**THE BRITISH METHODS IN WAR.**

WE republish on this page, from the London Illustrated Times, an illustration which appeared in that journal in the year 1857, representing THE BLOWING OF SEPOY PRISONERS OF WAR FROM THE MOUTH OF CANNON. The circumstances of the case bear some analogy to those which are recurring at the present time in our Southern States. The natives of British India, whose grounds of discontent with their Government, unlike those of the Southern rebels, were substantial and grievous, rose in arms to strike for their freedom. The British Government, at first unsuccessful in its struggles with the rebellion, at length gathered up its energies and put them down. How it dealt with the prisoners of war taken in fight our illustration shows. The following extracts from British journals contain the narrative of a couple of executions :

A late mail from India brought accounts of two such executions. On 12th June, at Pashawar, forty men were tried, convicted, and sentenced to be blown from the guns. The execution was a dreadful sight. Three sides of a square were formed by British troops, and in the centre ten guns were planted, pointing outward. In dead silence the decree of the court was read, and this ceremony concluded, a prisoner was bound to each gun-his back placed against the muzzle, and his arms fastened firmly to the wheels. The signal is now given, and the salvo fired. The discharge, of course, cuts the body in two; and human trunks, heads, legs, and arms may be seen for an instant flying about in all directions. As there were only ten guns used on this occasion, the mutilated remains had to be removed four times. All of these forty criminals met their fate with firmness, with the exception of two; and to save (time, they were dropped to the ground, and their brains blown out by musketry. Another execution of a similar nature took place on the 13th of June, at Ferozepore. All the available troops and public establishments were convened to witness the scene. Some of the mutineers were to be hung, and around the gallows, erected during the night previous, the soldiers were drawn up. The mutineers were then brought into the centre, and the proceedings of the general Court-Martial was read. Upon being informed that if they would become Queen's evidence they would be reprieved, twelve of the criminals accepted the offer and were marched to the rear. Two were taken to the gallows. They ascended the ladder with firm steps, and to the last moment betrayed no emotion of fear.

The remaining ten were now led away to the artillery guns, and while their irons were being struck off some cried, "Do not sacrifice the innocent for the guilty!" Two others rejoined, "Hold your sniveling: die men and not cowards—you defended your religion, why then do you crave your lives? Sahibs! they are not Sahibs, they are dogs!" Others then began to upbraid their commanding officer. The wretched beings were quickly fastened to the muzzles of ten guns, charged with blank cartridge. The commanding officer directed port-fires to be lit. "Ready!" "Fire!" and the drama was played out. An eye-witness says: "The scene and stench were overpowering. I felt myself terribly convulsed, and could observe that the numerous native spectators were awe-stricken—that they not only trembled like aspen-leaves, but also changed into unnatural hues. Precaution was not taken to remove the sponge-and-load men from the muzzles of the guns; the consequence was that they were greatly bespattered with blood, and one man in particular received a stunning blow from a shivered arm!"

Another witness, [W. H. Russell, LL.D](http://www.sonofthesouth.net/leefoundation/civil-war/william-russell.htm)., then as now correspondent of the London Times, wrote as follows :

A French General, in a letter to Sir Colin, expressed his regret that certain violences attributed to some of our officers in cold blood—I presume alluding to Hobson shooting the Princes of Delhi, and things of that sort—but he should know that here there is no cold blood at the sight of a rebel . . . . . . When Neile marched from Allahabad his executions were so numerous and indiscriminate, that one of the officers attached to his column had to remonstrate with him, on the ground that if he depopulated the country he could get no supplies for the men.—Diary, vol. i. p. 222.

And again, the same witness said:

The officer in command (Renaud) was emulous of Neile, and thought he could show equal vigor. In two days forty-two men were hanged on the roadside ; and a batch of twelve men were executed because their faces were "turned the wrong way" when they were met on the march. These severities could not have been justified by the Cawnpore massacre, because they took place before that diabolical act. An officer remonstrated with Renaud, on the ground that if he persisted in this course he would empty the villages and render it impossible to supply the army with provisions.

In another instance Mr. Russell stated that a helpless boy, leading a blind man, sought the protection of an officer of Fusiliers, when the latter drew his revolver, snapped it at the wretched suppliant's head—but it missed fire—cocked and snapped it again and again, until the fourth time, when it went off, and the "boy's life-blood flowed at his feet!"

