THE FATE OF AZUMA;

Or, The South African Millionaire.

CHAPTER XV.—(Cont'd.)

"See, see Baas, look."

She entreated him like a child.

"There is war, a great war," she muttered, "and blood . . blood."

"War."

Was this woman then really a witch, or how was it that she uttered the word which had wrung in his ears ever since Golling had departed, but which had rung in his ears ever but which neither had ventured so much as to breathe openly to each other?

He was growing interested, and because he told her everything always, because she was the only confidant he had, he told her all that Golling had told him in detail.

"It is not true," she said, "if he wants them to come, then why does he not send them himself?"

"But don't you see, Azuma, that it must not go on like this, the Boers, you hate the Boers, don't you—?"

The gleam which shot across her eyes, which he could feel was there even more than he could see it, told him that she had given her answer on that score.

"Well, soon they will have the whole country under their control, they pay no attention to the English, they oppress the natives, even now they treat the Uitlander with contempt. Now listen, and I will tell you what the scheme is."

She squatted down and listened till the end while he, fired with the new idea Golling had inspired, told her with all the excitement of a newly kindled ardor of enthusiasm, the way Kruger kept the country back from civilization in order to make money, and because he felt instinctively that for all his cunning, a civilized country would not tolerate him, that he could no longer control it. And Lieb told her, almost as if it were a fairy tale of wonder, what would happen if the British possessed it, how bridges and railways would be built, and schools and Churches, and how in time even her race would fare better and grow rich."

And though she listened with wonder and amazement, for all that, at the end, she shook her head.

"All that," she said, "if the British conquer, but if not, if the Boer wins the battle, what then?"

Yes, he had thought of that, and as she said the words, this wonderful intelligent being, he laughed.

"The Boers beat the British!" The idea was absurd.

And Azuma swept her hand backwards and forwards showing him the Veldt, the great tracts of land which the Boers knew so well, but which neither the British soldiers, nor even the Highland troops had any idea of.

"They do not know this country," she said, quietly, "they do not know the Boer, the Boer knows every kopje, every klooft, every raad; they will crouch in the valleys, and every man and woman and child," she held her hand out low to show how small a child she meant, "will carry a gun, and they will shoot from behind, they will shoot when your troops have turned their backs."

How had she thought of all this, this woman? And she went on. "And they will say, 'We came here first, what right have you?"

Yes, Azuma was right, what right had they, the British or the Germans, to come and take their country? Their wealth, that was another thing, they had never developed anything, been too afraid to spend money, too bestial to care for improving the country, or the welfare of their brethren, but their country!

Yet as one who cannot at once relinquish a new and deep, and powerful thought, he went on.

"But if we win, Azuma, what then . . . ?"

"You will not win, now, with a handful of men. There will be blood everywhere, and the mines they will go, you will be poor.'

She spoke now in low tones, her eyes seeing once more the strange numbers and signs into which the sand had fallen between the pebbles, talking like one in a dream, prophesying.

"With a few men you will lose, you English, and the Boers will take the mines."

No one but one of her own race could know how they dreaded the fuller power that might come to the Boers if they conquered, and they would conquer, unless the English brought such thousands as she, in her ignorance, could not imagine any country possessed. Then presently she looked up.

"And if they lose they will say it was you, they will kill you, the Boers, or perhaps the English, because you did not win."

And without answering her Adolphe had gone out into the garden. He wanted to be alone with his thoughts, with those former ones which still clung, with these new ones this strange woman had evoked, this strange woman who had come into his life seemingly so quietly, so unsought, and yet who had brought him wealth beyond that of almost any man.

To him she had seemed like a supernatural being, but as a matter of fact hers was simply an illuminated mind. In all centuries, in all ages, in every country, now and then there is born a type like Azuma's. Who can tell by what chain of heredity they are produced, what union of complex intelligence, the right apposites, the right contrasts lived over again and again, produce them, those who seem to have the gift of seeing, only because they have the combined gift of close observation coupled with a mind given to thinking things out, to solving problems. If she had been born in Germany, a man, she would have been a great scientist perhaps, or a great astronomer; a Napoleon in France, a Richelieu, a Charlemange; in Italy a Macchiavelli, but instead, born a Kaffir and a woman, her illumination was limited to a close observance of the character of the few men and women she came across, of the conditions of the country in which she had been born, of the actions of the white and the black races, and amongst those, of the diversity of actions of different whites, the Germans, the English, and the Boer, in the dark races, the Zulu, the Kaffir, the African, the Matabele. And she was a woman of silence, given to instinctively developing that utmost which lies within us all, but which so many of us leave dormant till the day of death. If she saw a thing of any kind she wanted to know all about it. It had been so with household things that Adolphe had bought at Cape Town, or had sent from Germany and Paris. When she had found out how they worked, she tried experiments till she had pushed them to their furthest use.

Such minds as these are often born in obscurity and amidst surroundings which do not permit of their development, and becoming warped or stultified in one direction, find their vent in subtle crme or criminal cunning, but in Azuma it seemed as if a natural sweetness and meekness had restrained all evil influences, while her devotion to Adolphe had seemed to concentrate her every thought on the endeavor to guide him to power, and to safeguard him from evil.

And those little pebbles were but the instruments of her visionary power. She was not in any sense a fortune teller; the art had been taught her as a child, but she had but scant belief in it on the lines on which she had been taught to use it they only assisted her thought, and she had learned to reckon on the shapes and forms the pebbles took upon them as the answers only, to her prophetic meditations.

When Adolphe had settled down in his new home he had some difficulty in persuading the Boers with whom she lived to let her go, they preferred to beat the devil out of her with leather thongs, to handing her over to the devil in the shape of Adolphe Lieb, and they naturally misinterpreted his desire that she should come to his house. Of this he was quite aware, it had been a sense of justice, a means of rewarding her, since he could not give her a share in the mine, which had led him, although slavery was not supposed to be countenanced, to compromise with the Boer farmer for a large sum of money.

Since then Azuma had been looked upon with mingled awe and scorn by the few Boers round about and as a wonderful and supernatural being by the Kaffirs, a sentiment which had gone far to enhance Adolphe's popularity amongst them, and had woven a spell of safety around him of which he was himself unaware. All attempts to find out something about her had failed. That she was not a Kaffir he was sure, her limbs and the shape of her head were cast in finer mould, yet the rich blackness of her skin forbade the idea that she had any white blood, and the Kaffirs told different tales. Some that she had come in a caravan of slaves from the Soudan, that her parents had been killed by the Boers, others that she was the daughter of a great chief, who had been taken prisoner and died in prison.

When he ever thought about it all, Adolphe Lieb inclined to the latter opinion, on account of the quiet dignity of her bearing, and her easy com command over the other servants of his household.

As a matter of fact it didn't much matter what she had been for to misapply a proverb if at night all cats are grey, all black women are in a sense alike. And Azuma understood that he wanted to be alone, and crept away, crept away to wander forth herself an hour later into the same garden to listen under his window to the strains of Adolphe Lieb's violin, to the exquisite music in which he strove to chase away the suggesting demons which flaunted power, and danced before his eyes in winged words, the words of Golling:

"The British government will be very grateful, they will recognize it even if they cannot absolutely suggest it."

And he was hardly aware that the music had a singing mysterious voice, a singing mysterious voice which had put words to his music and turned it to a song, the words of Azuma, the African Maiden. "They will say to you. 'We came here first, what right have you?'"

And a few days later because he wanted to find out the truth, because something made him distrust Golling, he started for London, and Azuma said:

"If you do not take me you will have no luck," and he had laughed and said,

"But I will soon come back."

But it was because she had thrown herself at his feet in a passion of grief, because she had said:

"If you do not take Azuma she will die," that he had taken her with him to London.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was perhaps just as well that a mood of sweeter content had come to Lady Judith at the time she met Adolphe Lieb for the first time, just as well that she met him in surroundings which made for well-being and restfulness and that she was amongst those who admired her and liked her and thought well of her, and that the new interest of "running these Africans," as Lady Glaucourt put it, had brought some vivacity back, some vivacity and vitality which responded to the unused in him. For there was a good deal of the unused in him. He had not yet grown weary of life, nor even met many of its stronger emotions. The emotion of great and ever increasing wealth had been his, and in experience of treachery he had knocked against Golling's dastardly and unpardonable suggestion. The first he had not found to bring with it all the elation the intoxication even he had expected; and the second, oh, that was wiped out now, gone, forgotten almost. That had been seven years ago and since then the Jameson Raid had convulsed England, dazed it, blinded it, sent it mad, and its madness had taken the shape of the Boer war and restored its sanity. There had been a moment when Golling and Lieb had both trembled for the welfare, the continuance to exist even, of their mines, and there had been the sudden resurrection which had brought millions, and all that remained now was outwardly a great historic secret more wonderful than the Dreyfus mystery, because it existed amongst Englishmen, who are supposed to be neither mysterious nor untruthful, above all because it savored a little of those historical romances which so many laugh at, and which resemble tales of the day of the first Bonaparte, without the graceful heroine who throws roses or smiles from some turret window; and— that between Golling and Lieb, it had left the remembrance, on the one side of a great treachery, a great injury suggested, and on the other the sense of having been discovered in an unworthy and abominable act. For Adolphe, through the intermediary of a powerful man interested in the mines, had obtained an interview with the authorities, in Downing Street and at the War Office, and been assured that nothing was known about the scheme, that it would not for a moment be tolerated. With his unusual loyalty, he would not give the name of the person who had suggested to him that this would be acceptable to the British government, and Golling, when he could do so without fear of its getting back to Lieb, would hint that it was what Lieb wanted to do. That was the impression Lieb, quite unconsciously gave to the government also, which did not add to his general good repute, while Lieb congratulated himself that he had listened to Azuma's warnings, and to the insistence of the passion for justice which lies at the heart of every Jew, principally because he gets so little of it.

But he had had none of the wear and tear of life, even as a young man. Home life, his good old father and mother, had had their restraining influence, and since the development of the mines he had been given over entirely to business, occupied himself with matters which generally fall to the share of older men, travelled backwards and forwards between Germany and Paris and London, forming companies, engaged on the Stock Exchange, making huge loans for vast undertakings, always under the guiding prognostications of Azuma. Then had come his father's death, and six months spent looking after his mother, his property and his younger brothers and sisters, journeys to South Africa, the stay prolonged each year longer and longer, as he built and embellished his house, and finally became obsessed with the Veldt itself and rarely left it except for short trips to his home. And on these occasions Azuma had said nothing when he came or went. He had been twenty-five when he first went to stay with the Gollings, now he was thirty-five, ten years older than Judith, who was twenty-five "well rung out," and he possessed some of the freshness of youth, of boyhood almost, and all its vigor.

It was the day he met Judith, that he told himself that life had really begun.

(To be continued.)

GOLDEN SENTENCES.

The only way to live in this age and get any pleasure out of life is always to take more time than you need for every job you tackle.

You'll see strength enough in the people some day.

The trouble with all your big men at the top is that they're trying to do for the crowd what the crowd wants to do for itself.

The age we live in is changing so much faster than any age before it that a man, if he's to be vital at all, must give up the idea of any fixed creed, in his office, his church or his home. If he holds himself open to change, and nows that change is his very life, then he can get a serenity which is as much better than that of the monk as living is better than dying.

Were we sent by our rulers to die only in order that they in their scramble might take more of the earth for themselves?

The head, like the stomach, is most easily affected by poison when it is empty.

Woolwich Arsenal possesses the largest steamhammer in the world. It is capable of striking a blow of nearly a thousand tons; and yet it is so carefully adjusted and accurately timed that it is possible to place a nut under the huge hammer and to crack the shell without injuring the kernel.

FRENCH INVENT A GRENADE

ALSO GOOD BOMB THROWERS AT SMALL EXPENSE.

Fumes From These Missles Which are Charged With Chemicals Have Overpowering Effect.

The widespread use of trenches in the present war, writes a correspondent with the French army, has brought the opposing armies into closer proximity than ever had been considered possible since the development of firearms, and the result has been that new methods have had to be devised to deal with unexpected conditions.

"At first," says the correspondent, "the Germans were probably better prepared for this kind of warfare. Their 'minenwerfen' are excellently made and well designed, as I have been able to assure myself by the examination of some of those captured on the Champagne front. There is no suggestion of improvisation about them. On the contrary, they are, if anything, over-complicated. Experience has shown that they are far too heavy. The largest of them, indeed, are cemented into the trenches, so that they cannot be removed, and none of them is nearly so effective as the simple weapons that the proverbial ingenuity of the French has invented under the pressure of circumstances.

"The Germans have been scoring to a certain extent by the use of asphyxiating bombs in utter defiance of the oblrgations they had accepted under The Hague Convention. The French have not been long in finding a reply to these weapons. If the Germans mean to use poisonous gases in warfare, the French are ready to retaliate with a weapon that should prove very effective, though it in no way contravenes the regulations accepted by all civilized nations except Germany.

"This weapon consists of a hand grenade filled with certain chemicals which when released produce gas that has no deadly effects but is quite powerful enough to paralyze a man for several minutes. As an experiment two of these grenades were thrown into a narrow lane between two walls that might fairly be taken to represent a trench. When the gases had been released a company of infantry was ordered to advance up the lane, and I accompanied them.

"When the first ranks came within the zone of the fumes they stopped suddenly and beat a hasty retreat, fighting their way through the men behind, absolutely blinded by the tears running down their cheeks. The smell of the fumes is not unpleasant. It is suggestive of pear drops combined with very strong ammonia, and it produces such violent smarting of the eyes and nose that it would be hopeless to try and use a weapon while under its influence. These bombs have not yet been used, and will only be employed if the Germans make any further use as asphyxiating gas

French Hand Grenades.

"Besides the newly invented gas bomb the French have various forms of bombs and bomb throwers for use in the trenches. The hand grenades are of two kinds. The larger kind, which looks like a rocket with a stick sawn off short and a very large head, contains more than a pound of explosives. These explosives are contained in a black steel case closed by a wooden cap, with a fuse at the bottom end. The man who is to throw the grenade breaks off the seal which covers this fuse and sets light to it with a match or cigarette. When the fuse begins to splutter he has five seconds before the explosion, and with a good swing can throw it twenty-five to thirty yards. Men of all arms are being trained to use this weapon, and the experiments which I have been permitted to witness were carried out by a number of infantrymen just back from the front. Its effects are very deadly, as it will sweep an area of fifteen yards, and though we were fifty yards away from the point where one of them exploded it was advisable to take cover behind a tree, as several splinters reached us.

"This large grenade is used for defensive purposes. It is thrown from the trenches when the enemy is attacking. For offensive work a lighter and more handy bomb is required. This grenade contains about half a pound of explosives, and a soldier can easily carry half a dozen of them in a bag when he leaves his trench for the charge.

"When the trenches are 250 to 300 yards apart the range is too great for hand grenades. For this work a bomb thrower called the 'crapauillot' has been devised. Its name is derived from the crapaud, a toad. It is a squat, toadlike thing, painted gray and consisting of a wooden stand mounted on it. The German shrapnel cases have only to be shortened and to have a touch hole bored in them. A charge of powder is placed in them, and above it a bomb containing three pounds of explosives.

Inexpensive Bomb Throwers.

"Two salvoes of six 'crapauillots' were fired in one hour. Six sausage-like bombs were thrown into the air and exploded with tremendous violence when they reached the ground 250 yards away, hurling mitraille in every direction. A piece of mitraille, like a heavy, roughly made nail, came hurtling through the branches of the tree behind which I was sheltering and fell at my feet, while another piece was driven deep into the trunk of the same tree. One bomb fell into a stream and threw up a column of water some fifteen feet into the air. The Germans, when they capture a trench, have an ingenious way of describing these bomb-throwers, which cost about a dollar each, as guns, to impress the readers of their communiques.

"We also witnessed the test of some smoke bombs from these engines. They produced a curtain of smoke which was quite sufficient to mask an advance, and their success was the more remarkable as there was a strong wind blowing. The output of these bombs and bomb-throwers is practically unlimited. The energy and method with which the men, who, of course, are mobilized under military law, were working was quite remarkable. The factory has been commandeered by the State, which pays a rent for its use to its proprietor."

MORE WARS TO FOLLOW.

Prophecy of Vast Series of Struggles For Existence.

Professor Ridgeway, speaking at a meeting of the Eugenic Society in London, said that the nation had been brought into the present struggle by a combination of millionaires who were frequently alien in origin, and their dupes the masses, while the same forces were exercising a baneful influence on the prosecution of the war.

Far from this being the last war, the hard facts pointed rather to its being the first of a vast series of struggles different from those yet known. The earth's waste spaces were now getting filled up and the struggle for existance, not merely kingly ambitions, was the great stake for which Germans and British were now fighting. Henceforward each new struggle would be more desperate.

Most of us who attempt to wear the mantle of greatness are disappointed in the fit.

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WIT AND WISDOM.

Rankin: "Have you ever been to the Trosachs?" Phyle: "Yes; but I want to go again some day and see the scenery. The first time I went I was on my honeymoon."

Hubby: "My dear, if all that I hear about you is true——" Wife: "I assure you it is. I started the scandal myself. You don't suppose I went into society to be buried alive, do you?"

Madge (reading letter from brother at the Front): "John says a bullet went right through his hat without touching him." Old Auntie: "What a blessing he had his hat on, dear."

A clumsy carver once sent a goose into a lady's lap. His apology was better than his carving. "Ah, madam, how potent your charms are; they attract not only the living but also the dead."

Mrs. Ryan: "They do be afther sayin' that old man Kelly has got locomothor ataxy." Mrs. Murphy: "Well, he's got the money to run wan av thim if he wants ter, but I'd raypher have a good horse any day."

Two Irishmen were philosophizing. Said Pat to Mike: 'Did you ever stop to think that wan half of the world don't know how the other half gets along?" "You're right," says Mike; "and neither does the other half."

"Many a damsel who is a kitten with men is a cat with women," says Mr. Gelett Burgess. "The custody of the child used to keep discordant married couples together, but now," says a cynic, "it is the automobile."

Agent: "I came to deliver your book on 'How to Play the Piano.'" Lady: "But I didn't order any." Agent: "Haven't you a next door neighbor named Brown?" Lady: "Why, yes; is it for her?" Agent: "No, she ordered it for you."

"I don't think I'll go to school today, mother." "Why, Eddie! I thought you liked to go to school." "I do, mother; but, you see, some of the boys in my class are not so far adavnced as I am, and I thought it would be kind of nice if I stayed away and gave them a chance to catch up."

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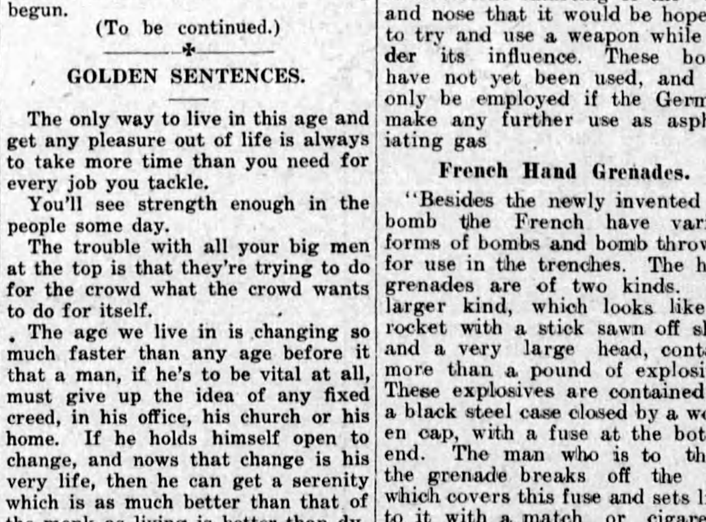

Plowing the Sands; or, Hate's Labor Lost.

A clever cartoon by Walker in "The London Daily Graphic."