YOU SING

CHAPTER I.

Regarded collectively, the Chinese may safely be classified under the head of unpleasant races. Most people who have had personal dealings with them will doubtless admit that, while there are to be discovered among them a tiny sprinkling of really decent men and women, taken "by and large" they are to Westerns at any rate, anathema. And yet, when due allowance is made for environment, and for hereditary peculiarities of many strange kinds—for which, of course, the individual is in no way responsible—it may not be too bold an assertion that the Chinese are a people who only need a little real leadership on Western lines to become a truly great nation. They possess all the necessary qualifications for such a splendid future and few of the drawbacks. Many virtues that are among us only inculcated by much laborious tuition, are the Chinese sui generis. No one will deny that they know how to die; were it possible to teach them how to live, such a revolution would be felt in the progress of the world as it has never yet witnessed. Of course, this does not touch the vast question as to whether such a resurrection of China is to be welcomed or dreaded.

But my intention in these pages is far from that of discussing the economic future of China. Such a task would be indefinitely beyond my powers, besides being utterly unnecessary and out of place here. Besides, I do not really feel sufficiently interested in the Chinese collectively. My story is about a single Chinaman who played a very important part in my own history, and who well deserved a far more powerful testimony than any I am able to bear to his virtues.

But, first, in order to launch my story properly, I must premise that in one of my vagrom voyages, while I was only a puny lad of thirteen, I was flung ashore in Liverpool, penniless and, of course, friendless. For many days I lived—or, rather, I did not die—by picking up, bird-like, such unvalued trifles of food as chance threw in my way while I wandered about the docks; but as there were many more experienced urchins with sharper eyes than mine on the same keen quest, it may be well imagined that I did not wax overfat upon my findings. Unfortunately my seafaring instincts kept me near the docks at all times, where most of my associates were as hunger-bitten as myself; had I gone up town I should probably have fared better.

However, I had put a very keen edge indeed upon my appetite one bitter November afternoon, when, prowling along the Coburg Dock Quay, I was suddenly brought up "all standing" by a most maddening smell of soup. With dilated nostrils I drew in the fragrant breeze, and immediately located its source as the galley of a barque that lay near, loading. I must have looked hungry as I swiftly came alongside of her, for the broad-faced cook, who was standing at his galley-door swabbing his steaming face after his sultry sojourn within, presently caught sight of me and lifted a beckoning finger. I was by his side in two bounds, and before I had quite realized my good fortune I was loading up at a great rate from a comfortably-sized dish of plum soup. My benefactor said nothing as the eager spoonfuls passed, but lolled against the door placidly regarding me with much the same expression as one would a hungry dog with a just discovered bone. When at last I was well distended, he asked me a few questions in a queer broken English that I immediately recognized as the German version. What was I? Where did I come from? Would I like to go to sea? And so on. Eagerly and hopefully I answered him, much to his amazement; for, like every other seaman I fell in with in those days, he found it hard to believe that I had already been nearly two years at sea, so small and weak did I appear. But the upshot of our interview was that he introduced me to the skipper, a burly North German, who, looking stolidly down upon me, between the regular puffs of smoke from his big pipe, said:

"Vell, poy; ju dinks ju like du komm in a Cherman schoop—hein?"

I faltered out a few words, not very coherently, I am afraid, for the prospect of getting any ship at all was just like a glimpse of heaven to me. Fortunately for my hopes, Captain Strauss was a man of action, so, cutting short my faltering reply, he resumed: "All righdt. Ve yoost loosd a leedle Engelsch boy lige you. He pin mit me more as ein jeer, gabinpoy, und mein vife lige him fery vell. Ju do so goot as him, you vas all righdt. Vat ju call jorselluf—hein?"

"Tom, sir," I answered promptly.

"Ya; den ve calls you Dahn. Dat oder poy ve calls Dahn, und so ju gomes all de same for him—aind id?"

That seemed to settle the matter, for he turned away abruptly and was gone. I hastened to my friend the cook, and told him what the skipper had said, with the result that in another five minutes I was busy laying the cloth for dinner in the cabin as if I had been the original Dan just come back. A pretty, fair-haired little girl of about ten years of age watched me curiously from a state-room door with the frank straightforward curiosity of a child; and I, boy-like, was on my mettle to show her how well I could do my work. Presently she came forward and spoke to me; but her remarks being in German, I could only smile feebly and look foolish; whereupon she indignantly snapped out, "Schaafskopf," and ran away. She returned almost directly with her mother, a buxom, placid-looking dame of about thirty-five, who addressed me in a dignified tone. Again I was in a hole, for she spoke only German also, and if ever a poor urchin felt nonplussed, I did. This drawback made my berth an uncomfortable one at first; but, with such opportunities as I had and such a powerful inducement to spur me on, I soon picked up enough to understand what was said to me, and to make some suitable reply.

The vessel was a smart-looking, well-found barque of about six hundred tons, called the Blitzen of Rostock, and carried a crew of fourteen all told. Each of the other thirteen was a master of mine, and seldom allowed an opportunity to slip of asserting his authority; while the skipper's wife and daughter evidently believed that I ought to be perpetually in motion. Consequently my berth was no sinecure; and, whatever my qualifications may have been, I have no doubt I earned my food and the tiny triangular lair under the companionladder wherein I crept — I was going to say when my work was done—but a rather better term to use would be, in the short intervals between jobs.

Now, the story of the next nine months on board the Blitzen is by no means devoid of interest; but I have an uneasy feeling that I have already tried the reader's patience enough with necessary preliminaries to the story of You Sing. After calling at several ports in South America, looking in at Alagoa Bay, visiting Banjoewangie and Cheribon, we finally appeared to have settled down as a Chinese coaster, trading between all sorts of out-of-the-way ports for native consignees, and carrying a queer assortment of merchandise. Finally we found ourselves at Amoy under charter for Ilo-Ilo with a full cargo of Chinese "notions." Owing, I suppose, to the docility of the German crew, and the high state of discipline maintained on board, we still carried the same crew that we left England with; but I must say that, while I admired the good seamanship displayed by the skipper and his officers, I was heartily weary of my lot on board. I had never become a favourite, not even with the little girl, who seemed to take a delight in imitating her father and mother by calling me strange-sounding, Teutonic names of opprobrium; and I was beaten regularly, not apparently from any innate brutality, but from sheer force of habit, as a London costermonger beats his faithful donkey. The only thing that made life at all tolerable was that I was fairly well fed and enjoyed robust health; while I never lost the hope that in some of our wanderings we should happen into an English port, where I might be able to run away. That blissful idea I kept steadily before me as a beacon-light to cheer me on. Happily, dread of losing my wages in such an event did not trouble me, because I had none to lose as far as I knew; I did not stipulate for any when I joined.

It was on a lovely night that we swung clear of Amoy harbour, and, catching a light land-breeze, headed across the strait towards Formosa. Many fishing sampans were dotted about the sleeping sea, making little sepia-splashing on the wide white wake of the moon. Little care was taken to avoid running them down; nor did they seem to feel any great anxiety as to whether we did so or not, and as a consequence we occasionally grazed closely past one, and looked down curiously upon the passive figures sitting in their frail craft like roosting sea-birds upon a floating log. Without any actual damage to them, we gradually drew clear of their cruising-ground, and, hauling to the southward a little, stood gently onward for Cape South, the wind still very light and the weather perfect. But suddenly we ran into a strange heavy mist that obscured all the sea around us, and yet did not have that wetness that usually characterises the clinging vapour of the sea-fog. Through this opaque veil we glided as if sailing in cloudland, a silence enwrapping us as if we had been mysteriously changed into a ghostly ship and crew. Then a quick strong blast of wind burst out of the brume right ahead, throwing all the sails aback and driving the vessel stern foremost at a rate that seemed out of all proportion to its force.

For a few moments the watch on deck appeared to be stupid with surprise. Then the skipper roused by the unusual motion, rushed on deck, and his deep, guttural voice broke the spell as he issued abrupt orders. All hands were soon busy getting the vessel under control, shortening sail and trimming yards. But to everybody's speechless amazement, it was presently found that entangled alongside lay a small junk, a craft of some twenty to thirty tons, upon whose deck no sign of life was visible. All hands crowded to the rail, staring and muttering almost incoherent comment upon this weird visitor that had so suddenly arisen, as it were, out of the void. As usual, the skipper first recovered his working wits, and ordered a couple of the men to jump on board the junk and investigate. They obeyed unquestioningly, as was their wont, and presently reported that she was unmanned, but apparently full to the hatches of assorted Chinese cargo in mats and boxes. The skipper's voice took an exultant ring as he ordered the vessel to be well secured alongside, and her contents to be transferred on board of us with all possible despatch. Meanwhile the strange mist had vanished as suddenly as it had arisen, and the full bright moon shone down upon the toiling men, who with wonderful celerity were breaking out the junk's cargo and hurling it on to our decks. Such was their expedition that in half-an-hour our decks were almost impassable for the queer-looking boxes and bales and bundles of all shapes disgorged from the junk's hold. Then they invaded the evil-scented cabin, and ransacked its many hiding-places, finding numerous neatly-bound parcels wrapped in fine silky matting. And, last of all—they declared he must have suddenly been materialised, or words to that effect—they lighted upon a lad of probably sixteen years of age. He showed no surprise, after the fatalistic fashion of his countrymen, but stood gravely before them like some quaint Mongolian idol carved out of yellow jade, and ready for any fortune that might await him. With scant ceremony, he too was manhandled on deck, for the command was urgent to finish the work; the busy labourers followed him, and the junk was cast adrift.

Some sort of rough stowage was made of the treasure-trove thus peculiarly shipped; and, the excitement that had sustained their unusual exertions having subsided, the tired crew flung themselves down anywhere and slept—slept like dead men, all except the officer of the watch and the helmsman. They had at first little to do that might keep them from slumber, for the wind had dropped to a stark calm, which in those sheltered waters, remote from the disturbing influence of any great ocean swell, left the ship almost perfectly motionless, a huge silhouette against the glowing surface of a silver lake. But presently it dawned upon the mate who was in charge of the deck, that although the vessel had certainly not travelled more than a mile since the junk was cast adrift, that strange craft was nowhere to be seen; and, stern martinet though he was, the consciousness of something uncanny about the recent business stole through him, shrinking his skin and making his mouth dry, until for relief he sought the helsman and entered into conversation with him on the subject. That worthy, a stolid unemotional Dutchman named Pfeiffer, scanned the whole of the palpitating brightness around before he would assent to the mate's theory of any sudden disappearance of our late companion; but, having done so and failed to discover the smallest speck against that dazzling surface, he too was fain to admit gthat the thing was not comforting. Right glad were those two men when the interminably long watch was over, and the sharp business-like notes of the bell seemed to dissipate in some measure the chilling atmosphere of mystery that hemmed them in. To the second mate the retiring officer said nothing of his fears, but hastened below, hurriedly scratched a perfunctory note or two on the log-slate, and bundled, "all standing"—that is, dressed as he was—into his bunk, pulling the upper feather-bed right over his head, as if to shut out the terror that was upon him. Slowly the remainder of the night passed away; but when at last the tiny suggestion of paleness along the eastern horizon gave the first indication of the day's approach, no change, not even the slightest, had occurred to increase the mystery whose environment all felt more or less keenly. As the advancing glory of the new day displaced the deep purple of the night, the awakening crew recalled, as if it had been a lifetime ago, the strange happening of the past few hours. But it was not until the clear light was fully come that the significance of the whole affair was manifest. For there, seated upon a mat-bound case, stamped all over with red 'chops,' was the Chinese youth, whose existence had up till now been unnoticed from the time he was first bundled on board. Impassive as a wooden image, he looked as if the position he had held throughout the night had left him unwearied, and to all appearance the strange and sudden change in his environment possessed for him no significance whatever. But now, when the surly-looking mate approached him and looked him over with evident distaste, he slid off his perch, and, kneeling at the officer's feet, kissed the deck thrice in manifest token of his entire submission to whatever fate might be dealt out to him. The mate stood silently looking down upon him as if hardly able to decide what to do with him. While this curious little episode was being enacted the skipper appeared, and, hastening to the mate's side, addressed the grovelling Celestial in what he supposed to be the only possible medium of communication — "pidgin" English, which, coupled to a German accent, was the queerest jargon conceivable.

"Vell," he said, "vot pelong you pifgin — hay? You savvy work, one dime?"

Lifting his yellow mask of a face, but still remaining on his knees, the waif made answer:

"No Shabbee. You Sing."

To be Continued.

GREAT MAN'S TENDER HEART.

An Incident of Lord Lawrence's Sea Voyage to India.

Lord Lawrence, viceroy of India, was a blunt man of action, impatient of contradiction, and thoroughly self-reliant. Yet, like many of the truly great, he had a heart as tender as a woman's. The night on which he started from London to govern India he gathered all his family in the drawing room and made each child repeat a favorite hymn to him. His youngest son, 10 years old, nestled in his father's arms. Suddenly the strong man burst into tears.

"I shall never," he cried, "see Bertie a child again!"

It was not of the hardships before him, or of his own death he thought, but of the fact that Bertie would not be a child to him on his return.

On board the steamer with the governor-general of India, was a lady with her infant child. She neglected the baby, which revenged itself by crying day and night. The passengers complained in language more forcible than polite.

"Steward, throw that baby overboard!" was petulantly shouted from sleepless berths.

At last Lord Lawrence, seeing that the child was left motherless, by its own mother, took it on his knee. For hours he would hold it, showing it his watch and anything that would amuse it. The child took to the great, strong man and was always quiet when he held it.

"Why do you, my lord," asked one of the relieved passengers, surprised to see the governor-general of India playing nurse to a crying baby, "why do you take such notice of that child?"

"Because, to tell you the truth," answered Lord Lawrence, with a merry twinkle in his eye, "that child is the only being in the ship who I can feel quite sure does not want to get anything out of me."

THE EXACT MEANING.

You say, said a judge to a witness, that the plaintiff resorted to an ingenious use of circumstantial evidence. State just exactly what you mean by that.

Well, said the witness, my exact meaning is that he lied.

TO PAY THE WAR'S COST.

HOW GREAT BRITAIN HOPES TO MEET THE EXPENSES.

Economy in the Administration of the Two South African Republics to Make Up $200,000,000 Indemnity Raised by Three Per Cent. Loan Redeemable in Three Years.

Aside from the abstract principles involved in satisfying the demands of the Outlanders for representation and a more efficient, honest and economic administration in the Transvaal, setting aside the enormous strategic value of the two South African republics for supremacy on the Dark Continent, England hopes to find a material recompense for the war in the public property and revenues of the belligerent governments.

It has been stated that the war at present is costing Great Britain at the rate of $1,000,000 a day, but her financiers figure that she can easily recover a cash indemnity of at least $20,000,000, without adding a penny of taxation, touching tangible assets valued at hundreds of millions, or reckoning the great increase expected in revenues under an improved government.

Before the Witwatersrand gold discovery, in 1885-86, the revenue of the Transvaal was $1,052,970 and the expenditure only $973,420. Since then, however, the British say that corruption and extravagance, with large expenditures in recent years on munitions of war abroad and the construction of fortifications at home, have raised the standard until the budget estimate for 1899 showed revenues of $21,700,000 and expenditures of $21,855,000, or twenty-two times those of the old frugal days.

WHERE CUTS ARE CONTEMPLATED.

Of these expenditures $6,081,970 is set down for government salaries, which, on the basis of those for similar positions in Cape Colony and Natal, Englishmen say can safely be cut in two. This would give an annual saving of $3,040,925, but it is estimated at only $3,000,000 to allow plenty of margin.

What are officially called special and sundry charges, comprising, it is believed, the secret service fund with which arms have been bought and useful newspapers, in Europe subsidized, as well as individuals, have averaged about $2,100,000 a year since 18.3, and their abolition, of course, would effect an equivalent economy. This is put down, however, at $2,000,000.

Frankly denominated military expenditures is an item on the Boer budget of $1,325,000—in 1897 it was as much as $3,070,000—which, it is argued may be wiped off the state of annual expenses, but its saving is reckoned at only $1,000,000.

Under the head of public work the expenditure has grown from $1,765,000 in 1895 to $3,350,000 for this year. This, says the British calculator, can be accounted for only by the cost of erecting forts. Taking the figures of 1895 as a basis of comparison, though it is believed that even then part of the expenditure was due to fortification, and ignoring the fact that this year an increase of $1,585,000 to charge to fort building. For the sake of round figures in the total only $1,000,000 of this is regarded as an annual economy.

The Transvaal dynamite monopoly formed one of the Outlanders' grievances on the ground that the quality of the explosive was bad and that it cost them more than would a first class article imported by themselves after payment to the government of a profit equivalent to that which the monopolist nominally received. Under the Boer arrangement the government derives only $150,000 a year from the monopoly, while the concessionaries' annual profits are put at $3,000,000. As the cancellation of the concession has been urged on evidence that the concessionaires have frequently violated their contract, it is contended that here is $3,000,000 additional revenue which the British would acquire as soon as they assumed the Transvaal government.

Expenditures in the Orange Free State have risen from $1,359,075 in 1895 to $4,860,000 in 1898. Here again there is nothing except military preparation to account for the increase. Comparing the cost of British colonial administration with that of this Republic, it is believed that $2,000,000 a year could readily be saved from the expenditures of the Orange Free State, but allowance is made for only $500,000.

WOULD MORE THAN PAY LOAN.

For the redemption of a three per cent. loan of $200,000,000 in thirty years there would be an annual charge of $10,200,000.

This is made up, with nearly half a million to spare, by the items of saving enumerated.

These are conservative estimates, according to those who make them, of what mere economy could do. They take no account of an increased revenue, such as is to be expected under an administration more honest and efficient than that of the Boer bureaucracy has been.

Mr. Hays Hammond has said that such an improved government would be equivalent to a saving of at least $1.50 a ton to the mine owner. This, on the basis of the tonnage of ore crushed in 1898, would mean $24,130,000 in dividends in addition to the $24,237,525 paid in dividends by the mines that year, despite all the drawbacks under which they labored.

As the Transvaal government has a tax of five per cent. on these dividends, this item alone would mean an additional revenue of $1,206,500.

SOME OF THE ASSETS.

Then there are the assets of the two republics. Those of the Transvaal contain twenty-five million acres of land on which are the Barberton gold fields. They include also one-third of the share capital of the Netherland Railway Company, besides the right to eighty-five per cent. of the road's net profits after the payment of the fixed dividened on its stock. This percentage alone in this year's budget was set down at $3,375,000, which, capitalized on a three per cent. basis, would represent $112,500,000.

Among the public property of the Orange Free State, which includes lands, telegraphs and other sources of income, is the railway system, conservatively valued at $27,500,000, which in 1897 produced gross profits amounting to $2,520,000.

And so, while her loss in blood may be beyond all compensation, England hopes to recoup herself for the mere material cost of her latest South African war.

DELAGOA BAY.

A Bit of History That is Interesting at This Time.

Delagoa Bay was discovered by Vasco de Gama in 1502, and explored forty years later by a Portuguese officer named Capt. Lorenco Marquez. Until the beginning of the present century Portugal exercised a more or less nominal sovereignty over the bay as well as over the entire coast line of Africa, but had completely abandoned its posts and trading stations on the east coast when in 1822 Capt. Cunliffe-Owen, of the royal navy, obtained from native chiefs a cession of Delagoa Bay to Great Britain. England founded a town on the bay, to which was given the name of Bombay and in 1867 Portugal refounded immediately opposite the town of Lorenzo Marquez, on the ruins of the old-time trading station of that name. In 1869 the Portuguese concluded a commercial treaty with the South African republic, and this brought to an acute stage the dispute as to the ownership of Delagoa Bay. The question was referred to the arbitration of the president of the French republic, the English resting their case on the concessions obtained by Capt. Cunliffe-Owen. In 1875 Marshal MacMahon, then chief magistrate of France, gave an award in favor of Portugal, which was loyally accepted by England, an agreement, however, being concluded between the two nations, according to which England secured from Portugal a preferential right to all of her territory south of the Zambesi, that is to say including Delagoa Bay.

For a time one heard but little of Delagoa bay, and then the place was once more brought on the tapis by the conflict which arose in connection with the railroad, now running from Lorenzo Marquez to Pretoria. The Transvaal portion of the line was built by German capitalists, while the forty miles of Portuguese territory were constructed by an American concessionaire, Col. McMurdo, with the help of English capital. Before the line had been opened very long Col. McMurdo suddenly died, and the Portuguese government took advantage thereof to cancel his concessions on the ground that the McMurdo Company had not carried out all its engagements. Both the United States and the English government thereupon intervened, and eleven years ago it was agreed to submit to arbitration the question as to the amount of compensation due by the Portuguese government to the McMurdo Anglo-American Company for the seizure of the line, the arbitrators being selected by the Swiss government. They have failed until now to give an award. But it is certain when granted to be against the Portuguese government, which will be mulcted in heavy damages to the company, damages which it will be unable to pay without the assistance of Great Britain. For the Portuguese treasury is on the verge of bankruptcy.

FRENCH BABIES.

It is not generally known that in France it is forbidden under severe penalties for any one to give infants under 1 year any form of solid food unless such be ordered by a written prescription signed by a legally qualified medical man. Nurses are also forbidden to use in rearing of infants confided to their care at any time or under any pretext whatever any nursing bottle provided with rubber tube. Several other and equally stringent laws have recently been enacted by the French Government, which, despairing of obtaining any increase in the birth rate in their land, are now turning their attention to the saving of the few children that are born.

A LOGICAL CONCLUSION.

They had a dispute, and they had agreed to leave it to the military expert.

What bullet, they asked, do you consider the deadliest?

For several minutes he remained in a brown study. Then he looked up with the air of one who had settled the matter finally and definitely.

The one that hits, he said.

PERSONAL EQUATION.

Teacher—If one servant girl could clean two rooms in two hours, how long would it take two servant girls to do it?

Little Girl—Four hours.

Teacher—Wrong. It would only take one hour.

Little Girl—Oh, I didn't know you were talking about servant girls that wasn't on speaking terms.

MERELY A HINT.

Mr. Borem, 11 p.m.—My motto is Pay as you go.

Miss Cutting—Well, I'm willing to lend you a small amount if it will help you out.

TUGELA RIVER BATTLE.

MR. BENNETT BURLEIGH DESCRIBES THE ACTION.

How and Why the British Attack Failed—Heroism of the British Soldiers—The Loss of the Guns.

The first account giving any adequate explanation of General Buller's defeat at the Tugela River comes by mail from Mr. Bennett Burleigh, The Daily Telegraph's correspondent, says a London despatch. It appears that the battle orders issued by General Clery, providing for the effective support of the artillery by General Barton's and General Dundonald's brigades, were never completed. Those for General Hart's brigade failed to reach Dundonald's way, Lord Dundonald failed to support, and General Barton got part of his forces in an untenable position. Colonel Long, with the artillery, outplaced the escort of the guns and they were lost. Briefly, that seems to be the story of the Tugela River, but through the graphic columns he continually recurs to the discovery of unexpected entrenchments and awful fusilades from hidden foes and infantry such as has seldom marked British battlefields.

A HURRICANE OF LEAD.

After describing how the British forces began the advance at daylight and how the Boers let them absolutely unmolested, the correspondent says:—At 6.25 there suddenly burst an awful crash of Boer musketry upon the batteries and advancing infantry. The rattle of the Mauser swelled and was maintained as one continuous roar. From the buildings and lines of trenches south of the river and from the river bank itself the Boers fired at our gunners and foot men, and from the trenches on the northern side of the Tugela River and from Fort Wilkie and elsewhere they sent out a hurricane of hidden hail, and the bullets remorselessly rained upon the ground in all directions, raising puffs of dust and tearing through the air with shrill sounds. Few have ever seen so heavy and so deadly a fusillade; but neither the British gunners nor the infantry faltered or wavered. Cannon were wheeled into position although many of the horses and men were shot down, and the manœuvre was completed in an unmistakable and straightforward, not over the prettiest day ever seen, and more devoted sons. As the gallant artillerists, including proud and brave men, met death, so the British soldiers succumbed to die stoutly, and they advanced with alacrity, stepped forward to do their duty—e.g., or the grave. In one case a gun always advanced alone, and an American, who had seen service at home, in Cuba and Manila, has seen countrymen engaged in all this, and he answered—"Yes, it is marvelous, but was fine."

Closer and closer they kept to the Boer trenches, in fifty yards of the enemy's rifles, lying down, they fired and but there was nothing at.

HEROISM OF THE BRITISH.

By 7.15 the British had driven on the Boers to the banks of the Tugela. They found that the enemy had planted the grass with wire entanglements. Even in the bed of the river a barbed wire was stretched down. Into the water the British Inniskillings, Borderers and Connaughts, and it was found that the Boers had nothing entrenched the river, and there was a foot of water where one had expected it would be deep. They strove to find the crossings, and many men fell yellow with the weight of ammunition and accoutrements, was dropped. It was a desperate and serious situation. The attack upon the trenches was making no progress, and the heights of the south had reached an impasse. But there were furious and angry Irishmen who had resolved to get across somehow. By dint of scrambling from rock to rock some a good number were shot to the side. Yet not of them found the river at the bottom passed across a winding spit. The Tugela still lapped it, and all the while the murderous fire of cannon and Mauser crashed and comrades fell, weltering in their blood.

In the meanwhile Colonel Long had lost his guns, and Generals Hart and Clery with their staffs and escorts had ridden to the scene.

TRIED TO SAVE THE GUNS.

The spitting shell, lead and grape snapped and spattered, and the smoke puffed more than ever. Lord Dundonald, with Captain Schofield and Congrove, volunteered to ride out and endeavor to save the two field guns in the open. Presently they were found. Colonel Long from the gunners and drivers of the ammunition waggons, taking shelter behind camp equipage, kept out and men and horses again began falling on every side. Young Roberts' horse was blown up by a shell. Congreve was hit with a bullet and his clothes were cut by other missiles. Schofield alone escaped untouched. Across that valley of death quickly the surviving animals were rounded up and the guns were hooked and dragged away. Again and again the day attempts were made to save the remaining guns, but the Boer fire was incessant and withering. At last the battle was over. General Buller abandoned the guns and retreated.

TWO MUCH TIME WANTED.

If you will get my new suit done by Saturday, and come for it then, or, I'll be forever indebted to you.

If that's your game, replied the tailor, the cloth will not be done at all.

SAVED BY DISCRETION.

Visitor—Harry, have you tried the remedies your friends recommended for your malady?

Invalid—Good gracious, no! I'd have been dead and buried years ago.

CROSS THE TU

Boer Positions North Sh
Enemy Taken By Surp
ing the Drifts Seized B

A despatch from Spearman's Farm, Natal, says:—Lord Dundonald, with the Mounted Brigade, pushed suddenly forward and seized the Springfield bridge. Then, hurrying forward, he took a very strong position at Zwartkop, commanding Potgieter's drift, finding the Boers totally unprepared for the British advance.

A number of the enemy were bathing in the river when Lord Dundonald's force appeared.

Gen. Lyttleton's brigade was sent to hold the position.

The whole British force, with the exception of a force to garrison at Colenso advanced without delay.

Gen. Hildyard's command is now at Springfield.

The South African Light Horse desired to bring the pont, or ferry boat, to the south side of the river, and six men of that command therefore swam the river and brought the boat over under Lieut. Carlyle.

After a wait of four days, the British advance was resumed, Gen. Lyttleton's Brigade crossing Potgieter's drift in the evening and holding the kopjes on the British right.

Gen. Warren's division made a flank attack on the enemy.

A despatch from London says that Gen. Lyttleton, after crossing the Tugela, seized with little opposition a line of low ridges a mile from Potgieter's drift.

Howitzers were carried across the river during the night.

The naval guns and howitzers effectively shelled the Boer position from Mount Alice near Swartkop.

Gen. Warren crossed the river several miles further west, near Wasbank drift, in the face of a heavy fire from the Boer commandos. He has effected a lodgment two miles further, to the Spionkop.

A despatch to the Times from Spearman's farm, filed at the same hour as the Daily Telegraph's despatch says that General Warren is now across the river without opposition, holding the Boers are holding a position five miles from the river.

A despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company says that the difficulties in crossing the swollen river were great, the waggons being quite covered.

THE OPPOSING FORCES.

The forces on either side may be roughly stated as follows, bearing in mind the nature of things the figures of the Boers can be little more than guess:—

General Buller
22,000 infantry.
3,500 cavalry.
2,000 artillerymen.
70 guns.

General Joubert.
18,500 mounted infantry.
1,500 artillerymen.
60 guns.

These figures are correct. The British have an advantage in numbers of 7,500, or more than that, but the mobility of the enemy more than counteracts this advantage, and places the two sides upon an equal footing.

BOERS SHELLED WOMEN'S LAAGER.

A Despatch from London says a news agency despatch from Maseru accuses the Boers, who are retiring that town, of shelling the women's laager with seeming deliberation.

Six and nine-pounder shells fell in the laager, killing a little girl and injuring two other children.

HOWITZERS CREEPING AWAY.

A despatch from London says: The officials of the War Office are satisfied that the tide has turned and that news of a more cheerful character, from a British point of view, will hereafter be the rule instead of the exception. The British advance in a northerly direction will be fiercely resisted, fully anticipated. The Boers are probably superior to the British, the despatches show the burghers occupy strong positions.

While General Warren's force was crossing the Tugela river the Boers occupied a thickly-wooded ridge a mile north of the river, and in several volleys in the afternoon. The British replied and the battle opened on a neighbouring kopje. As the British pushed across the Boers found their position untenable and retired to the hills. Immediately after the pontoon bridge was completed the whole British force crossed.

The British transport extended several miles, and included probably a thousand vehicles. All the country as far as Mount Alice has been thoroughly reconnoitred, and no sign of the enemy had been found.

Lord Dundonald's force advanced rapidly, meeting with no opposition.

The Boers had been at Potgieter's drift the day before the British arrived. They had had a large camp on the opposite hills, but this camp was quickly struck. A buggy with an escort, presumably the Boer commandant's equipage, was seen leaving the hills.

General Buller took quarters at a farm-house belonging to Martinus Pretorius, who had disappeared.

A loud explosion was heard on Jan. 12, and it was subsequently learned that the enemy had destroyed a bridge that was in course of construction seven miles above Potgieter's drift.

BULLER TO HIS MEN.

Gen. Buller issued spirited instructions to his force, beginning:

"We are going to relieve our comrades at Ladysmith. There will be no turning back."