

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
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Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
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General Gordon Saint and Soldier

J. Wardle

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p. 3PREFACE.

Nothing but the greatest possible pressure from my many kind friends who have heard my lecture on "General Gordon: Saint and Soldier," who knew of my intimacy with him, and had seen some of the letters referred to, would have induced me to narrate this little story of a noble life. I am greatly indebted to many friends, authors, and newspapers, for extracts and incidents, etc., etc.; and to them I beg to offer my best thanks and humble apology. This book is issued in the hope, that, with all its imperfections, it may inspire the young men of our times to imitate the Christ-like spirit and example of our illustrious and noble hero, C. G. Gordon.

J. Wardle.

p. 5THIS BRIEF STORY
of a
NOBLE, SAINTLY and HEROIC LIFE,
I Dedicate with Much Affection
To My Son,
JOSEPH GORDON WARDLE

p. 7" If I am asked, who is the greatest man? I answer, "the best." And if I am requested to say, who is the best, I reply: "he that deserveth most of his fellow creatures."

— *Sir William Jones.*

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p. 13 CHAPTER I.

“There is nothing purer than honesty; nothing sweeter than charity; nothing warmer than love; nothing richer than wisdom; nothing brighter than virtue; nothing more steadfast than faith.” — *Bacon*.

It has been said that the most interesting study for mankind is man; and surely one of the grandest objects for human contemplation, is a noble character; a lofty type of a truly great and good man is humanity's richest heritage.

The following lines by one of our greatest poets are true —

“Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.”

While places and things may have a special or peculiar charm, and indeed may become very interesting, nothing stirs our hearts, or rouses our enthusiasm so much as the study of a noble heroic life, such as that of the uncrowned king, p. 14 who is the subject of our story, and whose career of unsullied splendour closed in the year 1885 in the beleaguered capital of that dark sad land, where the White and Blue Nile blend their waters.

“Noble he was contemning all things mean,
His truth unquestioned and his soul severe,
At no man's question was he e'er dismayed,
Of no man's presence was he e'er afraid.”

General Gordon was the son of a soldier who proved his gallantry on many occasions, and who took a pride in his profession. It was said of him that he was greatly beloved by all who served under him. He was generous, genial and kind hearted, and strictly just in all his practices and aims. He gave to his Queen and country a long life of devoted service. His wife, we are told, was a woman of marked liberality; cheerful and loving, always thoughtful of the wants of others; completely devoid of selfishness.

The fourth son, and third soldier of this happy pair, Charles George, was born at Woolwich in 1833. He was trained at Taunton. When about 15 years of age he was p. 15 sent to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, to prepare for the army; a profession his father thought most worthy of the Gordons. While here at school an incident occurred which served to show that our young hero was no ordinary student. His tutor, with an air of contempt, rebuked him severely for some error or failure in his lessons, and told him sneeringly he would never make a general. This roused the Scotch blood of the budding soldier, and in a rage he tore the epaulettes from his shoulders, and threw them at his tutor's feet—another proof of the correctness of the old adage, "Never prophesy unless you know." By the time he reached the age of twenty-one, he had become every inch a soldier, and when tested he proved to have all a soldier's qualities—bravery, courage, heroism, patriotism, and fidelity, characteristics of the best soldiers in our army.

Archibald Forbes, writing of him, says "The character of General Gordon was unique. As it unfolded in its curiously varied but never contradictory aspects, you are reminded of Cromwell, of Havelock, of Livingstone, and of Captain Hedley Viccars. But Gordon's p. 16 individuality stood out in its incomparable blending of masterfulness and tenderness, of strength and sweetness. His high and noble nature was made more chivalrous by his fervent, deep and real piety. His absolute trust in God guided him serenely through the greatest difficulties. Because of that he was not alone in the deepest solitude. He was not depressed in the direst extremity. He had learned the happy art of leaning upon the Omnipotent arm."



Early in 1884 a leading newspaper said of him, "General Gordon is without doubt the finest captain of irregular forces living." About the same time Mr. Gladstone said of him, "General Gordon is no common man. It is no exaggeration to say he is a hero. It is no exaggeration to say he is a Christian hero." Mr. W. E. Forster also remarked of him, "I know no other man living for whom I have a greater admiration than General Gordon. He is utterly unselfish. He is regardless of money. He cares nothing for fame or glory. He cares little for life or death. He is a deeply religious man. The world to come, and God's government over this, are to him the greatest of life's realities. p. 17 True heroism has been said to be a sacrifice of

self for the benefit of others. If this is true, Gordon has well won the appellation, "The Hero of the Soudan." His soldierly qualities were first tested in the Crimea, where we find him in 1854 and 1855. Here for the first time in his military career he was brought face to face with all the horrors of actual war, and here for the first time he saw friend and foe lie locked like brothers in each other's arms. Here he got his first baptism of fire; and here he showed the splendid qualities which in after years made him so famous and so beloved. An old soldier who served under him during this terrible campaign says "I shall never forget that remarkable figure and form, which was an inspiration to all who knew him, and saw him on the field of carnage and blood."

He was utterly unconcerned in the midst of dangers and death. He would twirl his cane and good humouredly say "Now boys, don't fear, I see no danger." On one occasion when engaged in the very thick of a most awful struggle he said, "Now my boys, I'm your officer, I lead, you follow," and he walked literally through p. 18a shower of lead and iron with as little concern apparently, as if he were walking across his own drawing-room; and he came out of the conflict without a scar.

Sir E. Stanton in his dispatches home, making special reference to our hero, says—"Young Gordon has attracted the notice of his superiors out here, not only by his activity, but by his special aptitude for war, developing itself amid the trenches before Sebastopol, in a personal knowledge of the enemy's movements, such as no officer has displayed. We have sent him frequently right up to the Russian entrenchments to find out what new moves they are making." Amid all the excitement of war and its dangers he never omitted writing to his mother; an example I hope my readers, if boys, or girls, will studiously copy. He loved his mother with the passion of his great loving heart. Soldier lads often forget their mother's influence, their mother's prayers, and their mother's God. Writing home to his mother he says "We are giving the Redan shells day and night, in order to prevent the Russians from repairing it and they repay us by sending amongst us awful p. 19missiles of death and destruction, and it requires one to be very nimble to keep out of their way. I have now been thirty-four times, twenty-four hours in the trenches; that is more than a month without any relief whatever,

and I assure you it gets very tedious. Still one does not mind if any advance is being made."

An eye witness of this bloody work in the trenches and the storming of the Malakof and the Redan, writes:—

"On that terrible 8th of September, every gun and mortar that our people and our noble allies, the French, could bring to bear upon the enemy's work, was raining death and destruction upon them. The stormers had all got into their places. They consisted of about 1,000 men of the Old Light and 2nd Division; the supports were formed up as closely as possible to them, and all appeared in readiness. History may well say, 'the storming of a fortress is an awful task.' There we stood not a word being spoken; every one seemed to be full of thought; many a courageous heart, that was destined to be still in death in one short hour, was now beating high."

p. 20 "It was about 11.15 a.m., and our heavy guns were firing in such a way as I have never heard before. The batteries fired in volleys or salvos as fast as they could load and fire, the balls passing a few feet above our heads, while the air seemed full of shell. The enemy were not idle; for round shot, shell, grape and musket balls were bounding and whizzing all about us, and earth and stones were rattling about our heads like hail. Our poor fellows fell fast, but still our sailors and artillery men stuck to it manfully. We knew well that this could not last long, but many a brave soldier's career was cut short long before we advanced to the attack—strange some of our older hands were smoking and taking not the slightest notice of this 'dance of death.' Some men were being carried past dead, and others limping to the rear with mangled limbs, while their life's blood was streaming fast away. We looked at each other

with amazement for we were now under a most terrible fire. We knew well it meant death to many of us. Several who had gone through the whole campaign shook hands saying, 'This is hot,' 'Good bye, old boy,' 'Write to the old p. 21folks for me if I do not return.' This request was made by many of us. I was close to one of our Generals, who stood watch in hand, when suddenly at 12 o'clock mid-day the French drums and bugles sounded the charge, and with a shout, 'Vive l'Empereur' repeated over and over again by some 50,000 men, a shout that was enough to strike terror into the enemy. The French, headed by the Zouaves, sprang forward at the Malakof like a lot of cats. On they went like a lot of bees, or rather like the dashing of the waves of the sea against a rock. We had a splendid view of their operations, it was grand but terrible; the deafening shouts of the advancing hosts told us they were carrying all before them."

"They were now completely enveloped in smoke and fire, but column after column kept advancing, pouring volley after volley into the breasts of the defenders. They (the French) meant to have it, let the cost be what it might. At 12.15 up went the proud flag of France, with a shout that drowned for a time the roar of both cannon and musketry. And now came our turn. As soon as the French were seen upon the p. 22Malakof our stormers sprang forward, led by Colonel Windham—the old Light Division consisting of 300 men of the 90th, about the same number of the 97th, and about 400 of the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, and with various detachments of the 2nd and Light Divisions, and a number of blue jackets, carrying scaling ladders. Our men advanced splendidly, with a ringing British cheer, although the enemy poured a terrible fire of grape, canister and musketry into them, which swept down whole

companies at a time. We, the supports, moved forward to back up our comrades. We advanced as quickly as we could until we came to the foremost trench, when we leaped the parapet, then made a rush at the blood stained walls of the Redan. We had had a clear run of over 200 yards under that murderous fire of grape, canister and musketry. How any ever lived to pass that 200 yards seemed a miracle; for our poor fellows fell one on the top of another; but nothing could stop us but death. On we went shouting until we reached the redoubt. The fighting inside these works was of the most desperate character, butt and p. 23 bayonet, foot and fist; the enemy's guns were quickly spiked: this struggle lasted about an hour and a half. It was an awful time, about 3,000 of our brave soldiers were slain in this short period." Our hero Gordon, tells us that on the evening of this 8th of September—

"I heard most terrific explosions, the earth seemed to be shaken to its very centre;—It was afterwards discovered the enemy's position was no longer tenable, so they had fired some 300 tons of gunpowder, which had blown up all their vast forts and magazines. O! what a night: many of our poor fellows had been nearly buried in the *debris*, and burning mass: the whole of Sebastopol was in flames. The Russians were leaving it helter-skelter—a complete rout, and a heavy but gloriously-won victory."

For his acknowledged ability, his fine heroism, and his true loyalty to his superiors during this most trying campaign, he received the well-earned decoration of the Legion of Honour from the French Government, a mark of distinction very rarely conferred upon so young an officer.

p. 24 "God gives us men, a time like that demands.
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready

hands;
Men whom the lusts of office cannot kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men who have honour, men who never lie.”

We must not leave this part of our story without a brief notice of one whose name will live in song and story, when this generation shall have passed away. Many noble English ladies bravely went out to nurse the suffering soldiers; but in this noble band was one whose name remains a synonym for kindly sympathy, tenderness and peace—Miss Florence Nightingale.

The following lines were written in her praise—

“Britain has welcomed home with open hand
Her gallant soldiers to their native land;
But one alone the Nation’s thanks did shun,
Though Europe rings with all that she hath done;
For when will shadow on the wall e’er fail,
To picture forth fair Florence Nightingale:
Her deeds are blazoned on the scroll of fame,
And England well may prize her deathless name.”

p. 25 CHAPTER II.

“The greatness of a nation depends upon the men it can breed and rear. — *Froude*.

The war over and peace duly established, Lieutenant Gordon (for so he was then) accompanied General Sir Lintorn Simmons to Galatz, where, as assistant commissioner, he was engaged in fixing the new frontiers of Russia, Turkey and Roumania. In 1857, when his duties here were finished, he went with the same officer to Armenia; there, in the same capacity, he was engaged in laying down the Asiatic frontiers of Russia and Turkey. When this work was completed he returned home and was quartered at Chatham, and employed for a time as Field Work Instructor and Adjutant. In 1860, now holding the rank of Captain, he joined the Army in China, and was present at the surrender of Peking; and for his services he was promoted to the rank of Major.

p. 26 THE BURNING OF THE SUMMER PALACE.

“On the eleventh of October,” Gordon relates, “we were sent down in a hurry to throw up earth works against the City; as the Chinese refused to give up the gate we demanded their surrender before we could treat with them. They were also required to give up the prisoners. You will be sorry to hear the treatment they have suffered has been very bad. Poor De Norman, who was with me in Asia, is one of the victims. It appears they were tied so tight by the wrists that the flesh mortified, and they died in the greatest torture. Up to the time that elapsed before they arrived at the Summer Palace, they were well treated, but then the ill-treatment began. The Emperor is supposed to have been there at the time.

But to go back to the work, the Chinese were given until twelve on the 13th, to give up the p. 27 gate. We made a lot of batteries, and everything was ready for assault of the wall, which is a battlement, forty feet high, but of inferior masonry; at 11.30 p.m., however, the gate was opened, and we took possession; so our work was of no avail. The Chinese had then, until the 23rd, to think over our terms of treaty, and to pay up ten thousand pounds (#10,000) for each Englishman, and five hundred pounds (#500) for each native soldier

who had died during their captivity. This they did, and the money was paid, and the treaty signed yesterday. I could not witness it, as all officers commanding companies were obliged to remain in camp, owing to the ill-treatment the prisoners experienced at the Summer Palace. The General ordered this to be destroyed, and stuck up proclamations to say why it was ordered. We accordingly went out, and after pillaging it, burned the whole magnificent palace, and destroyed most valuable property, which could not be replaced for millions of pounds.

“This Palace” (wrote the author of *Our Own Times*), “covered an area of many miles. The Palace of Adrian, at Tivoli, might have been p. 28 hidden in one of its courts. Gardens, temples, small lodges and pagodas, groves, grottoes, lakes, bridges, terraces, artificial hills, diversified the vast space. All the artistic treasures, all the curiosities, archfological and other, that Chinese wealth and taste, such as it was, could bring together.” Gordon notes, “This palace, with its surrounding buildings, over two hundred in number, covered an area eight by ten miles in extent.” He says, “it makes one’s heart burn to see such beauty destroyed; it was as if Windsor Palace, South Kensington Museum, and British Museum, all in one, were in flames: you can scarcely imagine the beauty and magnificence of the things we were bound to destroy.”

“These palaces were so large, and we were so pressed for time, that we could not plunder them carefully. Quantities of gold ornaments were burned, considered as brass. It was wretchedly demoralizing for an army: everybody was wild for plunder . . . The throne and room were lined with ebony, carved in a wonderful manner. There were huge mirrors of all shapes and sizes, clocks, watches, musical boxes with puppets p. 29 on them, magnificent china of every description, heaps and heaps of silks of all colours, coral screens, large amounts of treasures, etc. The French have smashed up everything in a most shameful way. It was a scene of utter destruction which passes my description.” This was not much in Gordon’s line.

In the following year he made a tour on horseback to the outer wall of China at Kalgan, accompanied by Lieutenant Cardew. A Chinese lad of the age of fourteen, who knew a little English, acted

as their servant and interpreter, while their personal luggage was conveyed in the Chinese carts. In the course of this tour we are told they passed through districts which had never before been visited by any European. At Kalgan the great wall was seen, with its parapet about twenty-two feet high, and sixteen feet broad. Both sides were solid brick, each being three times the size of our English bricks. Gordon writes: "It is wonderful to see the long line of wall stretching over the hills as far as the eye can reach." From Kalgan they travelled westwards to Taitong; here they saw huge caravans of camels laden with tea going towards p. 30Russia. Here they were forced to have the axle trees of their carts widened, for they had come into a great part of the country where the wheels were set wider than in the provinces whence they came. Their carts, therefore, no longer fitted into the deep ruts which had been worn into the terribly bad roads. The main object of their journey was to find out if there was in the Inner Wall any pass besides the Tchatiaou which on that side of the country led from the Russian territory to Peking. It was not until they reached Taiyuen that they struck the road that led to Peking or Tientsin.

Their first bit of trouble on this somewhat venturesome tour occurred at Taiyueu; when the bill was brought for their night's entertainment, they found it was most exorbitant. They saw they were likely to have trouble, so they sent on the carts with luggage and waited at this strange hostelry till they believed they had got well out of the way. Then they offered what they believed was a reasonable amount in payment of their bill. It was refused. They then tried to mount their horses but the people at the Inn stopped them. Major Gordon hereupon p. 31drew his revolver more for show than for use, for he allowed them to take it from him. He then said, "Let us go to the Mandarin's house." To this consent was given, and the two wide-awake English officers walked alongside their horses. On the way Gordon said to his companion "are you ready to mount?" "Yes" he replied. So they mounted quietly, and went on with the people. When they reached the Mandarin's, they turned their horses and galloped off after their carts as fast as they could, having paid what they believed a reasonable amount for expenses. The people yelled and rushed after them, but it was too late. Some distance from the place where they had spent the night they came upon the

pass over the mountains which led down into the country, drained by the great Peiho river. "The descent" says Gordon, "was terrible, and the cold so intense that raw eggs were frozen as hard as if they had been boiled half an hour." To add to their troubles, the carts they had sent on in front had been attacked by robbers. They, however, with many difficulties managed to reach Tientsin in safety; their leave of absence p. 32 had been exceeded by about fourteen days. In 1862 Major Gordon left for Shanghai under the orders of Sir Charles Staveley who had been appointed to the command of the English forces in China. At the very time that England and France were at war with China, a terrible and far reaching rebellion was laying waste whole provinces. An article in our London *Daily News* about this date said, "But for Gordon the whole Continent of China might have been a scene of utter and hopeless ruin and devastation." At the date he took charge of the "ever victorious army," China was in a state of widespread anarchy and confusion.

This rebellion which Gordon was here authorized to suppress was called "The Tai-ping rebellion." Its rise was brought about by a strange mixture of incredulity and fanaticism, caused by some European Christian giving away his literature. A village demagogue named Hung-tsne-Shuen caught the idea, after reading the papers referred to, that he was inspired; that he was God, King, Emperor, and that he ought to rule; so, puffed up with pride and insatiable ambition, he began raising an army; and p. 33 aimed at nothing less than the usurpation of the "Dragon Throne." Some thought him mad; but he gathered about him some 20,000 men whom he had influenced to believe in him as the "Second Celestial Brother," and gave out he was a seer of visions, a prophet of vengeance and freedom; a champion of the poor and oppressed; and many were mad enough to believe him, and thus he raised an army which grew in strength until it reached some hundreds of thousands strong; he then proclaimed himself the Heavenly King, The Emperor of the great place; and then with five wangs or warrior kings, chosen from amongst his kinsmen, he marched through China, devastating the country, and increasing his army in his progress.

The most populous, and until now wealthy provinces were soon in his hands. The silk factories were silent; the Cities were falling into utter and hopeless desolation: rebellion, war and famine, raged