BY GUY BOOTHBY

Author of "A Beautiful White Devil," "A Bid For Fortune," "The Marriage of Esther," "Dr. Nikola," Etc., Etc.

(Continued from last week)

"You know what it is worth," answered vehemently, roused out of myself by this accusation. "And if ever the chance occurs again of proving it you will be afforded another example. I cannot say more." "And is it always to be like this,

Cilbert," she asked, for the first time calling me by my Christian name. "Are we to be séparated all our

"God knows-I fear so," I murmured, though it cut me to the heart to

have to say the words. She bowed her head on her hands with a little moan, while I, feeling that I should not be able to control myself much longer, sprang to my feet and went across to the verandah rails. For something like five minutes I stood looking into the dark garden, then I pulled myself together as well as I was able and went back to my

"Agnes," I said, as I took possession of her little hand, "you cannot guess what it costs me to tell you how impossible it is for me ever to link my lot with yours. The reason why I cannot tell you. My secret is the bitterest one a man can have to keep, and it must remain locked in my own breast for all time. Had I met you earlier it might have been very different-but now our ways must be separate for ever. Don't think more hardly of me than you can help, dear. Remember only that as long as I live I shall call no other woman wife. Henceforward I will try to be worthy of the interest you have felt in me. No one shall ever have the right to say ought against me; and, if by chance you hear good of me in the dark days to come, you will know that it is for love of you I rule my life. May God bless and keep you al-

She held up her sweet face to me, and I kissed her on the lips. Then, Mr. Maybourne returned to the verandah; and, half-an-hour later, feeling that father and daughter would like a little time alone together before they retired to rest, I begged them to excuse me, and on a pretence of feeling tired went to my room. Next morning after breakfast

drove with Mr. Maybourne into Cape Town, where I made the few purchases necessary for my journey. In extension of the kindness he had so far shown me, he insisted on advancing me half my first year's salary—a piece of generosity for which you may be sure I was not ungrateful, seeing that I had not a halfpenny in the world to call my own. Out of this sum I paid the steamship company for my passage-much against their wish-obtained a ready-made rig out suitable for the rough life I should henceforth live, also a revolver, a rifle and among other things a small gold locket which I wished to give to Agnes as a keepsake and remembrance of myself.

At twelve o'clock I returned to the house, and, after lunch, prepared to bid the woman I loved "good-bye." Of that scene I cannot attempt to give you any description—the pain is too keen even now. Suffice it that when I left the house I carried with me, in addition to a sorrow that I thought would last me all my life, a little square parcel which, on opening, I found to contain a photo of herself in a Russian leather case. How I prized that little present I will leave you to

Two hours later I was in the train bound for Johannesburg

CHAPTER XI.

Six months had elapsed since I had left Cape Town and on looking back on them now I have to confess that they constituted the happiest period of my life up to that time. I had an excellent appointment, an interesting, if not all-absorbing, occupation, comfortable quarters, and the most agreeable of companions any man could de sire to be associated with. I was as far removed from civilization as the most misanthropic of men, living by civilized employment, could hope to get. Our nearest town, if by such name a few scattered huts could be dignified, was nearly fifty miles distant, our mails only reached us once a week, and our stores every three months. As I had never left the mine for half a day during the whole of the time I had been on it, I had seen no strange faces, and by reason of the distance and the unsettled nature of the country, scarcely half-a-dozen had

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"The Pride of the South," as the mine had been somewhat grandiloquently christened by its discoverer. was proving a better property than had even been expected, and to my astonishment, for I had made haste to purchase shares in it, my luck had turned, and I found myself standing an excellent chance of becoming

One thing surprised me more and more every day, and that was my freedom from arrest: how it had come about that I was permitted to remain at large so long I could not understand. When I had first come up to Rhodesia I had found a danger in everything about me. In the rustling of the coarse veldt grass at night, the sighing of the wind through the trees, and even the shadows of the mine buildings and machinery. But when week after week and month month went by and still no notice was taken of me by the police, my fears began to abate until, at the time of which I am about to speak, I hardly thought of the matter at all. When I did I hastened to put it away from have done the remembrance of some unpleasant dream of the previous ing a tent with me at the back. week. One consolation, almost cruel in its uncertainty, was always with me. If suspicion had not so far fallen on me in England, it would be unpossibly be mine in the future. Was my work was pleasant to me and that the wording of Mr. Maybourne's let-

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but, though I could not guess it then, my troubles were by no means over; and, as I was soon to find out, I was on the edge of the bitterest period of

Almost on the day that celebrated my seventh month in Mr. Maybourne's employ, I received a letter from him announcing his intention of starting for Rhodesia in a week's time, and stating that while in our neighborhood he would embrace the opportunity of visiting "The Pride of the South." In the postscript he informed me that his daughter had decided to accompany him, and for this reason he would be glad if I would do my best to make my quarters as comfortable as possible in preparation for her. He, himself, he continued, was far too old a traveler to be worth con-

I was standing at the engine-room door, talking to one of the men, when the store-keeper brought me my mail. After I had read my chief's letter, felt a thrill go through me that I could hardly have diagnosed for pleasure or pain. I felt it difficult to believe that in a few weeks' time I should see Agnes again, be able to look into her face, and hear the gentle accents of her voice. The portrait she nad ly about with me; and, as proof of the inspection it received, I may say that it was already beginning to show decided signs of wear. Mr. Maybourne had done well in asking me to see to her comfort. I told myself I would begin my preparations at once, and it should go hard with me if she were not pleased with my arrangements

While I was mentally running my eye over what I should do, Mackinnon, my big Scotch overseer, came up from the shaft's mouth to where I stood, and reported that some timbering which I had been hurrying forward was ready for inspection. After we had visited it and I had signified my approval, I informed him of our employer's contemplated visit, and wound up by saying that daughter would accompany him. He shook his head solemnly when heard this.

"A foolish thing," he said, in slow, matter-of fact way, "a vera foolish thing. This country's nae fit for a lady at present, as Mr. Maybourne kens well eno'. An' what's more, there'll be trouble among the boys (natives) before vera long. He'd best be out of it.'

"My dear fellow," I said, a little testily I fear, for I did not care to hear him throw cold water on Mr. Maybourne's visit in this fashion, 'you're always thinking the natives are going to give trouble, but you must confess that what you prophesy never comes off."

He shook his head more sagely than

"Ye can say what ye please," he said. "I'm nae settin' up for a prophet, but I canna help but see what's put plain before my eyes. As proverb says-'Forewarned is forearmed.' There's been trouble an' discontent all through this country-side form onths past, an' if Mr. Maybourne brings his daughter up here-well, he'll have to run the risk of mischief happenin' to the lass. It's no business o' mine, however. As the proverb says-'Let the wilful gang their own

Accustomed as he was to look on the gloomy side of things, I could not but remember that he had been in the country a longer time than I had, and that he had also had a better experience of the treacherous Matabele than I could boast.

"In your opinion, then," I said, had better endeavor to dissuade Mr. Maybourne from coming up?"

"Nae! Nae! I'm na' sayin' that at all. Let him come by all means since he's set on it. But I'm not going to say I think he's wise in bringing the

With this ambiguous answer I had to be content. I must confess, however, that I went back to the house feeling a little uneasy in my mind Ought I to write and warn Mr. Maybourne, or should I leave the matter to chance? As I did not intend to send off my mail until the following day, I determined to sleep on it,

In the morning I discovered that my fears had entirely vanished. The boys we employed were going about their duties in much the same manner as usual, and the half-dozen natives who had come in during the course of the day in the hope of obtaining employment, seemed so peaceably inclined that I felt compelled to dismiss Mackinnon's suspicions from my mind as groundless, and deter mined on no account to alarm my friends in such needlessly silly fas-

How well I remember Mr. and Miss Maybourne's arrival! It was on a Wednesday, exactly three weeks after my conversation with Mackinnon just recorded, that a boy appeared with a note from the old gentleman to me It was written from the township, and stated that they had got so far and would be with me during the afternoon. From that time forward I examined my preparations with a critical eye, discussed the meals with the cook to make sure that he had not

forgotten a single particular, drilled my servants in their duties until I had brought them as near perfection as it was possible for me to get them, and in one way and another fussed about generally until it was time for my guests to arrive. I had fitted up my own bedroom for Miss Maybourne. and made it as comfortable as the limited means at my disposal would allow. Her father would occupy the overseer's room, that individual shar-The sun was just sinking to his

rest below the horizon when I espied a cloud of dust on the western veldt. Little by little it grew larger until likely, I argued, ever to do so; and | we could distinctly make out a buggy in the joy of this thought I began drawn by a pair of horses. It was dreams of the happiness that might traveling at a high rate of speed, and before many minutes were over would it to be wondered at therefore that be with us. As I watched it my heart began to beat so tumult seemed as if those around me could ters of praise seemed sweeter in my not fail to hear it. In the vehicle now ears than the strains of the loveliest approaching was the weman I loved, music could have been. It was evident the woman whom I had made up my that my star was in the ascendant, mind I should never see again.

Never before had I seen her look so lovely. She seemed quite to have recovered from the horrors of the shipwreck, and looked even stronger than when I had first seen her on the deck of the Fiji Princess, the day we had with a fine show of cordiality, but under it it was easy to see that she was as nervous as myself. Having

Five minutes later the horses had

ulled up opposite my verandah and

I had shaken hands with my guests

and was assisting Agnes to alight.

handed the horses and buggy over to a couple of my boys, I led my guests they expressed themselves as surprised and delighted with every arrangement I had made for their comfort. It was a merry party, I can assure you, that sat down to the evening that under the influence of Agnes' manner even Mackinnon forgot himself and ceased to prophesy ruin and

When the meal was finished we adjourned to the verandah and lit our pipes. The evening was delightfully cool after the heat of the day, and overhead the stars twinkled in the firmament of heaven like countless lamps, lighting up the sombre veldt till we could see the shadowy outline of trees miles away. The evening breeze rustled the long grass, and across the square the figure of our cook could just be seen, outlined I sat I could catch a glimpse of my darling's face, and see the gleam of her rings as her hand rested on the arm of her chair. The memory of the the island, and in the open boat, came

Maybourne made an excuse and went into the house, leaving us together. Mackinnon had long since departed. When we were alone, Agnes leant a little forward in her chair and said: "Are you pleased to see me, Gil-

"More pleased than I can tell you," I answered, truthfully, "But you must not ask me if I think you were wise "I can see that you think I was not,"

she continued. "But how little you understand my motives. I could not

Thinking that perhaps she had said too much, she checked herself suddenly, and for a little while did not speak again. When she did, it was only about the loneliness of my life on the mine, and such like trivial matters. Illogical as men are, though I had hoped, for both our sakes, that she would not venture again on such delicate ground as we had traversed before we said good-bye, I could not help a little sensation of disappointment when she acted up to my advice. I was still more piqued when a little later she stated that she felt tired, and holding out her hand, bade me "good-night." and went to her room.

Here I can only give utterance to a remark which. I am told, is as old as the hills-and that is, how little we men understand the apposite sex. From that night forward, for the first three or four days of her visit, Agnes' manner towards me was as friendly as of old, but I noticed that she made but small difference between her treatment of Mackinnon and the way in which she behaved towards myself. This was more than I could bear, and in consequence my own behavior towards her changed. I found myself bringing every bit of ingenuity I possessed to bear on an attempt to win her back to the old state. But it was in vain! Whenever I found an opportunity, and hinted at my love for her, she invariably changed the conversation into such a channel that all my intentions were frustrated. In consequence, I exerted myself the more to please until my passion must have been plain to everyone about the place. Prudence, honor, everything that separated me from her was likely to be thrown to the winds. My infatuation for Agnes Maybourne had grown to such a pitch that without

One day, a little more than a week after their arrival, it was my good fortune to accompany her on a riding excursion to a waterfall in the hills, distant some seven or eight miles from the mine. On the way she rallied me playfully on what she called "my unusual quietness." This was more than I could stand, and I determined as soon as I could find a convenient opportunity, to test my fate and have

her I felt that I could not go on living.

it settled for good and all. On reaching our destination, we tied our horses, by their reins, to a tree at the foot of the hill, and climbed up to the falls we had ridden over to explore. After the first impression, created by the wild grandeur of the scene, had passed, I endeavored to make the opportunity I wanted.

"How strangely little circumstances recall the past. What place does that remind you of?" I asked, pointing to the rocky hill on the other side of the

"Of a good many," she answered. little artfully, I'm afraid. "I cannot say that it reminds me of one more than another. All things considered there is a great sameness in South African scenery.

Cleverly as she attempted to turn my question off, I was not to be balk

ed so easily. "Though the likeness has evidently not impressed you, it reminds me very much of Salvage Island," I said, drawing a step closer to her side. "Half way up that hill one might well expect to find the plateau and the cave. "Oh, why do you speak to me of that awful cave," she said, with a shudder: "though I try to forget it, it al-

"I am sorry I recalled it to you memory, then," I answered. "I think in spite of the way you have behaved towards me lately, Agnes, you are aware that I would not give you pain for anything. Do you know that?" As I put this question to her, I look eyes and whispered "Yes."

ways gives me a nightmare.

ed to push my fate still further. "Aznes." I said, "I have been think ing over what I am going to say to you now for some days past, and l believe I am doing right. I want to tell you the story of my life, and then to ask you a question that will decide the happiness of the rest of it. I want you to listen and, when I have done, answer me from the bottom of your heart. Whatever you say

usly that it I will abide by."

I me could She looked up at me with a startled expression on her face. "I will listen," she said, "and whatever question you ask I will answer. But think host, Gilbert; do you really

"God knows I have as good reasons for wishing you to know as any man could have." I answered. "I can trust you as I can trust no one else in the world. I wish you to hear and judge me. Whatever you say, I will do and

She put her little hand in mine, and having done so, seated herself on a boulder. Then, after a little pause,

she bade me tell her all. "In the first place," I said, "I must make a confession that may surprise you My name is not Wrexford, as l have so long led you to suppose. It is into the house I had prepared for Pennethorne. My father was Sir Anthem. Evidently they had come with | thony Pennethorne, of Polton-Penna, the intention of being pleased, for in Cornwall, I was educated at Eton and Oxford; and, as you will now see I got no good from either. After a college scrape, the blame for which was thrown upon me, my father turned me out of England with a portion of my inheritance. I went to Australia, where I tried my hand at all sorts of employment, gold mining among the number. Details of my life out there, with one exception, would not interest you; so I will get on to the great catastrophe, the results of which were taking me out of England when I first met you. Up to this time illluck had constantly pursued me, and I had even known the direct poverty. ed you. You hated him; you longed You may imagine, therefore, what my feeling were when an old friend, a man with whom I had been partner on many goldfields, told me of a place which he had discovered where, he said, there were prospects of sufficient against the ruddy glow of the fire in | gold to make us both millionaires half the hut behind him. How happy I was a dozen times over. He, poor fellow, I must leave you to guess. From where | was dying at the time, but he left his secret to me, bidding me take immediate advantage of it. True to my promise, I intended to set off to the place he had found as soon as he was awful time we had spent together on buried, and having discovered it, to apply to Government for right to mine back to me with a feeling that was there, but fate was against me, and I half pleasure, half pain. When I rea- was taken seriously ill. For weeks I ing away from me with a gesture of lized that I was entertaining them in | hovered between life and death. When | horror. my abode in Rhodesia, it seemed I recovered I saddled my horse, and, dreaming of all I was going to accomplish with my wealth, when I had Towards the end of the evening, Mr. | obtained it, made my way across country by the chart he had given me. When I arrived at the spot it was only to learn that my greatest enemy in the world, a man who hated me as much as I did him, had filched my secret from me in my delirium, and had appropriated the mine. You cannot imagine my disappointment. I wanted money so badly, and I had counted so much on obtaining this, that I had almost come to believe myself possessed of it. What need to tell the rest? He became enormously rich. and returned to England. In the meantime my father had died, leaving me a sufficient sum, when carefully invested, to just keep me alive. With this to help me I followed my enemy reasonable frame of mind. I adopted home, resolved, if ever a chance arose, to revenge myself upon him When I arrived I saw his name everywhere. I found his wealth, his generosity, his success in life, extolled in every paper I picked up; while I, from whom he had stolen that which gave him his power, had barely sufficient to keep me out of the workhouse. You must understand that I had been seriously ill, for the second time, just before I | you, If you are in danger, this is the left Australia, and perhaps for this time for me to prove what my affecreason-but more so, I believe, on tion is worth. Do you value my love account of the great disappointment so lightly that you deem it only fit to which I had been subjected-I be for fair weather? When the world is gan to brood over my wrongs by day against you, you can see who are your and night, and pine for revenge. I friends." could not eat or sleep for it. Remember. I do not say this in any way to kissing her sweet upturned face. "You excuse myself, but simply to show you know that there is no one in this that my mind was undoubtedly not world so much to me as you; and for quite itself at the time. At any rate, that very reason I cannot consent to

length work myself that it was as one as mine." much as I could do to prevent myself from laying violent hands upon my me now you will make me miserable enemy when I saw him in the public for life. Oh, why must I plead so hard street. After I had been entertaining | with you?" Cannot you see that I am the devil in this fashion for longer in earnest when I say I wish to share than was good for me, he in return | your danger with you?" sent one of his satellites to complete my ruin. That man-such a man as | what way could I make her see how you could not picture to yourseif- base a thing it would be on my part out before me a scheme for getting to pull her down into the maelstrom even with my enemy, so devilish that of misery that might any day draw at first I could hardly believe he was | me to my doom? At last an idea ocin earnest. So insiduously did he tempt | curred to me. me, playing upon my hatred and increasing my desire for revenge, that a compromise? Will you promise me at last I fell into his net as completed to take a year to think it over? If at ly as he could wish. The means

immediately found for getting my victim into my clutches, and then nothing remained but to work out the hide crime that had been planned for I stopped for a moment and fr at Agnes, who was cowering with he face in her hands. She did not spea

so I continued my gruesome this "I need not tell you how I got the man in my power, nor in what wan ner it was arranged that I should kill him. I will content myself with to. you that when I had got him, could have killed him by lifting little finger, difficult as you may ?: it to believe it. I saw your face before me imploring me to repent. There and then I determined to throw of in

> disguise, to let him know who I was, and what I intended to do to him: after that I would have bidden him go. and have left him to his own con science. But, to my horror, when I got down from my box-for I was driving him in a cab-I found that in some devilish fashion my work had been anticipated for me—the man was dead, killed by the same fatal agency that had been given to me to do the deed. Try for one moment to imagine my position. In one instant I stood in that quiet London street, stamped with the brand of cain. Never again could I be like my fellow men. Henceforth I must know myself for what was—a murderer, whose proper end should be the gallows. In an agony of terror I got rid of the body-left

very life. While the town was still abed and asleep I tramped away into the country, and at a suburban station caught the earliest train to Southampton. On arrival there I booked my ssage in the Fift Princess for South Africa, and went on board. The rest ou know. Now, Agnes, that you have eard my wretched story, you can se for yourself why I was so desirous of getting out of civilization as quick ly as possible. You can judge for yourelf whether I was right or wrong in

in the street in fact—and fled for my

fusing to allow you to say you loved gore harshly than I judge myself. She looked up at me with terror "But you did not mean to kill th nan," she cried. "You repented—you

"If it had not been for me the man

No, no! Agnes, you cannot make me out innocent of his death, however A look of fresh life darted into he face. It was as if she had been struck by a brilliant idea that might mean my salvation

"But how do you know that you killed the man?" she saked. "Are you quite certain that he was dead when you looked at him?" Quite certain." I answered. "I exI have made enquiries since and e cited the fact that he has never been seen or heard of since that awful night There have been adverti n the papers offering rewards for any information concerning him.

She did not reply to this, only sat and rocked herself to and fro, her face once more covered in her hands. I knelt beside her, but did not dare, for very shame, to attempt to comfort

"Agnes," I said, "speak to me. If it only be to say how much you loathe me. Your silence cuts me to the heart. Speak to me, tell me my fate, advise me as to what I shall do. I swear by God that whatever you tell me, that I will do without questioning or com-

Still she did not answer. When saw this I rose to my feet, and in my agony must have turned a little from her. This action evidently decided her, for she sprang up from the boulder on which she had hitherto been sitting, and, with a choking cry, fell into my arms and sobbed upon my "Gilbert," she moaned, 'come what

may, I believe in you. Nothing shall ever convince me that you would have killed the man who so cruelly wrongto be revenged on him; but you never would have mardered him when it came to the point.'

In answer I drew her closer to me, "Agnes, my good angel," I said; what can I say to you for the comfort you give me? You have put fresh life into me. If only you believe in me, what do I care for the world? Heaven knows I did not mean to kill the man -but still the fact remains that he is dead, and through my agency. Though morally I am innocent, the law would certainly hold me guilty."

"You do not mean to say that the police will take you?" she cried, start-

doubt that they wil do so. How happens that I have not been arrested ere this I cannot imagine." "But, Gilbert, you must not let them find you. You must go away-you must

hide yourself.' "It would be no use, they would find me sooner or later, wherever I

"Oh, what can you do then? Come what may I shall not let you be taken. Oh God, I could not bear that." She glanced wildly round, as if she fancied the minions of the law might already be on my track. I endeavored to soothe her, but in vain. She was thoroughly frightened, and nothing could say or do would convince her that I was not in immediate danger. At last, to try and bring her to a

"But, Agnes, we are missing one point that is of vital importance." I said. "Knowing what I am, henceforward everything must be over be-

"No, no! she cried, with a sudden change of front. "On the other hand, you have shown me that there is more reason than ever that I should love "God bless you, darling," I said,

to such a pitch of hatred did I at link your fate with such a terrible "Gilbert," she said, "if you repulse

I was silent for a few moments. In

"Agnes," I said, "will you agree to the end of that time I am at liberty I will go to your father, tell him my story as I have to-day told it to you, and, if he will still have anything to do with me; ask him for your hand. By that time I shall probably know my fate, you will be able to see things more clearly, and I shall not feel that I have taken advantage of your love and sympathy.

"But I want to be with you and to help you now.' "Believe me, you can help me best by agreeing to my proposal. Will you make me happy by consenting to what wish?"

"If it will please you I will do so," she said, softly. "God bless you, dear," I answered. And thus the matter was concluded.

CHAPTER XII.

Nearly a week had elapsed since had made my confession to Agnes at the Falls, and in three days it was Mr. Maybourne's intention to set out on his return journey to the South. During the whole of that period not one word had been said by Miss Maybourne regarding my story. But if she did not refer to it in speech it was easy to see that the subject was never absent from her mind. On two occasions I heard her father question her as to the reason of her quietness, and I saw that each time she found it a more difficult task to invent a satisfactory reply. What this meant to me you will readily understand. could not sleep at night for thinking of it, and not once but a thousan times I bitterly regretted having bur-

Two afternoons prior to our guests departure I was sitting in my verandah reading the letters which had been broughe to the mine by the mailman at midday. Mr. Maybourne was sitting near me, also deep in his gone to her own room for the same urpose. When I came to the end or my last epistle I sat with it in my and looking out across the velo and thinking of all that had happen since I had said good-bye to old land. From one thing my last of all of Bartrand. The memory has just reached me, and—well, to filled with water. The cattle were drive of my hatred for him brought me | tell you the truth, we are in danger

myself meeting Nikola in the Strand, and then accompanying him home to his extraordinary abode. As I pic-tured him seated in his armchair in that oddly-furnished room, all my old horror of him flashed back upon me. I seemed to feel the fascination of his eyes just as I had done that night when we visited that murderou

cab in the room below. While I was thinking of him, I heard a footstep on the path that led round the house, and presently Mackinnon appeared before me. He beckoned with his hand, and understanding that he desired to speak to me, I rose from my chair and went out to him.

"What is it?" I enquired, as I approached him, for at that hour he was generally in the depths of the mine. "Has anything gone wrong." "That's as ye care to take my words he answered, wheeling about and leading me out of earshot of the house. There was something in his manner that frightened me, though I could not for the life of me have said why. When we reached the fence that separated my garden from the open veldt I stopped, and leaning on the rails, once more asked him why he had called me out

"I told ye a fortnight ago that there was trouble brewing for us with the natives," he said impressively "I warned ye a week ago that 'twas no better. Now I tell ye its close upon us, and if we're not prepared, God help us

"What do you mean? Don't speak in enigmas, man. Tell me straight out what your are driving at."

"Isn't that what I'm trying to do?" he said. "I tell ye the whole country's in a ferment. The Matabele are out, and in a few hours, if not before, we shall have proof of it." "Good God man!" I cried, "how do

you know this? And why did you not

make me see the importance of it "'Ye can lead a horse to the water but ye canna make him drink,' says tell a man of danger, but ye canna make him see it. An' so 'twas with ye. I told ye my suspicions a fortnight past, but 'twas only this minute I came to know how bad it really was."

"Step this way an' I'll show ye." He led me to a small hut near the kitchen. On reaching it, he opened it and showed me a man stretched out upon a bed of sacks and grass. He was a white man, and seemed utterly her before we are absolutely obliged.

"And how have you come to hear

"This man's name," said Mackinnon, as if he were exhibiting some hu- | Come to the office and let me see this man curiosity, "is Andrews. He's a prospector, and we've been acquent for years. Now tell your yarn, Andrews, and let Mr. Wrexford here see how bad the matter is" "I've not much to tell, sir," said the

man addressed, sitting up as he spoke. "It came about like this: I am a prospector, and I was out away back on the river there, never dreaming there was mischief in the wind. Then my boys began to drop hints that there was likely to be trouble, and I'd best keep my weather eye open. At first I didn't believe them, but when I got back to camp at mid-day to-day and found both my servants murdered, my bullocks killed, and my rifles and everything else of value stolen, I guessed who had done it. Fortunately, they had passed on without waiting for me, so I got into the saddle again and came here post haste to warn you. I tell you this, the Matabele are rising. The impi that murdered my men is under one of the king's sons, and by this time they are not twenty miles distant from this spot. There can be no doubt that they are traveling this way. From what my boys told me. Buluwayo is surrounded, while three more impis are traveling night and day with the same object as the one I now warn you of, namely, to cut off the advance of the troops being pushed forward to oppose them from the "Do you mean this? On your oath,

are you telling me the truth?" "God strike me dead if I'm not," he answered, solemnly. Look at me, I've made my way in here as hard as a man could come, riding for his life. That should be proof enough; but if | into laager, but in my opinion we shall it isn't, Mr. Mackinnon here will speak

"That I will," said Mackinnon, "I've known you long enough, and always found you a straightforward man." I stood for a few moments deep in thought. "How far do you think they are

for me, I'm sure."

way from us at the present moment?" "Not more than twenty miles at | pared. most, sir. I left my camp on the river about mid-day, and I've been here about a quarter of an hour. I came in as hard as I could ride; say five hours riding at twelve miles an hour, making a big detour of about twenty miles, to avoid them. That make between fifteen and twenty miles away now if they did five miles an hour straight across country." "And you're sure they mean war?"

"There's not a doubt of it, sir. I know the vermin too well by this time not to be certain of that.' "Then I must tell Mr. Maybourne

at once. Come with me Mackinnon, and you too, Andrews, if you can manage it. We must hold a council of war and see what's best to be done.' I led them across the small paddock to my office, and then went on to the house in search of my employer. I found his pacing up and down the

verandah, looking rather disturbed. "Wrexford, my dear fellow," he began, on seeing me. "I have been looking for you. I want a few moments' earnest conversation with you."

"And I with you, sir," I answered. He led me beyond the verandah before he spoke again. "You must hear me first. What

want to see you about is as important as life and death to us all. I have received a number of letters by the mail, and one all all warn me that there is likely to be trouble with the Mataseen it coming, I am told, and are taking all the necessary steps to secure life and property, but there is no knowing when the brutes may not oe on us, and what they may not do the barricades. Wagons, cases, sacks Now, you see, if I were alone I should | in fact, which would be likely to give see it out-but there is Agnes to con- the enemy was pressed into our sersider; and, with a woman in the que one ventures upon such a course." lia, of poor | "That is the very thing I came over | destroyed. Every tank that could be old Ben Garman, of Markapurlie, and to see you about, sir. Serious news utilized was carried to the house and

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now, this very minute. If you will sten over to my office, I have a man there who has seen the enemy within forty miles of this place, and he tells me they are advancing in our direction even now. His face, for an instant, became

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deadly pale, and I noticed that he glanced anxiously at the sitting-room "Steady, Wrexford, for heaven's sake," he said, "Not too loud, or Agnes will hear. We musn't frighten

man for myself." Together we walked over to my den where Mackinnon and Andrews were awaiting us.

Mr. Maybourne nodded to the former and then looked searchingly at the latter. "I am told that you have seen the

Matabele under arms to-day," he be-

gan, coming straight to the point, as

was characteristic of him. "My servants were killed by them and my camp was looted about forty miles from this office," replied Andrews, meeting Mr. Maybourne's glance without flinching.

"At what number should you estimate them?" "Roughly speaking, from what I saw of them from a hill nearly a mile distant, I should say they were probably two thousand strong. They were in full war dress, and from what my servants had hinted to me that morning, I gathered that they are led by

one of the king's sons." "You have no doubt in your mind that they are coming this way?" "I don't think there's a shadow of a doubt about it, sir. They're probably trying to effect a junction with another impi, and then they'll be ready to receive any troops that may come up against them from the South.

"There's something in that," said Mr. Maybourne, reflectively. "And now I am going to ask you the most important question of all, gentlemen. That is, what's to be done? If we abandon this place, the mine and the buildings will be wrecked for certain. At the best we can only reach the township, where we can certainly go be even worse off there than we are here. What do you say?"

There could not be any doubt about the matter in my opinion. In the township we should certainly be able to make up a larger force, but our defences could not be made so perfect, while to abandon the mine was an act for which none of us were pre-

"Very well then," continued Mr. Maybourne, when he had heard that we agreed with him, "in that case the best thing we can do is to form a laager here, and prepare to hold out until the troops that I have been told are on their way up can rescue us. How are we off for arms and ammunition, Wrexford?" "I will show you," I said, and forth-

with led the way through the office into a smaller room at the back. Here-I pointed to an arm-rack in which twenty-two Winchester repeating rifles, a couple of Martini-Henris, and about thirty cutlasses were arranged. "How many men capable of firing a decent shot can we muster?" asked

hauled the weapons. "Nineteen white men, including ourselves, and about half-a-dozen na-"And how much ammunition have

Mr. Maybourne, when he had over-

"I can tell you in a moment," I answered, taking up a book from the table and consulting it. "Here it is. Two thousand cartridges for the repeating rifles, two hundred for the Martinis, and a thousand for the six revolvers I have in this drawer.

"A good supply, and I congratulate you on it. Now let us get to work. Ring the bell, Mr. Mackinnon, and call all the hands up to the house. I'll talk to them, and when I've explained our position, we'll get to work on the

Ten minutes later every man had was taking his share of work upon of flour, sheets of iron-everything, shelter to ourselves and resistance to vice, while all that would be likely to afford cover to the enemy for a num dred yards or so round the house was

(Continued on page two)

Cares Crip

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Mayor Vrooman on Chairmen of C Ald. O.Reilly w

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Volume X

The inaugural meeting council took place on ing. All the member with Mayor Vrooman After the members ha declarations of qua chairman of the seve were elected as follow Finance Committee, ly : Police and Light G; McFadden ; Board

J. Maunder : Manufac G. Rea ; Town Prop Fisher. Proposed by Ald. O ed by Ald. McFadden, of Revision consist of the chairmen of the mittees. Carried. During the meeting,

an called attention to Act relating to "open voting," which he e on each member when from his seat. Then tion to the rule, said a show of hands, in not according to the Ald. O'Reilly though referred to was only icipalities that had i Mayor Vrooman-" amended in 1903, a

over-rules the by-law sed a long time ago. The Mayor then re further discussion for Knowlson suggested ment had been added cret voting. It was that the Mayor shou Town Solicitor, and man's opinion of the EVENING : Council resumed

p.m., all present. B with the general bus stated that we had Town Solicitor re th ing in Council. Mr agreed with him as the votes, openly t as it is practiced in Commons, but he th was only necessary division. The May together satisfied wi but as far as proceed Councils, there was them being nullified in procedure.

COMMUNIC From F. Yarstone Standard Publishing reference to an artic ed during the comin From the County ing a statement of town treasurer. A Mr. R. G. Corneil

Council Chamber fo the Farmers' Mutu Chamber on the 6th. Granted. Applications for a were received from James Fleury, Thos Crandell, G. H. Lin J. J. Miller, Robt. From the Town S a communication fr officials asking the at the Kent and Li

be withdrawn from owing to the small during these hour Board of Works, w that the Town Sol From E. F. Mase the Finance Commi boro Council, as Council to appoint a deputation to th ask for the speedy Trent Valley Canal

From J. Ross R Sick Children's Ho a renewal of subscr of Ald. McFadden, was voted for the last year From Wm. Steers mention of Lindsay review.

From H. Lewrie etc., of snowplows. From Stewart plaining of the tax belonging to Mrs. the south ward. Pr \$300, and the taxe the time the local paid up, Mrs. have paid \$720 in perty. Pinance. From Mrs. Annie es for 1905, and remitted. Finance

From G. H.

Commissioners ren

Deetetttt

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