

The Gordons Avenge Wauchope.

A. G. Hales, in a letter to the London Daily News from Thabanchu gives the following remarkable description:—

When, a few months ago, I stood upon the veldt, almost within the shadow of the frowning brow of Magerfontein's surly heights, and looked upon the cold, stern faces of Scotland's dead, and listened to the weird wailing of the bagpipes, whilst Cronje gazed triumphantly down from his inaccessible mountain stronghold upon his handiwork, I knew in my soul that a day would dawn when Scotland would demand an eye for an eye, blood for blood. I read it written on the faces of the men who strode with martial tread round the last sad resting place of him they loved—their chief, the dauntless General Wauchope. Vengeance spoke in the sombre fire that blazed in every Scotchman's eye. Retribution was carved large and deep on every hard-set Scottish face; it spoke in silent eloquence in the grip of each hard-browned hand on rifle barrels; it found a mute echo in each knitted brow, and leapt to life in every deep-drawn breath; it sparkled in each tear that rolled unheeded and unchecked down war-scarred cheeks, and thundered in the echo of the men's tread across the veldt right up to Cronje's lines, as they marched campwards. The Highland brigade had gazed upon its dead, and neither time, nor change, nor thought of home or wife, or liping babe, would wipe the memory of that sight away until the bayonets' ruthless thrust gave Scotland quittance in the rich, red blood of those who did that deed.

The hour has come. The men who sleep in soldiers' graves beside the willow clad banks of the Modder River have been avenged. Or, if the debt has not been paid in full, the interest owing on that bond of blood has at least now been handed in. It was not paid by our colonial sons; not from Australian or Canadian hands did the stubborn Boers receive the debt we owed. They were not Irish hearts that cleared old Scotland's legacy of hate on that May day amidst the African hills. It was not England's yeoman sons who did that deed, but men whose feet were native to the heather, men on whose tongues the Scottish burr hung lovingly—the bare-legged, killed "boys" whom the lasses in the Highlands love, the gallant Gordons.

Let the tale be told in Edinburgh Town, let it ring along the Dorder; let the lass as she braids the widow's hair whisper the story with love-kissed breath, let the lads as they come from their daily toil throw out their chests for the sake of their breeding, let the pessimist turn up the faded page of history written when the world was young, and find, if he can, a grander deed done by the sons of men since the morning stars sang together.

So to my tale. It was the 1st of May. We had the Boers hard pressed in Thabanchu in a run of kopjes that reached in almost unbroken sequence farther than a man's eye might right. (The flying French was with us, chafing like a leashed greyhound because he could not sweep all before him with one impetuous rush. Rundle too was here, with his haughty, handsome face, as keen as French, but with a better grip on his feelings. Six thousand of the foe, under Louis Botha, cool, crafty, long-headed, resourceful, have held the kopjes. Again and again we manoeuvred to trap them, but no wolf in winter is more wary than Botha, no weasels more watchful than the men he commanded. When we advanced they fell back, when he fell back they advanced, until the merest tryo in the art of war could see that a frontal attack unless made in almost hopeless positions was impossible. So Hamilton swept round their right flank, ten miles north of Thabanchu, and gave them a taste of his skill and daring, whilst Rundle held their main body here at Thabanchu. Rundle made a feint on their centre in strong force, and they closed in from both flanks to resist him. Then he drew off as if fearing the issue. This drew the Boers in, and they pounded our camp with shells until one wondered whether the German made rubbish they used would last them much longer. Then we threatened their left flank quickly and sharply, giving Hamilton time to strike on their right, and he struck with out erring, whipping the enemy at every point he touched, driving them out of their positions, and holding them firmly himself, so threatening their rear and the immense herds of sheep and oxen they have with them, making a footing for the British to move on and cut Botha off from his base at Kroonstad.

Whether he will now stand his ground

and fight or make a break for the main army of the Boers is hard to calculate, for the Boer generally does just what no one expects he will attempt to do. It was during Hamilton's flanking effort that the Gordons vindicated their character for courage. Captain Towse, a brave, courteous soldier and gentleman, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at Graspan, and whose guest I had been on several occasions, was the hero of the hour. He is a fine figure of a man, well set up, good-looking, strong, active. He was, I think, about the only soldier I have seen who could wear an eye-glass and not lose by it. In age he looked about forty. I remember snapping a photo of him as he was "tidying up" the grave of gallant young Huddart, an Australian "middy" who lay buried on the veldt but the Boers collected that portrait from me later on, worse luck. On this fateful day Captain Towse, with about fifty of the Gordons, got isolated from the main body of British troops, and the Boers, with that marvellous dexterity for which they are becoming famous, sized up the position, and determined upon a capture. They little dreamt of the nature of the lion they had snared in their toils. With fully two hundred and fifty men they closed in on the little band of killed men, and in triumphant tones called upon them to throw down their arms and surrender. It was a picture to warm an artist's heart. On all sides rose the bleak, black kopje ridge on ridge, as inhospitable as a watch dog's growl. On one hand the little band of Highlanders, the picturesque colors of their clan showing in kilt and stocking, perfect in all their appointments, but nowhere so absolutely flawless as in their leadership. Under such leaders as he who held them there so calm and steady, their forlathers had hurled back the chivalry of France and had tamed the Muscovite pride, and they were soon to prove themselves men worthy of their captain.

On the other side rose the superior numbers of the Boers. A wild and motley crew they looked compared to the gem of Britain's army. Boys stood side by side with old men; lads braced themselves

shoulder to shoulder with men in their manhood's prime, ragged beards fell on still more ragged shirt fronts. But there were manly hearts behind those ragged garments hearts that beat high with love of home and country, hearts that seldom quailed in the hour of peril. Their rifles lay in hands steady and strong. The Boer was face to face with the Briton; the numbers lay on the side of the Boer, but the bayonet was with the Briton.

"Throw up your hands and surrender." The language was English, but the accent was Dutch. A moment, an awful second of time, the rifle barrels gleamed coldly towards that little group of men, who stood their ground as pine trees stand on their mountain sides in Bonnie Scotland. Then out on the African air there rang a voice, proud, clear, and high as clarion note, "Fix bayonets, Gordons!" Like lightning the strong hands gripped the ready steel; the bayonets went home to the barrel as the lips of lover to lover. Rifles spoke from the Boer lines, and men reeled a pace from the British and fell, and lay where they fell. Again that voice with the Scottish burr on every note, "Charge, Gordons! Charge!" and the dauntless Scotchman rushed on at the head of his fiery few. The Boer's heart is a brave heart, and he who calls them cowards lies; but never before had they faced so grim a charge, never before had they seen a torrent of steel advancing on their lines in front of a tornado of flesh and blood. On rushed the Scots, on over fallen comrades, on over rocks and clefts, on to the ranks of the foe, and onward through them, sweeping them down as I have seen wild horses sweep through a field of ripening corn. The bayonets bled as they crashed through breastbone and backbone. Vainly the Boer clubbed his rifle and smote back. As well might the wild goat strike with puny hoofs when the tiger springs. Nothing could stay the fury of that desperate rush. Do you sneer at the Boers? Then sneer at half the armies of Europe, for never yet have Scotland's sons been driven back when once they reached a toe to smite.

How do they charge, these bare-legged sons of Scotia? Ask the hills of Afghanistan, and if there be tongues within them they will tell you that they sweep like hosts from hell. Ask in sneering Paris, and the red records of Waterloo will give you answer. Ask in St. Petersburg, and from Sebastopol your answer will come. They thought of the dreary morning hours of Magerfontein, and they smote the steel downwards through the neck into

the liver. They thought of the row of comrades in the graves beside the Modder, and they gave the Boers the "haymaker's lift," and tossed the dead body behind them. They thought of gallant Wauchope riddled with lead, and they sent the cold steel, with a horrible crash, through skull and brain, leaving the face a thing to make fiends shudder. They thought of Scotland and they sent the wild slogan of their clan re-echoing through the gullies of the African hills, under their comrades far away along the line, hearing it, turned to one another, saying: "God help the Boers this hour; our Jocks are into 'em with the bay'net!"

But when they turned to gather up those who had fallen, then they found that he whose lion soul had pointed them the crimson path to duty was to lead them no more. The noble heart that beat so true to honour's highest notes was not stilled, but a bullet missing the brain had closed his eyes forever to God's sunlight, leaving him to go through life in darkness, and they mourned for him as they mourned for the noble, white-souled Wauchope, whose prototype he was. They knew that many a long, long year would roll away before their eyes would rest upon his like again in camp or bloody field. But it gladdened their stern warrior hearts to know that the last sight he ever gazed upon was Scotland sweeping on her foes.

And when our noble Queen shall place upon his breast the cross which is the soldier's diadem, their hearts will throb in unison with his, for their strong hands on that May day helped him to win what he is so fit to wear, and when our sovereign honours him she honours them, and well they know it. And when the years have rolled away, and they are old and grey, and spent with wounds and toil, fit for nothing, but to dandle little grandbabes on their knees, young men and maids will flock around, and pointing out the veteran to the curious stranger say with honest pride, "He was with Towse the day he won the cross."

All there.

A philanthropic citizen of Dashville, moved by sympathy for his unfortunate townspeople who were suffering from want during an exceedingly cold winter, arranged a public entertainment in their behalf.

No admission fee was charged, but it was announced that a collection would be taken. The evening came, and the hall was well filled. The entertainment, consisting of recitations, music and amateur sleight of hand performances, was generously applauded, and with much satisfaction the

philanthropic citizen, assisted by the ushers proceeded to take up the contributions.

They amounted to three dollars and sixty-seven cents.

"Well," he said to the audience, after he had counted the money, "this collection, as you understand, is for the benefit of the poor—and they seem to be all here."

SINKERS FORMS A TRUST.

After Hearing About Ice He Sets at Work With a Slate for Capital.

"It's getting verser," said the Sinker Man as Sarsaparilla Reilly went into the restaurant.

"What's getting verser?" asked Reilly. "Der ice question," replied Sinkers. "When I lay awake in bed dreaming of which is to be, I don't supposition dot der Grand Jury will do der Mayor something for putting ice in der City Hall. What?"

"He didn't put no ice in th' City Hall," answered Reilly. "The ice trust did it."

"What is it for a ice trust?" "Well," explained Reilly, "the ice trust is a body av refrigerators who bought up all the ice farms in Iceland and sold off shares at sixty-seven dollars a cake. They played a big game for high stakes."

"Pinochls?" "No," said Reilly, "treiz" out. The ice men got the ice and th' gave th' customers th' frozen end av it. Last week whin me wife got her ice bill she took a chill and gave me the cold shoulder. Then she took Mary Ellen's diamonds out of th' safe and put them in the ice box and put the ice in the safe, for there's no telling when burglars might drop in."

"Yesterday night my wife paid two dollars for one little ice share," said the Sinker man, mournfully. "Mebbe, she says, before der summer comes out ve vill had to burn oil in der gas stove."

"That wud be terrible," remarked Reilly. "Yes," continued Sinkers, "und soap vent up two cents a cake on the grocery, 'cause he can't no more afford der big ice bills. Coal twenty cents vent up mit der bushel und vinegar more besides."

"Sure they don't kape coal on ice," said Reilly. "Don't lay it all to the Trust. I remember one very hot morning when I was a sailorman, it was so hot that the iron plates on the ship's side melted and ran red hot into the sea. Well that morning we went fishing for icebergs and caught a berg that had floated down from Greenland. When we hauled it aboard our ship we noticed some carving on the side of it, in letters as big as a house and—"

"Please, Reilly, you get me dizzy," interrupted Sinkers. "Do der ice mans fish icebergs too?"

"No," said Reilly. "They cut it in th' small lakes near th' Hudson River whin snowballs are ripe. I've seen cakes up there tin thousand feet square."

"How do they get dot size in der ice cart wagon?" asked Sinkers.

"Why," said Reilly, "they have to build the wagon around the cake. Well, these ice trusters save the ice till th' summer and thin sell it off in small pieces. This year they'll get stuck, for the people won't buy all ay it."

"Mebbe dey can sell it mit skating rink," said Sinkers. "Væn somebody would start a ice farm down in Cuba he would much money make. Vnat?"

"No," said Reilly, "it wudn't pay. I heerd av a man who started a snowball farm down in Cuba, but he was overcome by the heat and died before harvest time."

"Vhy not ship ice by telegraph from Iceland?" suggested Sinkers. "Den you could sell a big share for ten cents."

"Thot 'ud never do," said Reilly. "Th' telegraph wires wud be blocked continualy wid icicles."

"How shamefulness," remarked Sinkers. "Den ve must ice buy on trust. Vnat?"

"No," said Reilly, "ice trust don't mane trust ice. A trust is a combination av men that corner th' market. For instance, if you and I agree to drink all the whiskey in Red Jerry's, we form a whiskey trust. Are ye listening?"

"Sure," said Sinkers. "Vhy not ve make a beer trust on Red Jerry?"

"In that case," answered Reilly, "we wudn't need to raise the price av th' beer."

"No," said Sinkers, "we'll put it on der slate."

And the new syndicate went into Red Jerry's and absorbed a large block of stock that wasn't watered.

Polite editor—Mr. Slowpokes, I want you to go out and write a story on how it feels to be a millionaire.

Mr. Slowpokes—But how can I do it without a million?

Polite editor—Go and earn a million. When you get it, come back and write the story.

"Knave!" said the autocrat, how camest thou to be a fool?"

"Sire," responded the jester, "I began life among the wise men."

Teacher—Why did they hide Moses in the bullrushes?

Answer—Because they didn't want him to be vaccinated.



"OH! YOU TICKLE ME."