

BULLER'S BATTLEFIELDS REVISITED.

Memorials of the Fight Round Ladysmith.

"Poor Buller!" Lord Roberts is reported to have exclaimed when he visited Colenso and saw the ground for himself. The battle of Colenso, like Magersfontein, will always remain somewhat of a mystery. Neither the cutting-up of the Highland brigade in the one case nor the loss of the guns in the other fully explain the results.

When I was at Magersfontein Farm, Mr. Bissett, who viewed the battle from the homestead, told me, says Chas. D. Don in the London Daily Mail, that the British had practically turned the Boer left, but the attack was not pressed home. The Highlanders, of course, walked slap into the eastern end of the range of kopjes in the Boer defense. At Colenso we were within an ace of turning the Boer left, but our extreme right wing was withdrawn at the critical moment, I refer to Hlangwane and the mounted force sent to occupy it.

I do not wish to dwell upon the already familiar details of the battle. A careful study of the ground, however, shows how impracticable, almost impossible, was the task our infantry were asked to perform. The Boer positions extended in a rough semi-circle

from Groblers Kloof to Hlangwane—a vast natural amphitheater of hills, in front twisted and turned the river in a succession of S's, finally turning sharply northwards on the western side of Hlangwane.

MERCIFUL TUGELA.

It is said, although I can scarcely believe it, that the staff believed Hlangwane to be on the northern bank of Tugela. Certainly the British left—Hart's brigade—were expected to ford a river which threatened flows eighteen or twenty feet deep. The ignorance of the nature of the country displayed by the British commanders is scarcely credible. However, even had Hart's and Hildyard's brigades succeeded in crossing the river they would only have fallen into a deadly trap the other side. It seems to me that the depth of the Tugela saved the British army from what might have proved irreparable disaster. Why General Clery should have sent half his infantry to be shot down looking for non-existent drifts over a river running twenty feet deep and kept the other half falling at the back while a mere handful of men were dispatched to negotiate the one accessible Boer position which it was essential for us to occupy, why these things should have been I do not attempt to explain. Perhaps some day the explanation will be forthcoming.

The monument erected on the spot where young Roberts fell stands in a

spot of quiet sunshine and pleasant winds, bringing the warm scenes of the African world. There is no trace left of the maelstrom which raged here on December 15, 1899—no trace except the big solitary monument briefly recording the fact that Lieut. Roberts fell there. He is buried near Chieveley, by the side of gallant comrades who also fell in action. The exact position of the guns is marked by pieces of wood placed in the ground a few paces apart and facing towards Fort Wylie.

The best way to get to Spion Kop is from Ladysmith, along the Acton Homes road. One can either ride or drive the sixteen miles. The country is very level and easy, quite unlike the mountainous region lying between Colenso and Ladysmith. As far as the British were concerned, the battle was chiefly confined to the Tabaymama plateau. Here they clustered thick as bees. The shallow trenches and hastily constructed sangars afforded them little shelter. Whichever way their entrenchments were constructed they could be enfiladed from one or other of the kopjes with which Tabaymama is connected, and which were occupied by the Boers.

If there is one thing which military history proves in South Africa it is this—that you do not necessarily win a battle, but you may very easily lose it, by capturing a hill. In the case of Tabaymama, however, it was not so much rifle fire from adjacent hills which did the awful execution; it was the shell fire. The Boers pounded away with a big Creusot on Doornkloof, five miles away. This big gun—fitted on a disappearing platform—could not be touched by our big guns across the river on Mount Alice, nor could our guns get at the Boers entrenched on the northern slopes of Spion Kop.

The treeless summit of Tabaymama is a dreary, miserable, ignoble scene enough, although the view across the hills and valleys and plains to the south

and to the great peaks of the Drakensberg, piled up in sublime confusion on the western horizon, is one never to be forgotten. On the top of Tabaymama two monuments have been built, though no tablets have yet been placed upon them. Little crosses are scattered about in disorder, some crookedly placed in the ground, others bent or broken, all showing signs of hasty construction. The plateau is seamed with rough trenches and long, irregular mounds of red, stony earth. A few empty cartridges, or shrapnel ball, or bits of shell lie about, but most of such relics of the bloody battle have disappeared. The scene is one of utter confusion and of unspeakable dreariness, and it has a dreadful irony of its own. All around Nature is revealed in her fairest and grandest aspects, but here on this lonely rugged hill-top—War is devil's work after all.

As all the world knows, Buller ultimately broke through the Boer defenses near the point at which he started. To follow the line of the final British advance one should establish one's headquarters at Colenso, and do much horse-riding. All the interesting points can be visited on horseback; indeed, there is no other effective way of getting about. One can ride out past Hlangwane towards Monte Christo, where the British at last found the key to Ladysmith. Fort Wylie, an unpicturesque rubbish-heap, shot and shell-shattered until scarcely one stone remains on another, crowns a slight eminence. Excellent bits of river and hill-scenery present themselves at every turn of the road. The Tugela is a perpetual delight to the eye. One picture succeeds another—foaming cascades, dancing rapids, glassy pools, mirroring in their unruffled surface every hue and outline of the foliage above.

From the summit of Hart's Hill—the

strategical key to the whole complicated series of positions—one commands a superb panorama of rolling landscape. Bulwani is on the one side, and Colenso on the other. On Hart's Hill the Boers had a position of enormous natural strength. Their trenches and shelters are marvels of ingenuity.

To visit the positions held by the Boers is to understand something of the awful ordeal of modern artillery fire. Hart's Hill is torn and seamed and seared with shell. Great trees are rent in twain, rocks are smashed into fragments, trenches are strewn from end to end with shrapnel. The boulders are splashed green and yellow with lyddite. Not a stone but is chipped with bullet or shrapnel. It is as though all the hells of hell had been let loose on this fair countryside.

The afternoon was drawing to a close as I retraced my way towards the river. In the shadow of the hills the air was cool and sweet. The turbulent voice of the river filled the valley. Here and there on the crest of a hill a white cross glistened in the sun. Ah! these little white crosses. They are everywhere to be seen on the banks of the Tugela. Beside them "the tumult and the shouting dies." They speak to each heart in words no tongue could tell—of the agony and the suffering and the sacrifice. They make of this South Africa of ours a land of the dead. But the great world goes on. The future awaits the living—the future, as we shall share it, with our brains and with our hearts. On vast hill, by kloof and kloof, lie the brave men and true who will never know that future, never share in its honors, its achievements, its celebrations. Let us pause sometimes to think of them blindly and reverently. However have the years to be, let us keep their memory green.

LIKE A REPORTER.

How Winston Churchill Prepares His Great Novels.

Success has come early to Mr. Churchill. At thirty he is the author of three successful books—"The Celebrity," "Richard Carvel" and "The Crisis." The first sixteen years of his life he spent in St. Louis; then, after a course at Smith academy, he went to the Naval academy at Annapolis, from which he graduated among the first six of his class. He joined the staff of the Cosmopolitan, and while living at Irvington he married a wealthy woman from his native city, and left the routine of editorial work for the more delightful labor of original writing.

Mr. Churchill's thoroughness and accuracy, coupled with unusual concentration, are shown by his method of work. After his marriage he returned to St. Louis and hired an office in one of the skyscrapers and worked regular hours on "Richard Carvel." He went to Virginia and Maryland and studied the country and old records, he devoured biographies, memories, letters and old newspapers, and he made thousands of notes, which he classified as methodically as a naturalist would arrange a collection of butterflies. Notes on costume were kept in one book, manners and customs in another; unusual words or turns of expression in another; character in another; history in another, and bits of description in another. The gospel of hard work is Mr. Churchill's inspiration.

When he was revising one of his novels for the fifth time, he worked daily from breakfast time to 1 o'clock and for some hours after luncheon. A long horseback ride made a little diversion, and after dinner he wrote till the light of his lamp grew dim.

In preparing for his latest novel, "The Crisis," a story of the civil war,

in which Lincoln, Grant, Douglas, Sherman and other famous men figure, he had seven drafts made of every chapter, and planned to each page were the memoranda from which changes were made. Mr. Churchill is described as a typical college man—smooth-shaven, with heavy black eyebrows that join above gentle, brown eyes; with a manner that inspires good nature.

Mr. Churchill lives in a beautiful home at Cornish, New Hampshire, with his wife and child. The study is a little wooden shanty, resembling a Dakota "claim shack," in a pasture near his house. Here, with a type-writing machine, a roll-top desk and his reference books, he does his work.—Ledger Monthly.

Stricken With Paralysis.

Henderson Grimmett, of this place, was stricken with partial paralysis and completely lost the use of one arm and side. After being treated by an eminent physician for quite a while without relief, my wife recommended Chamberlain's Pain Balm, and after using two bottles of it he is almost entirely cured.—Geo. R. McDonald, Man, Logan county, W. Va. Several other very remarkable cures of partial paralysis have been effected by the use of this liniment. It is most widely known, however, as a cure for rheumatism, sprains and bruises. For sale by all druggists.

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The Paris Millinery Company.

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