his last enterprise:

But a visit to the camp of Clarke's column was no laughing matter. The oxen had died literally in hundreds. On the exposed side of the camp whole teams were lying dead just as they had stood at the trek-trow. I believe the total loss of oxen during the last twenty-four hours will not be less than about 500 out of 3,000. The rain continued most of the day, but the wind moderated, and it is now breaking, and we are settling ourselves for the night, still wet to the skin but comparatively comfortable, and on the whole very jolly.[6]

'How I wish,' he writes a little later, 'I could give you some of my day-dreaming faculty! Under the most uncomfortable and depressing circumstances I can often spend a delightful time by just letting my mind wander over the scene of the pleasantest days of the past—or build castles for the future.'[7]

Ulundi was reached, and the search for Cetewayo began. Light columns were sent out in many directions, everybody was keen to catch the king, but for a fortnight the hunt went on without result. At length, on August 28, a small party of King's Dragoon Guards, under Major Marter, surrounded a kraal lying in a deep valley between table-topped hills in the

[6] Camp Entazaneni, August 8, 1879, to his wife.
[7] Ulundi, August 31, 1879, to his wife.

N'gome Forest, and succeeded in capturing the Zulu monarch. Writing on September 3, Colley thus describes the royal captive:

The meeting with the chiefs passed off very well two days ago, though they looked queer trying to 'make their marks' to the documents in which they pledged themselves to abide by the conditions imposed on them. Cetewayo passed through the day before. Not the least the enormous bloated savage I had imagined, or like any portraits I had ever seen, but a singularly fine-looking man, very large in the thighs, as most of that family are, but not corpulent, with a very calm, stately, and almost royal manner, and a pleasant face much above the usual Kaffir's. I must say I feel very sorry for him. But there is no help for it, and the country will gain very much by his removal. I fancy for a savage he was not cruel, and rather restrained than encouraged cruelty as such. But such absolute power in the hands of a savage must always necessarily entail a horrible amount of cruelty.

We are keeping our time excellently so far. I allowed two months for Zululand. I arrived on July 9 and we shall probably cross the border on September 9, and I hope we shall finish off Secucuni and the Transvaal with equal punctuality.[8]

Almost with the news of the capture of the Zulu king, had come the particulars of the Afghan 'Gazette.' 'I have seen the Afghan "Gazette,"' he writes in the same letter, 'and am delighted with the distinction made in favour of Lyall and Cavagnari.' Colley too had received his reward, and was now a Knight Commander of the Star of India.

I was very much interested with your account of Cavagnari. I rather feel for him myself, as I can well understand the longing for rest that must have come over him after that prolonged and most severe strain. I trust,

[8] Ulundi, to his wife.

however, that he will be able to pull through the next few months, and bring Yakub down to visit the Viceroy in the cold weather; and then I think he might well go home for six months or so, and come in for a little lionising and general freshening up.[9]

This was on September 9. Already when he wrote the outbreak at Kabul had taken place. Sir Louis Cavagnari, and most of his escort, had been massacred by the Afghan soldiery.

Cetewayo captured, and Zululand quiet, the camp at Ulundi had broken up and moved slowly towards the Transvaal: that border once crossed, the state of political feeling there soon became apparent. On September 16, the Commander-in-Chief and staff are at Standerton; Colley takes advantage of the halt to write to Cavagnari, and after congratulating him upon the 'Gazette,' and 'upon the account which I see in the papers of your successful journey and brilliant reception at Kabul,' turns to the Transvaal question:

We are now on a tour through the Transvaal, where the Boers, or rather a small and noisy section, are protesting very violently against the annexation. I think, however, there is a large amount of common sense and appreciation of self-interest in most of the Dutch population, and, considering the almost hopeless state of bankruptcy they had reached, and the depreciation of all property, they will not be sorry to see a strong and settled government under which resources will be developed, and the value of their property raised. There are, however, a certain number of obstinate, almost fanatical, old Dutchmen, whom one cannot help rather admiring, and who will sacrifice everything, and abandon their farms, rather than live under the British flag, or, indeed, under any form of government but their own.

[9] Conference Hill, to his wife.

These, I hope, will decide on emigrating, and we shall do all we can to facilitate such a move.

This singular letter, written from the near neighbourhood of the scene of Transvaal tragedy so soon to be, to the man whose life had already closed in even darker tragedy at Kabul, ends with a 'good-bye for the present,' a hope of 'meeting again in India,' a wish for 'every success in your most difficult work,' and the final expression of having 'a sort of feeling that you cannot fail, which gives me more confidence in the stability of our arrangements than I should, perhaps, otherwise have.'

A little earlier, on September 6, Lady Colley had written to her husband in Natal, describing the receipt at Simla of the news of the Kabul massacre, and the effect upon the Viceroy and his circle of this sudden reversal of the anticipations founded on the Treaty of Gandamak:

This is a terrible day; all seems one terrible time since yesterday afternoon, when Lady L. told me the dreadful rumour that the Residency at Kabul had been attacked by the populace, that the man had left Kabul at that stage, and did not know the end. At dinner came a telegram confirming this, so far as the fact that a severe cross-examination of the man, only eliciting the same tale, could confirm it. We were a small party—the Barnetts, Lady Anne Kerr, and Colonel Stansfeld—no A.D.C.'s, and Sir Michael Kennedy the only guest. But he and the others knew nothing of what was going on, so we had to keep up appearances, even when the look that passed over H.E.'s face when he read the telegram told us pretty well that there was little hope left. Then, just at the end of dinner (which was half an hour earlier for the theatre), in came Z., talking in gallant style—but a look about his eyes which to me made it ghastly. Nothing was to be shown as yet, so Lady L. went to the

theatre with Mrs. Barnett and Sir Ashley. I was so thankful I had declined before; I don't think I could have sat through it. I heard no more until this morning, when a letter came from Lady L. telling me it was all true; when she was coming home last night, about 1 o'clock, she met Z., he passed without a look or word or bow, and she knew worse news had come. She got up to Lord L. and found it was a letter from the Amir (telegraphed on, I fancy) describing how some soldiers had mutinied, stoned their officers, then collected and marched to the Residency, where they were received with bullets as they stoned the building. The Amir sent Daud Shah to help our people.[1] He was ill treated, and is dying; then the Amir sent his son to try and disperse the crowd, but in vain, and they had set fire to the Residency and he did not know what had become of our envoy. He himself was besieged, Afghanistan was ruined.

The rest of the telegram only came to-day, but I will give it here. He implores for help and advice, declares his loyalty, and says he has lost his very best friend in the envoy.

It was an awful night. Lord L. was deeply affected; it was the horror of Cavagnari's fate which overcame him. But in a few moments he pulled himself together. . . .

To-day before dinner came the full horrible reality which somehow I had not fully faced before, always secretly thinking he might have got away somehow: 'A further telegram has just come confirming all, and a further witness has even found the bodies of envoy and escort.' The resistance seems to have been very great, and many Kabulis killed, but no numbers are given; the porch only of the Residency was burnt, but the whole place entered and sacked.

Oh, Geordie, it is all too dreadful! I sometimes think I feel it more than any one except perhaps Z. Cavagnari's face haunts me, and all our last talks, and the poor little wife at home.[2]

Terrible although this tragedy at Kabul was, it

[1] This first account of the Amir's conduct was not confirmed afterwards.

[2] Simla, September 6, 1879, from his wife.

remains a fair subject for argument whether the death of Cavagnari need have carried all the consequences which were allowed to result after Lord Lytton's resignation. It should in justice be recognised that the murder of an envoy does not necessarily involve the condemnation of the policy he represented, and that all such questions may claim to be judged on wider considerations.

I find Sir Frederick Roberts writing to Colley from Simla on August 17:

> Cavagnari is doing well at Kabul, and I am very hopeful all will go on quietly there; but with so many discordant elements and with several fanatical Mollahs preaching sedition, there may of course be a row any day. I went with Cavagnari to the top of the Shutargardan, and there made him over to the officials sent by the Amir to receive him. Nothing could have been more satisfactory than the arrangements made by Yakub Khan for the reception of the embassy. . . So long as affairs go on smoothly at Kabul there will be no trouble at Kuram, but any row to the north of the Shutargardan would be the signal for a general disturbance. For this reason I am anxious to have a certain portion of the Kuram column equipped with mule carriage, ready to move off at short notice.

Long before the letter reached its destination, the 'row' had taken place, and the Kuram column was in movement against Kabul.

When the news from Kabul was confirmed, Lord Lytton, on September 6, telegraphed to Colley to return to India. The summons took three weeks to reach South Africa. By that time he had arrived at Pretoria, with his chief, and was there busily engaged upon the political problems of the Transvaal.

> Since my last was written, we have had rather an interesting meeting with Mr. Joubert, for a short time President

of the Transvaal, and the leader of the ultra-Boer and anti-annexation party. Sir Garnet had sent him an invitation to come and lunch with him, when we were halted in the neighbourhood of his farm. Mr. Joubert did not get the invitation in time, but sent a civil reply expressing his desire to wait on Sir Garnet, and a meeting at Standerton was accordingly arranged. He lunched with us, and afterwards we had a business talk in presence of two or three Dutchmen and some of our staff. He spoke well and earnestly; maintained his unchangeable opinion that the annexation was unjust and unnecessary, and that if England had endeavoured to assist instead of endeavouring to embarrass the young and struggling State, none of the pleas for annexation would ever have arisen; and declared that nothing would ever reconcile him or make him in any way acquiesce in a measure which he believed to be as injurious to the country as it was uncalled for.

Sir Garnet did little more than allude to the causes of annexation, which he said was final and irrevocable, and could not be further discussed by him; said that he and the British Government were satisfied that it was for the true interests of the people, by a majority of whom it had been sought and welcomed; that the discontent was mainly owing to the factious and interested opposition of the few; and that he counted on the support of the leading and influential men among them to discourage this agitation (which must tell against the prosperity of the country), and help him in the administration, and in bringing about a state of things which would admit of the Government being made an entirely free one, and placed in the hands of elected representatives as in the Cape Colony. He also appealed strongly to Joubert personally to help in this. But Joubert repeatedly and emphatically refused to take any share in furthering a course which he did and always should protest against, and said he would look on himself, and would be looked upon by his countrymen, as a traitor to his country if he ever did so.

He spoke courteously and deferentially to Sir Garnet personally (he had been threatening and insolent to Sir Bartle Frere, but on that occasion he had 3,000 armed Boers

at his back while Sir Bartle was without even an escort; on this occasion Sir Garnet had the force at his back and Joubert was alone), and with a certain ring of patriotism which would have been more telling but that we knew Joubert had taken advantage of his short tenure of the Presidency to further his own pecuniary interests, in a way that scandalised even the long-suffering Dutchmen. And as his great ambition has been to hold the Presidency, and our interference had put that or any high political post out of the question, he was bound to be in opposition.

Some pretty good fencing took place, in which Joubert showed better than I expected. In reply to some hint at our greed for annexation and extension of territory, Sir Garnet pointed to Zululand as a proof that so little did we desire to increase our territory and responsibilities that, when it lay prostrate and conquered at our feet, we did not take a single inch, but gave it all back to them. To this Joubert retorted that in doing so we had inflicted an additional and deeper insult on the Boers, to whom we refused the right to manage their own affairs and live unmolested by us, which we conceded to the savage and plundering Zulus. I think Sir Garnet was rather sorry for his allusion to the Zulu settlement!

On the other hand, when Joubert alluded to some addresses which had been presented, and interviews which Sir Garnet had had, and said he must not be deceived by such apparent acquiescence, as many who would not dispute with him and might even seem to agree with him would be as determined as ever in their opposition after they had left him, Sir Garnet replied that he was sorry to hear Mr. Joubert thus lowering his countrymen in an Englishman's eyes, and that his (Sir Garnet's) opinion and experience was more favourable to them, as he believed that they generally spoke out frankly their real opinions whether they were favourable or unfavourable.

The interview ended amicably enough with assurances that differences of opinion would not affect their mutual respect and friendly feeling, coupled, however, with a just perceptible hint that Mr. Joubert must not act too far

on his divergent views. But it led to nothing but what we had already anticipated—namely, that Joubert would prefer his position in the country as leader of the Dutch opposition to anything we could offer him. I believe that the maxim that every man has his price would apply to him if we had a sufficiently high price to offer him, but we can offer him nothing so good as what he has always had before his eyes and has not yet altogether given up hopes of.

In a couple of days more we shall be at Heidelberg, and perhaps in a position to gauge better the amount of opposition to be expected in the country, as the great meeting has been summoned there for the 24th. I am inclined to think, however, that in face of the military force which has now been collected, the meeting will not be very largely attended, as all the waverers, who attended before because the Dutch opposition seemed the strongest, and they were afraid of the consequences to themselves if the Boer Government got the upper hand, or the country was restored by us, will now think our side is looking up, and be careful to stay away.

I hope when we have been at Pretoria a week or so we shall be able to decide as to the movement of the remaining cavalry regiment to India, and that will probably govern my movements also.[3]

A week later at Pretoria there seemed no better prospect of moving the remaining cavalry regiment from the Transvaal. But Colley had received Lord Lytton's telegram, and on September 29 the following general order was published by Sir Garnet Wolseley: 'The services of Brigadier-General Sir George Colley, K.C.S.I., C.B., C.M.G., having been applied for by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, the General Commanding, in view of the urgency of the demand, has no alternative but to allow Brigadier-General Sir George Colley to return to his duties as Private Secretary to the Viceroy.' Then followed expressions of regret at his departure, and of testimony to his

[3] September 21, 1879 to his wife.

services, as strong as words could make them. 'No words could too strongly express,' ran the order, 'the value of the assistance he has rendered since his arrival in this command, or the advantage which the General Commanding has derived from his sound military and political judgment in the concluding operations of the Zulu War and the final settlement of the country.'

And so he started on his road to India—down again along the veldt track into Natal, by Lang's Nek, under the shadow of Majuba Mountain, past Ingogo, until at Durban, on October 8, he took ship to India. This was the fourth time of his leaving South Africa. In less than ten months he would return to that well-known land—not to leave it any more.

CHAPTER XIII

NATAL

Accepts appointment as Governor, High Commissioner, and Commander-in-Chief in South-Eastern Africa—A brief spell of home—General election of 1880—The Boers and annexation—Inspection of Transvaal garrisons—The Administrator's letters to Colley—Proclamation of the Boer Republic—Bronkerspruit.

THE letter from Sir Frederick Roberts quoted in the last chapter contains the following passage:

Few people know as well as I do how much you did to make the recent campaign a success, and how well you deserve the honour you received. I hope it will be followed by more honours for the Zulu War, and then I dare say you would not mind having a rest to prepare for the next campaign, when you must have a command of your own.

During quite four years Colley's life had been one of ceaseless activity. The voyage from Natal to India—the deck chair and the blue line of sea horizon—may have afforded a welcome rest. But a note-book kept during the voyage shows that his idea of rest was far removed from idleness. The notes on many subjects, some professional, others literary and speculative, prove the variety of his interests and the wide range of his thought.

When he reached India early in November 1879 the second Afghan campaign had begun. In October General Roberts crossed the Shutargardan, fought at Charasia, and entered Kabul. Everybody knows

what followed. The gathering of the clans round Kabul, the break-up of the Afghan league, the march of Sir Donald Stewart from Kandahar to Kabul, and that of Sir Frederick Roberts from Kabul to Kandahar; the proof growing stronger day by day that the greater part of Afghanistan was a bleak and barren wilderness of rock and mountain, with a climate fatal to Indian men and Indian animals, and with a people as true to the traditions of war, rapine, and freedom as they had ever been in the long two thousand years since history first tells of them.

The renewal of active operations in Afghanistan had caused disappointment at home, while an exceptionally bad harvest and the prospect of agrarian trouble in Ireland set the mind of the nation still more out of joint with its governors. The Parliament of 1874, which had placed Lord Beaconsfield in office with such a commanding majority, was dying in its sixth session, the victim of many misfortunes. Parliament was dissolved in March 1880, and in April the general election placed the Liberals in power. 'The stars in their courses have fought against us,' wrote Lord Beaconsfield, and not the least hostile among the constellations had been those which watch over the destinies of South Africa.

A month before the dissolution, the Governorship of Natal had been offered to Colley by the Home Government. He was also to succeed Sir Garnet Wolseley as High Commissioner of South-Eastern Africa, including the Transvaal, and as Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Natal and the Transvaal.[1] He accepted the offer conditionally upon getting a short leave of absence home. At a farewell dinner in

[1] With local rank of Major-General.

Calcutta on February 28, Lord Lytton spoke—as few could speak—touching words of congratulation and good-bye. The same evening Sir George and Lady Colley left Calcutta.

'You will find them at home in the thick of the general election,' wrote the Viceroy a few days later, 'and I hope to hear from you your impression of the whole political situation and prospects in England. Adieu, my dear and true friend. I miss you every hour more than I can say, but—good heavens! how much one must be resigned to miss more and more as life goes on! Like Falstaff, I would it were bed-time and all were over.' The wished-for rest was soon to come. The change of Ministry at home meant a change of Viceroy in India. In a letter written by Lord Lytton just before he left Bombay, a name occurs already great among those who knew it. With Lord Ripon, Charles Gordon had come out to India as private secretary. As everybody knows, he resigned this appointment a day or two after reaching Bombay. A hundred reasons were imagined for what seemed such sudden change of mind. Among the varied causes, one given by Lord Lytton was at least novel:

You will doubtless have seen Gordon's extraordinary letter about his resignation of the private secretaryship. He is now on his way to the Celestial Empire, which is, I suppose, the next best thing in his estimation to the Kingdom of Heaven. He was much cut up by being told to write a letter to Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeeboy, informing him that Lord Ripon had read with much pleasure and interest a pamphlet sent him by that portentous Parsee. This, he said, was making him tell a lie, since he well knew that Lord Ripon had not read the pamphlet at all. Let us hope that a 'mysterious Providence' has reserved him for the command of a victorious Chinese campaign against the Russians.

But the reservation was for other purpose.

The incoming Liberal Ministry did not disturb the appointment of Governor of Natal made by their predecessors in office, and, after a stay of two months in England, Colley started for his destination, new to him only in the sense of its new responsibilities, to exercise at last in his own name all the well-wrought faculties hitherto used for others.

As Commander-in-Chief, Governor, and High Commissioner, the total emoluments of his office were fixed at an unusually high figure. None of the felicitations and expressions of goodwill usual upon success in life had been wanting on this occasion. He had been the guest of the Queen at Windsor, the guest of the Colonial Office at a large public dinner in London, the recipient of many congratulatory addresses from public bodies and of private letters and messages beyond number.

He reached the Cape on June 17, and Natal a week later. The old idea of a confederated South Africa had again been formulated, only to be again doomed to disappointment. The opposition of the Boers had mainly frustrated this new attempt. Nevertheless, the general situation throughout South Africa was not regarded as critical. The troubles of the past years appeared to be subsiding, and it was generally believed that an era of peace and prosperity had set in. But the last gust of the storm which had begun three years earlier on the Bashee River had yet to come, and was to prove the fiercest and most fatal in the record. Even now the horizon was not quite unclouded. In Zululand the thirteen kinglets set up in the place of Cetewayo were already disposed to quarrel amongst themselves, and the