

the branch runs off to Kalka in the hills, a troop train stood ready to leave for Peshawur, and the two transferred to it.

The whole atmosphere was soldiers. Wherever the train pulled up by the wayside there were soldiers; where a carriage rolled down to the line, or riders cantered round the corners, there were soldiers; where a kitmatgar disappeared in the bazaar to chant a warning of the flying speed of the train when there was "fet" on the frontier, soldiers emerged in dozens.

Montagu-Murray was a new man in a new element. The atmosphere of soldiers after all did seem a congenial one, and he talked tactics and brush very freely with the officers of a native battalion going forward, until Chesney almost suspected that he had been studying his profession.

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Then there was an interval, filled with frontier warfare and mistakes, sniping parties, convoys massacred, brilliant charges such as the schoolboy loves to dream of, and a mail tonga from the military base with letters ten days old from Dunga Khel.

At last the Hussars got to beyond Tank, far away in the hills, and the tribes foregathered to meet them. There was a big fight. The Dogras wavered; the Lincolns had more than their hands full to keep their ground, and the Queen's Indias were sent forward to clear their front and cover the retreat.

Montagu-Murray felt sick at heart, as he had felt when for the first time he had lined out with the school for a match in the first fifteen. But it was only for a moment. Then he rose superior.

The Hussars charged. The Colonel was wounded and unhorsed. The squadron was penned in close to a sangar under a singing cross fire, and the loaded garnets phitted and split on the stones. The position was serious, and the ranks fidgeted to move.

The trumpeter blew "Rally," and the troopers formed in expectation. The trumpeter blew "Retire," and Montagu-Murray,

with his first public oath since he was a gentleman cadet, said: "Retire be damned!"

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By and bye the doolie bearers came along to pick up the wounded. Montagu-Murray lay on his back far beyond the reach of doolies.

Next morning Dunga Khel read the war news with a heavy heart. Many known figures would not be seen again at the Hussars' Theatre, from the colonel down to the subaltern, and to judge from the paragraph which concluded the Commanding Officer's report of the brush, the subaltern would not be the least missed. Dunga Khel marvelled and wept when it read as follows:

Second Lieutenant Claude A. de G. Montagu-Murray behaved with conspicuous gallantry, dashing out and rescuing the Colonel of his regiment when he was wounded and dismounted, and in danger of being taken prisoner, and afterwards leading the brilliant charge of the Hussars which decided the day, and in which he lost his life.

"It was marvellous!" said the Colonel, a week or two later, when he was home again at Dunga Khel by the advice of the Medical Staff. "Five minutes before I could swear he would funk! He was blue with whiteness, poor fellow! But they are all the same at first, and you can be pretty certain of blue blood turning game in a tight corner. I've seen so much of it in my time."

The Colonel was very much upset at Montagu-Murray's death. He said as much; and the whole station was proud of the subaltern, although to this day there are some uncharitable enough to say that he was burning to destroy remembrance of the call to the Council in something even better and more real.

And it was destroyed as far as the outside world was concerned. A Christian clerk at the Military Department saved the telegram from being filed, and the only persons who know the story of the hoax are Chesney and his accomplices at Dunga Khel, some of whom are dead, and the rest ashamed.