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A REMARKABLE SOLDIER

GENERAL SIR BRUCE HAMILTON IS SAID NEVER TO SLEEP.

He Started in the Army in 1877, and Has Put in Forty Years of Hard Service—He Was in the Advance on Benin in 1897 and It Was He Who Felled General Botha's Last Attempt to Invasade Cape Colony.

THE son of a distinguished soldier, for his father was Lieut-General Henry Meade Hamilton, C.B.—General Sir Bruce Hamilton has probably seen as much active service as any officer now holding high command at the front—not more. He received his first commission as Lieutenant in the East Yorkshires as long ago as 1877; and since then he has "put in" nearly forty years of hard service and hard fighting.

His first campaign was in Afghanistan in 1880, and it is said that it is one of the greatest regrets of his life that he missed sharing in Lord Roberts' famous march to Kandahar. But, though the young officer was not afforded much chance of personal distinction during the war, he, nevertheless, did good work. "A good soldier does not bother whether he wins medals or gets his name into the newspapers; but he does his duty and fights whenever he can," he is reported to have said once. Fame has come to him, and his name has appeared in the newspapers a good many times since those early days, simply because he always has done his duty.

It was in the advance on Benin in 1897 that Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce Hamilton was first given a real opportunity of proving the stuff he was made of. After the massacre of Benin he made the famous march through the bush on the black capital at the head of a mere handful of men hastily gathered together, and in the teeth of seemingly insurmountable obstacles and against thousands of savages, who were all the more formidable because they clung to cover and chose to fight by treachery and cunning rather than in the open.

When far from support and still distant from his goal, the water supply failed. Many a commander would have retreated for lack of water in that burning African climate threatened to be more deadly than an armed foe, but Bruce Hamilton made up his mind promptly. "We must go on!" was his order. Every man who could be dispensed with was left behind, and all superfluous baggage was cast aside in order that nothing should impede an even swifter march.

Then, waterless, daring death, but resolute, the tiny force went on against an enemy who could have outnumbered it by fifty to one, had they been given time to bring up all forces. But that was just what Bruce Hamilton did not give them a chance to do. "If he slept, no one knew when it was," said one of the force, "and whenever the Ben showed half a sign of their presence there the thick of it. We got through all right, and avenged the massacre, mostly, I think, because we couldn't well have done anything else with such a leader."

He was a lieutenant-colonel aged forty-two, with close on twenty years' experience of war in many parts of the world, when the great Boer war broke out in 1899. He had no part in the earlier operations—and disasters—but his name began to loom large in the operations after Lord Roberts assumed command. It was then, too, that he first served under Lord Kitchener. He had not been one of the original "Kitchener's disciples," for he had not shared in the Omdurman campaign; but the grim, silent tireless chief of the staff must have found him a man after his own heart. There was always something coolly methodical and thorough about his work which must have inspired the Boers with enraged and yet admiring despair. He made as few mistakes as any one during the war, and he never let himself or his men in for a disaster.

It was Bruce Hamilton who mainly frustrated Botha's last desperate attempt to invade Cape Colony, and thereby proved himself a worthy opponent of the great burgher Commandant-General. It must be confessed that there were British officers in those days who were always in a terrible hurry, always dashing wildly across the veldt, and yet, somehow, never accomplishing anything in particular. Bruce Hamilton was never noticeably in a hurry, but he never went on a march without either doing something effective at the end of it or coming very near to that end. In the course of the war he was mentioned in despatches not less than six times, and emerged from it a Major-General, while to the honor of wearing the Queen's and the King's Medals was added the dignity of a K. C. B.

There is a small but significant incident recorded in the home letter of a private, which mentions no name, but yet seems to indicate one man in particular. "The night was horrible," he says, "the rain pouring down and mud a foot deep in our trenches. It was so cold, too, that you felt no fire could ever make you warm again. The General has been directing and bucking us up all day and half the night, and when he threw himself down under a smashed cottage wall I expect it was simply because he couldn't stand up any longer. He was lying in the mud, with the rain and sleet and icy wind beating on him, and an officer bent over him and suggested respectfully that he ought to take cover. He just laughed and said—'This is the best place, since I shall not wish to stop here too long asleep!'"

The Matagama brought 114 wounded and sick Canadian soldiers to St. John, N.B.

The facts in the case is what is tried to suppress in the average lawsuit.

SPRIT OF THE WEST.

It Has Contributed Half of Canada's Soldiers So Far.

An inspiring tale of the gallant part that western Canada is playing in the war is told in an article by Mary Synon in Scribner's Magazine. "Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the North-West Territories, and the Yukon," says the writer, "with less than one-fifth the population of the Dominion of Canada within their far-flung boundaries, have contributed more than one-half the 121,000 soldiers which Canada has given the Allied armies. Sixty-five thousand men have enlisted from the western provinces. One in three is an extraordinarily high rate of eligibility for service among the men of the country. Using this rate, a few more than 99,000 men of the West of Canada were eligible to serve in the army. The 65,000 who have enlisted are therefore more than two-thirds of the available men of the country. There is only one instance in history of a volunteer enlistment that equaled the same ratio—that of the Confederate State of America during the Civil War. Consider with this that the soldiers of the Confederacy were fighting in their own territory and that the Canadian volunteers were anywhere from 2,000 to 4,000 miles overland before they came to the sea they must cross, and you will face the fact of an army—not of mercenaries, but of men—that has set out with the zeal of crusaders upon a journey that makes the Anabasis of the ancient Cyrus the Persian a child's wandering."

British Columbia, we are told, has sent more men to the war than any other division of the British Empire. The little town of Wallachin, on the Cariboo Trail, has contributed forty-seven soldiers out of its sixty-seven eligible citizens. Vancouver, with a population of 170,000, gave 10,000; Prince Rupert went even higher; but Edmonton has apparently surpassed all the cities of Canada in patriotic sacrifice, for from her population of 90,000 Edmonton has sent more than 8,000 fighting men out with the bugles.

In accounting for this remarkable response of western Canada to the call to arms, the writer says: "In the time while England's entrance into the war hung in the balance eastern Canada, except French Quebec, swung toward a policy of upholding England in any possible contingency. The West of Canada, un-English in sentiment, opposed the idea. Then Germany entered Belgium. The West blazed with beads of anger. Western Canada went to war, not because of any so-called 'colonial' loyalty to England, but from a desire to avenge the invasion.

The old-time Western idea that no man should stand idly by while the big fellow strikes his little neighbor has been the motive that took the farther provinces to war."

Honoring the Sabbath.

On one occasion Lord Strathcona took with him to Scotland on Saturday night a young secretary, with whom he was personally unacquainted. On Sunday morning he planned to answer a number of pressing letters, largely dealing with his various charities, so as to catch Monday morning's mail. The secretary objected to working on the Sabbath, saying he had never done so. (?) For a moment Lord Strathcona seemed disconcerted. Then he said, quietly: "Say no more about it. Go and take a walk up the glen."

The young man spent the whole day walking about enjoying the scenery and retired weary and footsore. Promptly at midnight, when he was wrapped in the soundest slumber, he was aroused by a thunderous knock at the door. He sprang out of bed, and encountered Lord Strathcona, taper in hand, and a winning smile on his face.

"Come, Mr. Blank—the Sabbath is now over, and we must make haste with those letters, you know, so as to catch the morning mail." By dint of incessant industry the morning sun had not risen very high over the vale of Glencoe when the letters were finally despatched, and Mr. Blank, a sadder and a wiser man, once more sought his couch to snatch a couple of hours repose before breakfast.

Knees Versus Feet.

Mr. John Ross Robertson, owner of The Toronto Telegram, is an old-time reporter, and as such has his eyes open for good stories. He nailed one on the street car the other day. A soldier in kilts was sitting opposite a man in civilian attire, who observed that his knees must be very cold in the keen weather prevailing. "Not half so cold as your feet," was the sharp rejoinder.

Is 107 Years Old.

New Brunswick's oldest man, Timothy Sullivan, sr., celebrated his 107th birthday recently at his home at Burton, Sunbury County, where he is now practically bed-ridden. Mr. Sullivan's span of life has extended over the reign of five British sovereigns. He has always used tobacco and liquor in moderation.

Hygienic Precautions.

Parisian barbers are legally compelled to wash their hands after attending a customer and before waiting on another.

Military authorities are endeavoring to make the duties of soldiers as light as possible at Easter.

Female teachers in Toronto taking places of men on active service ask the same remuneration.

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