

excelled; and the Turks had little confidence in their leaders, so that the fall of Silistria was accounted certain; but in the two British volunteers who had come to their aid, they at once felt themselves a match for the enemy at their own weapons. Of their firm resolution to defend the town to the last they also gave an amusing indication at the commencement of the siege. A Turkish officer, who was sent over to the Russian camp, was warned of the impossibility of saving the town, and advised to surrender it on easy terms, "for," said the Russians, "we *must* take it, as the emperor has ordered us." "Well," replied the Turk, "it shall not be taken, as our sultan has ordered us to keep it."

It is not our purpose to enter into the details of the defence of Silistria, more especially as this was given in the diary of Lieutenant Nasmyth published in the *Times*. The resolution of the two belligerent parties, which they had expressed as above, was fully borne out by the deeds that followed; and as fast as the Russians advanced, whether by mine, cannonade, or hand-to-hand conflict, they were met and baffled by the indomitable obstinacy of the Turks, whose fortitude in the defence of streets and walls has become proverbial. Eight batteries were erected against the town, and each was armed with artillery of very heavy calibre. The Russians had sixty guns in position at Silistria, and threw upwards of 50,000 shot and shell, besides an incalculable quantity of small-arm ammunition. They constructed more than three miles of approaches, sprung six mines, and kept up their persevering assault during forty days. On the other hand, the Turks, confident in their two British leaders, whose directions they implicitly obeyed, handled spade or weapon as the emergency required, and either worked or fought with equal coolness under the heaviest of the fire. In every circumstance these two volunteers were the soul of the defence and the directors of all its movements. Captain Butler died, rather worn out by the fatigues he had undergone than of the wounds he had received in action; but Nasmyth, although left alone, with a double amount of toil, still animated the defenders, and taught them to hold out. And well was his perseverance rewarded at last; for after losing about 12,000 men by wounds and sickness, and alarmed at the threatened advance of the allies, the Russians hastily raised the siege.

The young artillery officer was now the object of popular applause. At a single step he had risen to the character of a skilful and successful commander, by producing such results with materials so unpromising; for he was unacquainted with even the language and manners of the people whom he had so generously come to defend, and whom his example and instructions had converted into heroes. Nor was the defence of this Turkish fortified town of inferior consequence in the war that followed. It saved the British and French armies from the necessity of conducting a campaign amidst the swamps and marshes of the Danube, which in all probability would have proved another Walcheren, and enabled them to transfer the scene of operations to the Crimea. From the East India Company's service he was transferred to the royal army, and in the Crimean campaign, through which he served, he obtained the medal with clasps for Alma, Inkermann, and Sebastopol. Being invalided from the Crimea in consequence of failing health, he returned to England, and was subsequently appointed to the Kilkenny district as an assistant adjutant-general, afterwards brigade-major at Curragh, and latterly brigade-major and deputy-assistant adjutant-general in Dublin. But his health again breaking down, he was transferred to Aus-

tralia, from which he was invalided home in 1859. It was not surprising that the fatigues he had undergone at Silistria, under which Captain Butler succumbed, should have completely undermined the constitution of Major Nasmyth. He retired to Pau, and there he continued to reside until his death, which occurred on the 2d of June, 1861. Among the honours and promotions which he so justly won, it should not be omitted that the freedom of the city of Edinburgh was conferred upon him for his services in the Turkish campaign, and particularly in the defence of Silistria.

NASMITH, DAVID. This energetic Christian philanthropist, the originator of town and city missions, was born in Glasgow, on the 21st of March, 1799. His parents were of respectable station, and eminent for piety. Like other boys of his condition, David Nasmith, after the usual course of an elementary education, was sent to the city grammar-school for the purpose of learning Latin; but after a four years' course at this academy, it was found he had profited so little, that he was found ignorant of even the rudiments of the language, and therefore unfit to enter college. And yet, during all this time, he had never been an hour absent from his classes. Judging it of no use to train him for a learned profession, his parents had him educated for business, and afterwards apprenticed him to a manufacturer. Even at these tender years, such was the religious sensitiveness of his character, that although apparently no worse than other boys, his impressions of his own worthlessness were so harassing, that more than once he was tempted to take refuge from them in suicide. But in process of time this evil spirit was cast out of him, while these experiences only tended to strengthen and confirm his faith, and prepare him for a course of correspondent action. His religious training also from earliest boyhood was such as to fit him for that especial mission to which his life was devoted, and in which he was to be so successful. From the time that he was six years old he attended a Sabbath-school; and when he had reached the age of fourteen, he and two of his school-fellows formed a society in their school, which was called the "Glasgow Youths' Bible Association," for the purpose of distributing Bibles among the poor. Of this society he was elected secretary, although, as he confesses, he neither understood the name nor the duties connected with the office. It was the commencement of a new era in his history. It brought him into contact with those youths of Glasgow who were like-minded with himself, and by whose society his religious impressions were enlarged and elevated. The circulation of the sacred volume in which he was employed made him study more earnestly its contents, that he might be better able to recommend its perusal to others. And above all, his office of secretary habituated him to the work of organizing and directing those religious societies which afterwards acknowledged him for their founder. On completing his sixteenth year he became a member of the congregation assembling in Nile Street; but although a Congregationalist or Independent, his aims as well as his disposition were of too catholic a character to be circumscribed by any sect, so that to the close of his life he regarded all Christians as his brethren.

With his growing enlargement of views, it was natural that David Nasmith should seek a field of action more immediately connected with the ministry. It was the common desire of a young enthusiast, who had not yet learned that the cause of religion can be promoted in any station of life, whether lay or clerical.