BY H. RIDER HAGGARD.

on the opposite shelf, and gently unveiled it. It was that of a man in advanced life, with a long grissled beard, and also robed in white, probably the husband of the lady, who, after surviving her many years, came at last to sleep once more for good and all-

we left the place and entered others. It would be too long to describe the many things I saw in them. Each one had its occupants, for the five hundred and old years that had elapsed between the completion of the cave and the destruction of the race had evidently sufficed to fill these cafacombs, numberless as they were, and cack appeared to have been undisturbed rines the day that it was laid there. I would all a book with the description of them, but to do so would only be to repeat what I have said with variation.

"Hast thou seen enough, my stranger

"Mast thon seen enough, my stranger west, or shall I show thee more of the wonders of these tombs that are my palace balls? If thou wilt, I can lead thee to where Tisno, the mightlest and most valor-ous King of Kor, in whose day these caves mock that nothingness, and bid the empty shadows of the past do homage to his

"I have seen enough, oh queen," I answered. "My feeble breast is overwhelmed by the strength of the present Death. Mortality is weak, and easily broken down by a sense of the comp ship that waits upon its end. Take me

CHAPTER XVII. THE BALANCE TURNS



N a few minutes, following the lamps of the mutes, that, held out from the body as a bearer holds water in a vessel, had the appearance of floating down the darkness by themselves we came to a stair which fled us to Sho's antercom, the same that Billali had crept up upon all fours on the previous day. Here I would have bid the queen

sesting but she would not Say," she said, "enter with me, oh, riolly, for of a truth thy conversation pleaseth me. Think, oh, Holly; for two thousand rears have I had none to conwerse with save slaves and my own-shoughts; and though of all this thinking with number wisdom come, and many secests been made plain, yet am I weary of my thoughts, and hath come to loathe nine own society, for surely the food that nemory gives to eat is bitter to the faste. and it is only with the teeth of hope es can boar to blie it. Now though the " houghts are green and tender, as been make in the engage of a thinking thein, and in truth show dost bring well to my mind corinin of those old philsophers with whom in days by gone is for their hast the same crabbed air and fristy look, as though thou hadst passed hy days in feating Herrit Greek, and son strined dark with the arime of man-

soon by my side, and we will eat fruit, and ralk of planath Prings, See, I will again convoit to nee. Thou hast brought it on Holly; fairly have I warned then, and took shall ould me beautiful, as do. I'm upon them, to getting their phil-

receipts so draw the curtain, and sit

and without more ado she stood up and shock the white wrappings from her, and came forth shining and splendid like some plitts fing shake when she has east her county; sy, and fixed her wonderful eyes pon me-more deadly than any basilisk's and perced me through and through with their beauty, and sent her light laugh

A new mood was on her, and the ver moral her mind seemed to change beneath h was no longer torture, torn and atoful, as I had seen it when she was which her dead fival by the leaping fame, no longer letty terrible, as in the independ half, no longer rich and somber and opher lift, like a Tyrian cloth, as in the swellings of the dead. No; her mood now int costable, wonderful seemed to and and sighed, and swift her glances the shook her heavy fresses, and nonted foot mon the floor, and

if conten of summ of creek epien-Without take and faintly flicker through her + white over, the lightfilling spen through She had cast off the terror of the laming flame, the cold power of Judge mank that was even now being hone, and this when sadness of the tombe coust them ass and just those holled how like the white property of the the the the the isconnation of levely, tempting womanknow! minde more perfect and in a way

more applicated than ever woman was be-

"There my Holly, all there where then front see me. It is by thine own wish, re-months again I say, blame me not t thou-dost apand the rest of thy little span, with such a sick pain at the heart that life women a fain have died before ever thy enrious eyes were set upon me. There, at for probes tell me, am I not beautifuls Kny, speak not so hastily; consider well The point take me leadure by feature, for witting not my form, and my hands and had and the whiteness of the whiteness who is a whiteness the the portion of her beauty, in the whiteness of an eyelash even, or the modeling of a shell-like car, is justified to hold a white before my loveliness. Now, my wrist freedings the fore the first is not see it is the

Furger, but of a frush is in not not in in this withen sinke that is too large, and doth with this it as it should. It is a was mane count knowsti that it is ill to tie the waist. If the troit, give me thy hands—so—now press than round me, there, with but a little sarter, thy fingers touch, oh, Holly!"
I could stand it no longer, I am but a man, and she was more than a woman.

inven knows where the was I don't find then and there I felt upon my knows that there has, and told her in a and mixture of terms and mixture of terms.

"Oh, so soon, oh, Hollyt' she add. of middered how many minutes it would take their these to they knoos. I have not seen the seet before me for so many days, the live me to be a remarks heart. The

ght is sweet; ay, wisdom and length of the fact from that dear pleasure, lifeh is our sex's only right,"

"What wouldst thou? what wouldst tou! Thou dost not know what thou best. Have I not told thee that I am not for thee? I love but one, and it is not thee.
Ah, Holly, for all thy wisdom—and in a way thou are wise—thou are but a fool running after folly. Thou wouldst look into mine eyes; thou wouldst kiss me. Well, if it pleaseth thee, look," and she bent her self toward me, and fixed her dark and the thousand the little and the little and the little are the little and the little are the little and the little are the thrilling orbs upon my own; "ay, and kies, too, if thou wilt, for thanks be given to the scheme of things, kisses leave no marks, except upon the heart. But if thou does him, I tell thee of a surety wilt thou cast out thy heart with love of me, and die!" and she bent yet further toward me, till her soft hair brushed my brow, and her fragrant breath played upon my face, and made me faint and weak. Then of a sudden, even faint and weak. Then of a sudden, even as I stretched my arms to clasp, she straightened herself, and a quick change passed over her. Reaching out her hand, she held it over my head, and it seemed to me that something flowed from it that chilled me back to common-sense and a me back to common-sense and a

"Enough of this wanton play," she said, with a touch of sternness. "Listen, Holly. Thou art a good and honest man, and I fain would spare thee, but, ohl it is so hard for a woman to be merciful. I have said I am not for thee, therefore let thy thoughts pass by me like an idle wind, and the dust of thy imagination sink again into the depths well, of despair, if thou will Thou dost not know me, Holly. Hadst thou seen me but ten hours ago, when my pas-sion seized me, thou hadst shrunk from me in fear and trembling. I am a woman of many moods, and, like the water in that vessel, I reflect many things; but they pass my Holly—they pass, and are forgotten. Only the water is the water still, and Istill am I, and that which maketh the water maketh it, and that which maketh me maketh me, nor can my quality be altered. Therefore pay no heed to what I seem, seeing that thou canst not know what I am-If thou troublest me again I will veil my-self, and thou shalt behold my face no

I rose, and sank on the cushioned couch beside her, yet quivering with emotithough for a moment my mad passion had left me, as the leaves of a tree quiver still, although the gust be gone that stirred them. I did not dare to tell her that I had seen her in that deep and hellish mood muttering incantations to the fire in the

"So," she went on, "now eat some fruit; believe me, it is the only true food for man. Oh, tell me of the philosophy of the Re-brew Messiah, who came after me, and who thou sayest doth now rule Rome and Greece and Egypt and the barbarians beyoud. It must have been a strange philosophy that He taught, for in my day the people would have naught of our philosophies. Revel and lust and drink, oloodand cold steel, and thes ered in the battle these were the canons of their ereeds."

I had recovered myself a little by now, and, feeling bitterly ashamed of the weakness into which I had been betrayed, I did my best to expound to her the doctrines of Christianity, to which, however, with the single exception of our conception of heaven and hell, I found that she paid but faint attention, her interest being all directed toward the Man who taught them.

"Ah!" she said. "I see-a new religion! I have known so many, and doubtless there have been many more since I knew aught beyond these cayes of Kor. Mankind asks ever of the skies to vision out what lies behind them. It is terror for the end, and but a subtler form of selfishness—this it is that breeds religions. Mark, my Holly, each religion claims the future for its folowers, or, at the least, the good thereof. The evil is for those benighted ones who will have none of it, seeing the light the true believers worship, as the fishes see the stars, but dimly. The religions come and the religions pass, and civilizations come and pass, and naught endures but the world and human nature. Ah! if man would but see that hope is from within and not from without that he himself must work out his own salvation! He is e, and within him is the breath of life. and a knowledge of good and evil, as good and evil are to him. Thereon let him build and stand erect, and not east himself be fore the image of some unknown God, modeled like himself, but with a bigger brain to think evil, and a longer arm to do

I thought to myself—which shows how old such reasoning is, being, indeed, one of the recurring quantities of theological discussion—that her argument sounded very like some I have heard in the nineteenth oentury, and in other places than the caves of Kor, and with which, by the way, I personally disagree, but I did not cave to try and discuss the question with her. To begin with, my mind was too weary with all the emotions through which I had passed; and in the second place, I knew that I should get the worst of it. It is hard enough to argue with an ordinary mater. enough to argue with an ordinary materialist, who huris statistics and whole strata of geological facts at your head, whilst you can only buffet him with deductions and instincts and the snow flakes of faith, that are, alas, so apt to melt in the hot embers of our troubles. How little chance, then, should I have had against one whose then, should I have had against one whose brain was supernaturally sharpened, and who had two thousand years of experience, besides all manner of knowledge of the secrets of nature at her command? Fealing that she would be more likely to convert me than I should to convert her, I thought it best to leave the matter alone, and so sat slient. Many a time since then have I bitterly regretted that I did so, for thereby I lost the only opportunity I can remember having had of ascertaining what Ayesha really believed.

wast upon thy knees the posture does not out thee, Holly—swearing that thou didst love me. What shall we do? Nay, I have love me. What shall we dot Nay, I have it. I will some and see this youth, the Lifon, as the old man Milait calle him, who came with thee, and who is now so sick. The fever must have run its course by now, and if he is about to die, I will recover him. Fear not, my Holly, I shall use no magic. Have I not told thee that there is no such thing as magic; though there is such a thing as understanding and applying the forces which are in natural liv now, and presently, when I have made

the drug ready, I will follow thee?"

Accordingly I want, only to find John

the best of us are lighted down to evil by the gleam of a women's eyes! What a wicked wretch was !! Actually for the last half hour I had scarcely thought of Leo, and this, be it remerahered, of the man who fer twenty years had been my dearest companion, and the one interest of my existence. And now perhaps it was

Twrung my hands and glanced round.
Ustane was sitting by the couch, and in her eyes burned the dull light of despair.
Job was blubbering—I am sorry I cannot call his distress by any more delicate word—audibly in the corner. Seeing my eye fixed upon him, he went outside to give way to his grief in the passage. Obviously the only hope lay in Ayesha. She, and she alone—unless indeed she was an impostor, which I could not believe—could save him. I would go and implore her to come. As I started to do so, however, Job came flying into the room, his hair literally standing on end with terror. ng on end with terror.

Oh, God help us, sir!" he ejaculated in frightened whisper, "here's a corpse coming sliding down the passage!"

For a moment I was puzzled, but presently, of course, it struck me that he must

have seen Ayesha, wrapped in her grave-like garment, and been deceived by the ex-traordinary undulating smoothness of her walk into a belief that she was a white ghost gliding toward him. Indeed, at that very moment the question was settled, for Ayesha herself was in the apartment, or rather cave. Job turned and saw her sheeted form, and then, with a convulsive howl of "Here it comes!" sprung into a corner and jammed his face against the wall, and Ustane, guessing whose the dread presence must be, prostrated herself upon her face.

"Thou comest in a good time, Ayesha," I said, "for my boy lies at the point of death,"

"So," she said, softly: "provided he be not dead, it is no matter, for I can bring him back to life, my Holly. Is that man there thy servant? and is that the method wherewith thy servants greet strangers in y country?"
"He & frightened of thy garb, it hath s

death-like air," I answered.

"And the girl? Ah! I see now. It is she of whom thou didst speak to me. Well, old them both to leave us, and we will see to this sick lion of thine. I love not that underlings should perceive my wisdom."
Thereon I told Ustane in Arabic and Job

in English both to leave the room—an order which the latter obeyed readily enough, and was glad to obey, for he could not in any way subdue his fear. But it was otherwise with Ustane. "What does She want?" she whis

divided between her fear of the te

queen and her anxiety to remain near Leo.
"It is surely the right of a wife to be near
her husband when he dieth. Nay, I will not go, my lord the Baboon." "Why doth not that woman leave us, my Holly?" asked Ayesha, from the other end of the cave, where she was engage

the wall.

"She doth not like to leave Leo," I answered, not knowing what to say. Ayesha



Next second her tall and willowy form was staggering back across the room. wheeled round, and pointing to the girl Us tane, said one word, and one only, but it was quite enough, for the tone in which it

And sullenly Ustane crept past her on her hands and knees, and went.

"Thou seest, my Holly," said Ayesha, with a little laugh, "it was time that I gave these people a lesson in obedience. The girl went nigh to disobeying me, but then she did not learn this morning how I treat the disobedient. Well, she has gone; and now let me see the youth," and she glided toward the couch on Leo lay, with his face in the shadow and turned to the wall.

"He hath a noble shape," she said as she bent over him to look upon his face. Next second her tall and willowy form was staggering back across the room, as though she had been shot or stabbed, stag-gering back till at last she struck the savern wall, and then there burst from her lips the most awful and une scream that I ever heard in all my life.
"What is it, Ayesha?" I cried. "Is he

is turned, and sprang toward me like a

"Thou dog!" she said, in her terrible thisper, which sounded like the hisp of a nake; "why didst thou hide this from ne?" and she stretched out her arm, and thought she was going to slay me. "What?" I ejaculated, in the most lively

"Ah!" she said, "perchance thou didst not know. Learn, my Holly, learn; there lies—there lies my lost Kallikustes. Kallikustes, who has come back to me at last, as I know he would—as I know he would; and she began to sob and to laugh, as generally to go on like any other lady where lies, much murmuring "Kallikustes".

"Noncense," thought I to myself, but I did not like to say it; and, indeed, at that moment I was thinking of Lee's life, her ing forgotten overything also in that the

"True," she said, with a start. "Oh, why did I not come before? I am unnerved—my hand trembles, even mine—and yet it is very easy. Here, thou Helly, take this phint," and she produced a tiny far of pottery from the folds of her garment, "and pour the liquid in it down his threat. It will cure him if he be not dead. Switts now, switt! the man diest"

I glanced toward him, it was true enough, Leo was in his death-struggio. I saw his poor face tuening ashen, and the breath negan to rattle in his threat. The vinly were and curry a life threat. The vinly were and curry a life threat. The vinly were and curry a life threat.

sweet flavor, and for a second made my head swim and a mist gather before my eyes, but happily the effect passed away as swiftly as it had arisen.

When I reached Leo's side he was plainly expiring—his golden head was slowly turning from side to side, and his mouth was alightly open. I called to Ayesha to hold his head, and this she managed to do, though the woman was quivering from head to foot, like an aspen leaf or a startled horse. Then, forcing the jaw a little more open, I poured the contents of the vial into his mouth. Instantly a little vapor arose from it, as happens when one disturbs nitric acid, and this sight did not increase my hopes, already faint enough, of the efficacy of the treatment.

One thing, however, was certain, the death throes ceased—at first I thought because he had got beyond them, and crossed the awful river. His face turned a livid pallor, and his heart beats, which had been feeble enough before, seemed to die away altogether—only the eyelid still twitched a little. In my doubt I looked up at Ayesha, whose head wranning had slipped back, in whose head-wrapping had slipped back in her excitement when she went reeling scross the room. She was still holding Leo's head, and with a face as pale as his, watching his countenance, with such an expression of agonized anxiety as I have never seen before. Clearly she did not know if he would live or die. Five minutes passed, and I saw that she was abandoning hope; her lovely oval face seemed to fall in and grow visibly thinner beneath the pressure of a mental agony, whose pencil drew black lines about the hollows of her eyes. The coral faded even from her lips, till they were as white as Leo's face, and livered pitifully. It was shocking to see r, even in my own grief I felt for hers.

"Is it too late?" I gasped. She hid her face in her hands, and made to answer, and I, too, turned away. But as I did so I heard a deep drawn breath, and looking down perceived a line of color creeping up Leo's face, then another and another, and then-wonder of wonders-the man we had thought dead turned over on his side

"Thou seest," I said, in a whisper. "I see," she answered, hoarsely. "He is saved. I thought we were too late; another moment-one little moment more-and he had been gone!" and she burst into an awful flood of tears, sobbing as though her heart would break, and yet managing to look lovelier than ever, as she did it. At

last she ceased. "Forgive me, my Holly-forgive me for my weakness," she said. "Thou seest, after all, I am a very woman. Think—now think of it. This morning didst thou speak of the place of torment appointed by this new religion of thine. Hell or Hades thou didst call it-a place where the vital essence lives and retains an individual memory, and where all the errors and faults of judgment and unsatisfied passions and the unsubstantial terrors of the mind wherewith it hath at any time had to come to mock and haunt and gibe and wring the heart forever and forever with the vision sness. Thus, even thus, have I lived for two thousand years-for ne sixty generations, as ye reckon time -in a Hell, as thou callest it-tormented by the memory of a crime, tortured day and night with an unfulfilled desire—with out companionship, without comfort, without death, and led on only down my dreary road by the marsh lights of Hope, which, though they flickered here and there, and now glowed strong, and now were not, yet, as my skill told me, would one day lead unto my deliverer.

"And then-think of it still, ch, Holly, for never shalt thou hear such another tale, or see such another scene, nay, not even if I give thee ten thousand years of life-and thou shalt have it in payment if thou wilt-think: at last my deliverer came -he whom I had watched and waited for through the generations-at the appointed time he came to seek me, as I knew he must come, for my wisdom could not err, though I knew not when or how. Yet see how ignorant I was! See how small my knowledge and how faint my strength For hours he lay here sick unto death, and I felt it not-I who had waited for him for two thousand years-I knew it not. And then at last I see him, and behold, my chance is gone but by a hair's-breadth even before I had it, for he is in the very inws of death, whence no power of mine can draw him. And if he die, surely must the hell be lived through once more once more must I face the weary centuries, and wait and wait till time in its fullness shall bring my beloved back to me. And ther thou gavest him the medicine, and that ive minutes dragged along before I knew if he would live or die, and I tell thee that all the sixty generations that are gone were not so long as that five minutes. But they passed at last, and still he showed no sign, and I knew that if the drug works not then, it, so far as I have had knowledge, works not at all. Then thought I that he was once more dead, and all the tortures of all the years gathered themselves into a single venomed spear, and pierced me ough and through, because once again I had lost Kallikrates! And then, when all was done, behold! he sighed, behold! he Byed, and I knew that he would live, for none die on whom the drug takes hold, Think of it now, my Holly-think of the wonder of it! He will sleep for twelve hours, and then the fever will have left

And she stopped 'Inid her hand upon the golden head, a hou hent down and kissed the brow with chastened abandor ment of tenderness that would have been beautiful to behold had not the sight cut ne to the heart—for I was jealous!

CHAPTER XVIII.-GO, WOMAN!



silence of a inute or so, tring which

the man, and he has been pleased to accept her love; where, then, is her staff"
"Truly, ob, Holly, thou art foolish?" the enswered, almost petulantly. "Where is her sin? Her sin is that she stands be-tween me and my desire. Well I know that I am take him from her for arelie

there a man upon this earth, oh, Holly, who could resist me if I put out my strength? Men are faithful for so long strength? Men are faithful for so long only as temptations pass them by. If the temptation be but strong enough, then will the man yield, for every man, like every rope, hath its breaking strain, and passion is to them what gold and power are to women—the weight upon their weakness. Believe me, ill will it fare with mortal women in that heaven of which thou speakest if only the spirits be more fair, for their lords will never turn to look upon them, and their heaven become their hell. For man can be bought with woman's beauty if it be but beautiful enough; and woman's beauty can be ever bought with gold, if only there be gold enough. So was it in my day, and so it will be to the end of time. The world is a great mart, my Holly, where all things are for sale to him who bids the highest in the currency of

ight have been expected from a woman of Ayesha's age and experience, jarred up-on me, and I answered, testily, that in our heaven there was no marriage or giving in

"Else would it not be heaven, dost thou mean?" she put in. "Fie upon thee, Holly, to think so ill of us poor women! Is it, then, marriage that marks the line between thy heaven and thy hell? But or of this. This is no time for dis outing and the challenge of our wits. Why lost thou always dispute? Art thou also a philosopher of these latter days? As for this woman, she must die; for, though I can take her husband from her, yet, while she lived, might he think tenderly of her. and that I can not away with. No woman shall dwell in his thoughts; my em shall be all my own. She hath had her day, let her be content; for better is an our with love than acentury of loneliness -now night shall swallow her."

'Nay, nay." I cried, "it would be a wicked crime, and from a crime naught comes but what is evil. For thy own sake do not this deed."

"Is it, then, a crime, oh, foolish man, to put away that which stands between us and our ends? Then is our life one long erime, my Holly; for day by day we de stroy that we may live, since in this world none save the strongest can endure. Those who are weak must perish; the earth is to the strong, and fruits thereof. For every tree that grows a score shall wither, that the strong ones may take their share. We run to place and power over the dead bodies of those who fail and fall; ay, we win the food we eat from out the mouths of starving babies. It is the scheme of things. Thou sayest, too, that a crime breeds evil, but therein thou dost lack experience; for out of crimes come many good things, and out of good grows much evil. The cruel rage of the tyrant may prove a blessing to thousands who come after him, and the sweet-heartedness of a holy man may make a nation slaves. Man doeth this and doeth that from the good or evil of his heart, but he knoweth not to what end his moral sense doth prompt him; for when he striketh he is blind to where the blow shall fall, nor can he count the airy threads that weave the web of circumstance. Good and evil, love and hate, night and day, sweet and bitter, man and woman, heaven above and the earth beneath-all these things are necessary, one to the other, and who knows the end of each? I tell thee that there is a hand of Fate that twines them up to bear the burden of its purpose, and all things are gathered in that great rope to which all things are needful. Therefore doth it not become us to say this thing is evil and this good, or the dark is hateful and the light lovely; for to other eyes than ours the evil may be the good, and the darkness more beautiful than the day, or

all alike be fair. Hearest thou, my Holly?" I felt it was hopeless to argue against casuistry of this nature, which, if it were carried to its logical conclusion, would absolutely destroy all mortality, as we unstand it. But her talk gave me a fresh thrill of fear, for what may not be possible to a being who, unconstrained by human law, is also absolutely unshackled by a moral sense of right and wrong, which, wever partial and conventional it may be, is yet based, as our conscience tells/us. upon the great wall of individual responsi-bility that marks off mankind from the

But I was deeply anxious to save Ustalia. whom I liked and respected, from the dire fate that overshadowed her at the hands of her mighty rival. So I made one more

"Ayesha," I said, "thou art too subtle for me, but thou thyself hast told me that each man should be a law unto himself, and follow the teaching of his heart. Hath thy heart no mercy for her whose place thou wouldst take? Bethink thee, as thou sayest—though to me the thing is incredihe whom thou desirest has returned to thee after many years, and but now thou hast, as thou sayes also, wrung him from the jaws of death. Wilt thou celebrate his coming by the murder of one who loved him, and whom perchance, he loved-one. at any rate, who saved his life for thee when the spears of thy slaves would have made an end thereof? Thou sayest also that in past days thou didst grievor wrong this man, that with thine own hand thou didst slay him because of the Egyp tian Amenartas, whom he loved."

"How knowest thou that, oh, str How knowest thou that name? I spoke it not to thee," she broke in with a cry, catch-

ing at my arm. "Perchance I dreamed it," I answer "strange dreams do hover about these caves of Kor. It seems that the dream was, indeed, a shadow of the truth. What same to thee of thy mad crime thousand years of waiting, was it not? and now wouldst thou repeat the history? Say what thou wilt, I tell thee that evil will ne of it; for to him who doeth, at the ut, good breeds good and evil evil, ever h in after days out of evil o sh of whom I spoke to th d it was truly said. If thou slayest this necessit woman, I say unto thee that thou sit be accurated, and plack no fruit from the ancient tree of love. Also, what intest thou? How will this man take se red-handed from the slaughter of her

maybe there is truth in what there don't say; for in some way it present on my sind. If it may be, I will spare this an; for have I not told thee that I am not cruel for the cake of cruelty? I love not to see suffering, or to cause it. Let her come before me quick, now, before my mood changes," and she hastily covered her face with its gamy wrapping.

me with an air of infinite beseeching than

ent straight to my heart.
"Nay; he lives," I answered. "She hath

saved him. Enter."

She sighed deeply, and entered, and fell upon her hands and knees, after the custom of the Amahagger people, in the present to the Amahagger people, in the prese "Stand," said Ayesha, in her coldest

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Istane obeyed, standing before her with Then came a pause, which she broke.
"Who is this man?" she said, pointing to the sleeping form of Leo.
"The man is my husband," she answered.

"Who gave him to thee for a husband?"
"I took him according to the custom of our country, oh, She."
"Thou hast done evil, woman, in taking

this man, who is . stranger. He is not a man of thine own race, and the custom fails. Listen. Perchance thou didst this thing through ignorance; therefore, woman, do I spare thee; otherwise hadst thou died. Listen again. Go from hence back to thine own place, and never dare to speak to or set thine eyes upon this man again. He is not for thee. Listen a third time. If thou breakest this my law, that moment thou diest. Go."

But Ustane did not move.

Then she looked up, and I saw that her

face was torn with pa "Nay, oh, She, I will not go," she answered, in a choked voice. "The man is my husband, and I love him; I love him. and I will not leave him. What right hast thou to make me leave my husband?"

I saw a little quiver pass down Ayesha's frame, and shuddered myself, fearing the

"Be pitiful," I said, in Greek; "it is but nature working." "I am pitiful," she answered, coldly: "had I not been pitiful, she had been dead

even now." Then addressing Ustane: "Woman, I say to thee go, before I destroy thee where thou art." "I will not go. He is mine-mine!" she cried, in anguish. "I took him, and saved

his life. Destroy me, then, if thou hast the power. I will not give thee my hus-



Ayesna made a movement so swift that I could scarcely follow it.

band—never—neverith

Ayesha made a movement so swift that
Leould scarcely follow it, but it seemed to me that she lightly struck the poor girl Ustane's head, and then staggered backing rror; for there upon her hair, right across her bronze-like tresses, were three finger marks as white as snow. As for the gifl terself, she had put her hands to her head

and was looking dazed. "Great heavens!" I said, perfectly agha at this dreadful manifestation of inhum

power; but She did but laugh a little. "Thou thinkest, poor ignorant fool," she said to the bewildered woman, "that I have not power to slay. Stay; there lies a min-ror," and she pointed to Leo's round sharing-glass that had been arranged by Job with other things upon his portmant "Give it to this woman, my Holly, and let her see that which lies across her hair, and whether or no I have power to slay."

I picked up the glass and held it before Ustane's eyes. She gazed, then felt at her hair, then gazed again, and then sank upon the ground with a sort of sob.

"Now wilt thou go, or must I strike a second time?" asked Ayesha, in mockery. 'See; I have set my seal upon thee, so that I may know thee till thy hair is all as white as it. If I see thy face here again; be sure too that thy bones shall soon be whiter than my mark upon thy hair."

Utterly awed and broken down, the poor creature rose, and, marked with that are ful mark, crept from the room, sobbing bitterly.

"Look not so frightened, my Holly," said Ayesha, when she had gone. "I tell theat deal not in magic-there is no such thing. 'Tis only a force that thou dost not understand. I marked her to strike terror to her heart, else must I have slain her. And now I will bid my servants bear my Lord Kallikrates to a chamber near my own, that I may watch over him, and be ready to greet him when he wakes; and thither, too, shalt thou come, my Holly, and the white man, thy servant. But one thing mber at thy peril. Naught must thou my to Kallikrates as to how this woman went, and as little as may be of me. Now, have warned thee!" And she slid away to give her orders, leaving more abso-intelly confounded than ever. Indeed, so tely confounded than ever. Indeed, so wildered was I, and racked and torn by ession of various emotio legan to think that I must be going mater, perhaps fortunately, I had but the to reflect, for presently the ten arrived to carry the sleeping had our possessions across the central cave; so for a while all was bustle. of what warmed to call Ayesha's idud what go dell Ayesha's Dou-loir, the chrisined space where I had first men her. Where she herself slept I did not then know, but it was somewhere quite

That night I passed in Leo's room, but he slept through it like the dead, never once stirring. I also slept fairly well, as, indeed, I needed to do. But well, as, needed to do, titl my alsop