

A DISCIPLE OF MESMER.

I do not know if my dear friend, Jack Conyers, will pardon me for making use of a story which I had from his lips some few weeks ago. But then I have to plead as an excuse that he ought not to be so indiscreet as to confide in a struggling journalist who is ever on the lookout for interesting "copy."

An introduction is necessary. Suffice it to say that Conyers, who is an artist, had entered my diggings on the day in question after having been absent on a sketching tour in the south of Ireland for a little more than fifteen months. He came with the extraordinary announcement that he was going to be married to an Irish girl—Kathleen O'Neil by name. I became shockingly interested. My eager questioning elicited the following facts:—

He had first come across Miss O'Neil in the vicinity of Lismore, it appears. Curiously enough, the cause of his original interest in her was an expression of haunting sadness which was ever on her face; nor had he known her long before he experienced an enthusiastic desire to have a hand in clearing the sadness away. But how could he learn the cause? By good fortune he was permitted to hear the story from her own lips, although she had spoken to no man before about it.

"My father," she said, "is insane." "Good heavens!"

He had never entertained that possibility.

No wonder the poor girl was sorrowful. But how had it happened?

"We lived until a year ago in Dublin," she answered. "My father was a merchant there. He had had a hard struggle, but at last success came. Not that his balance at the bank was sufficient of itself; but if he could sell his premises and connection he could retire, which was what he desired, for he was growing old. Fortunately, a purchaser was soon procured in an Irish baronet, Sir Patrick O'Connell by name who wanted it for the purpose of establishing his younger sons in business. An agreement was signed. Sir Patrick could not pay cash down, his money was tied up; but he would have sufficient free in six months' time. He, however, proposed to lodge with my father as security in the meantime, the family diamonds, valued at £60,000—father, you must understand, had an honorable name.

"The pity of what followed, it was at the place of business, on a certain afternoon, that the jewels were handed over, and father, for one night only, locked them in his eschiroire, intending next day to take them to the bank. Alas! the self-same night the premises were burnt to the ground—nothing was rescued. The sudden shock turned my father's brain. As for mother and I, after we had paid to the baronet money equivalent to the value of his diamonds, which the insurance, banking account, etc., enabled us to do, we had just sufficient left to live in simplicity. So we came down to this quiet place. We are allowed to keep father, because the form of his disease comes under the heading of melancholia. He is not dangerous, but he does not know even mother and me."

Such is a brief outline of the sad story. Well, this life, they say, is made up of curious chances. As Conyers was nearing his "diggings" afterward, who should he run up against but his old chum, Charley Manton, who is confidential agent in the employment of Gray & Helmsley of Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"Hallo! What are you doing down this way, Charley?" shouted Conyers.

"Searching for a needle in a haystack, my boy. I want Daniel O'Neil, supposed to be residing in this quarter, formerly a merchant trading in Dublin. I say, though, what makes you look so excited?"

Conyers took his arm and led him to his "diggings," which were conveniently near.

"Now, I know where to find Mr. Daniel O'Neil," he said. "But, first, what do you want him for?"

"Well, that's cool. Supposing you make a start by telling me why you are so mightily interested in him?"

There are times when you can gain a great deal by reposing confidence in a man. Conyers felt that this was one. Therefore he told all he knew.

"In an experience extending over ten years," said Manton, "this is the most extraordinary affair I have ever come across."

Taking his brown brief bag, he opened it and extracted a flat, oblong leather case. Raising the lid he displayed to Conyers' astonished eyes a collection of gems of the finest water. Really, he confounded the latter when he remarked that they were the identical stones concerning which the story had first been told.

fact that when O'Neil and Sir Patrick were in the former's office arranging about the transfer of the stones their conversation was overheard by the cashier, one Jonathan Clark, who happened to be behind an exceedingly thin partition. That night, by a cunning device, he managed to be left last in the office. What concerns us is that he also managed to extract this case from the eschiroire. A train ran at midnight to Liverpool—this he took. Now, don't you see, the building took fire, as in many cases, from some cause unknown, after the valuables had been stolen. Of course, Clark, knowing nothing of this, but imagining justice to be hot on his heels, got on a boat bound for Africa without delay. Harkening how retribution awaited him. He was stricken down with a fever. He was told that there was no hope of recovery. Therefore he sought to purchase peace in his dying moments by restoring his ill-gotten wealth to its owner. He had got rather friendly with a sailor during the passage; to him he intrusted the case, together with a confession of his crime, bidding the fellow swear by the most solemn oaths that lips could utter that he would deliver them up to Gray & Helmsley. O'Neil's solicitors. The fellow proved faithful—that is why I am here to-day."

"What shall you do?" asked Conyers eagerly.

"I don't know. If, as you say, Mr. O'Neil is a lunatic, what will be the good of giving him the jewels? He certainly will not recognize them. Can't you suggest something?"

"They do say that when a man has been robbed of reason by a sudden shock, a sudden shock will also restore it. Come, let us test the truth of that theory."

Manton assented eagerly, so together they proceeded to O'Neil's abode. They were courteously received by Mrs. O'Neil and her daughter. Manton told his story. The ladies were amazed, electrified.

"You inspire a hope undreamed of," cried Mrs. O'Neil.

Without another word she darted upstairs to her husband, and was followed no less quickly by the others. O'Neil was found sitting in an arm-chair gazing into space. When, however, Manton offered him the jewel case he took it readily enough. He turned it over gravely, opened it, and then, alas! looked at the jewels with lack-luster eyes. They might have been pebbles.

Mrs. O'Neil sank into a chair with a piteous moan. Had this momentary brightness come here to make her more miserable than ever? But her daughter had approached Conyers, and was putting her hand upon his arm. It gave him joy to think that in the time of crisis she turned to him.

"Can you do anything, Mr. Conyers?" she asked, earnestly.

"Yes, I have a plan. I will mesmerize your father, if you will let me," he said, quietly.

For all his endeavor he could not prevent a tremor from creeping into his voice. Mrs. O'Neil sprang from her chair aghast; Manton stared at him with his mouth open. Conyers had not time to think of them.

"It is a great risk," he continued; "but is not this a desperate case which demands such?"

"But how can you do what you say?" asked Mrs. O'Neil.

"I studied it in Paris along with art. I was very successful with experiments which I tried upon my fellow students."

"You certainly can't be successful with Mr. O'Neil," protested Manton. "His mind is deranged."

"All the better," explained Conyers, "his resisting power will be absent. It is impossible to mesmerize a man against his will. Mr. O'Neil's state will be of considerable assistance to me. The activity of the ganglion cells of the brain, with which the functions of consciousness are believed to be specially associated, are almost inhibited in his case. You must know that insanity is entirely due to the disorder of the brain. However, let us make preparations."

Conyers' plan was very simple. Obtaining permission from Mrs. O'Neil, he went into the adjoining bedroom, and found there a writing desk containing drawers—four in all. He placed the jewel case in the bottom drawer, closed it, then returned to his subject. He gazed straight into his eyes for a few moments, and then commenced making passes with his hands before his face, backward and forward.

O'Neil watched him with a kind of grave curiosity for a little while, and then he put his hands up to his face and rubbed his eyes. Suddenly he winced slightly and straightened himself in his chair. Ah! What was that? Gradually his eyes became intent on Conyers until he had lost the power to draw them away. The pupils began to dilate, then the eyeballs to protrude, then the eyelids to droop. Respiration and circulation became considerably accelerated, until at length perspiration set in and complete stupor soon followed. While in this state of coma the more powerful will could do with him what it chose.

Conyers threw his head back in exultancy. But he had reckoned without his host. The tense feeling of every faculty overstrained became almost unbearable. He would not be able to keep up long. He must be quick.

Accordingly he commanded O'Neil to rise, who did so. Step by step he led him to the writing desk. He had no need to speak—he had only to think, and the subject obeyed. O'Neil dropped on his knees before the writing desk. He opened the first drawer, and then the second; all were bending in that little room; all four were stilling over him with eager, excited faces.

And now he was opening the third drawer. His nostrils were quivering. He hastily closed it; then literally dragged open the fourth drawer and

captured the jewel case. And then Conyers waked him. It took many moments and all watched with fearful anxiety. What would happen?

It was pleasant to see what did happen. O'Neil snatched up the case, tore it open, laid hold of the jewels, and ran across the room to a far corner, clasping them to his breast and uttering little shrieks of joy. It was pitiful to behold! Not long, and Mrs. O'Neil and Kathleen had darted to his side and were holding his hands and murmuring soft words of comfort.

He looked into their eyes and recognized them, and great tears stood in his eyes. Then Conyers knew that he had succeeded; but barely by the skin of his teeth; a mist rose before his eyes; he tottered to a couch; he lost consciousness.

He awoke to find Kathleen bending over him with a wonderful look in her eyes. She was holding his hand, and—Well, the sequel is to happen in six months' time.

KING SOLOMON'S MINES FOUND?

Carl Peters Asserts That He Found Ophir Where He Looked for It in South Africa.

I have this summer explored the country between the Zambesi and the Pungwa, in Portuguese East Africa and Eastern Mashonaland. Before I started from England I had acquired geographical information which led me to believe that Fura was near the eastern entrance of the Lupata Gorge. There I have found it. It is situated on the banks of the Maira River, about fifteen miles south of the Zambesi, and half-way between Sena and Tete. At the time of my discovery I had with me Mr. Puzs and two mining engineers, Messrs. Gramann and Napolski. I should perhaps explain here that Fura is the native corruption of the word Afur, by which name the Arabs of the sixteenth century knew the district of which I am speaking. Afur is the Sabaean or South Arabian form of the Hebrew name Ophir. I have ample proof that the Fura we discovered and explored this summer is the Ophir of the Old Testament. Afur or Ophir in the Semitic language, means mine. Fura in the language of the people who now inhabit the district also means mine.

The natives, who are under the powerful chief, Macombe, call themselves Makalanga, which means

PEOPLE OF THE SUN.

Unlike any other Africans I know, they are to this day, sun and fire worshippers. They are quite unlike the ordinary African, and have a distinct Jewish type of face, and in my opinion they are a mixture of the Asiatic conquerors with the original inhabitants of the country.

On arriving in the district, I soon found that the natives had some idea of the existence of the ancient Ophir. In fact, they wash gold themselves after the rainy season, and after storing it in quills, do a fairly large trade in it with Beira and Tete.

At first I had great difficulties with these people. For five weeks they refused to sell me food and performed war dances to frighten me. Macombe, the chief, then sent his brother Sunete to me, demanding what I meant by entering his country. By this time, however, as I had succeeded in getting food from other sources, Sunete seemed inclined to be friendly. I made friends with him, and I have brought him to England. Up to the present his greatest surprise is that he has not seen the sun. This chief subsequently gave me valuable information regarding the position of the ancient ruins and workings, which I at once investigated. Going to the spot indicated, I found ancient ruins of undoubtedly Semitic type. I discovered phallic emblems, which have always been connected with the ancient Semitic sun worship. Fura itself I found to possess a formation of quartzite slate and diorite, between which gold reefs were running. Under the ruins I found a large alluvial tract, in which we discovered gold and near it magnificent quartz reefs. The ancient workings which I found were not only surface workings, but there were also shafts and roads.

HEWN INTO THE ROCK

I have built a station in this district, and also one in Inyanga, both of which are in charge of trustworthy Europeans. I intend next summer to further investigate the traces of diamonds, coal, white mica and saltpetre which we found.

"My theory with regard to Ophir," said the doctor in conclusion, is this: The ancient conquerors heard at the mouth of the Zambesi of rich alluvial gold up river and sailed up to the eastern entrance of the Lupata, beyond which rapids made navigation difficult. They then proceeded overland and found, under the very walls, of the fortifications, ruins of which he have discovered, alluvial and also reef gold. They then settled for a considerable period, and afterward migrated to the west toward the Ruene. They eventually settled in the cool climate of Inyanga, conquered all the districts west and southwest as far as the Sanyate River and Tete, and built a great empire along the Zambesi and Sabi rivers. The ancient Sabaean empire probably lasted for thousands of years. Its existence was well known among the Semitic nations, and it is interesting to note that Ophir is always mentioned in the Old Testament without any explanation as to its locality. I have seen enough to be assured that all the products of the ancient Ophir are to be found on the Zambesi.

As a result of my investigation the Arabian and Indian theories, regarding Ophir fall to pieces, and I claim unhesitatingly to have located this year the Golden Ophir of King Solomon and King Hiram."

FROM THE TRANSVAAL.

STORIES TOLD BY CORRESPONDENTS AT THE FRONT.

How the Boers Treated the Bishop of Pretoria—Tommy Atkins and the Half Crown—A Sergeant's Opinion of the Boers' Fighting Qualities—How the Transvaal Government Taxed the Uitlanders.

The bishop of Pretoria, Dr. Bousfield, was summarily ordered from his home and from the Transvaal by Kruger. It was a fear trip for the aged prelate to make from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay in an open coal car. But he says he had to get away somehow. He continues: "No Uitlander is permitted to remain in the Transvaal without a permit. People found there without permits are condemned to 25 lashes and three months' imprisonment. As the Uitlanders leave their property is commandeered or stolen by the Boers. The savagery of the Boer to-day is worse than it was before the war broke out. It makes any Christian man's blood boil when he reflects that these wretches first rob their victims and then actually apply the lash to them because they are British subjects."

WHY BULLER'S PLAN WAS CHANGED.

Gen. Buller went to South Africa with fixed intention—in which the British Government concurred—of abandoning Ladysmith, leaving the British garrison there to the mercy of the Boers, he himself marching in force direct upon Bloemfontein and Pretoria, relieving Kimberley en route. Nobody then believed that Ladysmith could hold out beyond the end of the year, but Buller had not been at the end of the Cape many days before he called the British ministry announcing the change of policy, largely, no doubt, because of the bad effect upon the Cape Dutch and the natives of such a Boer triumph as the surrender of Ladysmith would appear to be. The ministry replied in effect: "Sorry, but do as you think best."

It was this general concentration of Gen. Buller upon Natal, and not a mere incident of the Tugela river reverse, that decided the cabinet to send out Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener to direct the campaign as a whole from Capetown.

DID NOT KNOW HER WITH WHISKERS.

The Natal Witness tells a story of how the captain in a regiment in Natal, when paying his company the other week, changed to give a man a Transvaal half crown, which, as one would naturally expect, bears the image and superscription of President Kruger. The man brought the coin back to the pay-table, and said it was a bad half-crown. The officer took the coin, and without looking at it rang it on the table, and then remarked: "It sounds all right, Atkins; what's wrong with it?" "You look at it, sir," was the reply. The captain glanced at the coin, saying, "It's all right, man; it will pass in the canteen." This apparently satisfied Atkins who walked off, making the remark: "If you say it's all right, sir, it's all right; but it's the first time I've seen the Queen w' whiskers on."

HOW BOER TRAPS ARE PREPARED.

An Afrikaner in the Paris Matin, writes:—"Just you wait until after the capitulation of Ladysmith and Kimberley, and then you will see. Until the British adopt our way of fighting they will never be able to do anything against us, and we are firmly convinced that they will be killed or captured to a man before forcing us back over our own border. They little know what January has in store for them. We have no more fear of Roberts or Kitchener than we have of Buller or Methuen. They only make two general errors. We shall hasten to capture Ladysmith and Kimberley before they arrive, and then we shall have our hands free to deal with them each in turn as we did with Methuen and Buller. What the Boers do is to secretly and rapidly change their positions after the British scouts have passed, and to mass in force in spots that were previously unoccupied. The result is the British columns inevitably walk into the trap and find themselves met with a murderous fire where they thought there was nobody."

A BRITISH SERGEANT OF THE BOERS.

Sergeant Sanderson, with Lord Methuen's force, was in the battles of Belmont and Graspan. Writing from Honey Nest Kloof to his relatives in Hartlepool he says:—

"People can say what they like about Boers being good fighters, but I consider them a lot of cowards. As soon as they are driven from the hills on the plains, and our men make a charge at them they won't stand and fight, but simply show the flag of truce until they have gained another substantial position, and then they will commence firing on you, as usual, shooting officers and men."

HOW SIR REDVERS BULLER WAS DECEIVED.

A correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, says that Sir Redvers Buller was probably induced to adopt the plan of a frontal attack by the fact that the Boers had not answered our artillery for two days, and appeared to be few in numbers. The elaborate earthworks which they had constructed

ed on the ridges probably did not mark the real position they occupied. The heaviest fire came from the bed of the river. Our bombardment of the ridges was terrific, but possibly it did not inflict a proportionate loss on the enemy. The coolness with which the enemy lay quiet under the tremendous fire was amazing. They waited till exactly the right moment, and their defence is one of the most notable of modern times, for the skill, courage, and judgment displayed. There was an extraordinary contrast between the Boers, who were almost invisible, and the British troops marching conspicuously across absolutely open country.

HOW THE UITLANDERS WERE TAXED.

The following statistics show to what an extent the Uitlander has been taxed by the Transvaal Government:

Supposing his business was the importation into the Transvaal of any of the following articles, he would have to pay, first of all, a customs tariff on beer of 73 cents per gallon; butter, \$2.21 for every hundred pounds; cheese, the same; coffee, 50 cents per hundred pounds; gunpowder, 73 cents per pound; dynamite, \$14.58 per case; guns, \$2.45 for every barrel, with \$1.21 1-2 per hundred for cartridges; ironware, machinery, jewellery, preserved meats, vegetables, and fresh fruits were charged an indiscriminate 7 1-2 per cent. ad valorem duty; common soap \$1.12 1-2 per hundred pounds; toilet soap, \$2.43 for a similar quantity; spirits, when from neighboring states \$1.46 per gallon, but when from outside South Africa, \$2.43, and, if over proof, \$4.85 per gallon.

THE BOER PONIES.

The celebrated Boer ponies have the blood of the Basuto pony in them, and the Basuto pony is a pure bred Scotchman. He is not even a half case. There were no horses or ponies in Basutoland until 1840, when a butcher in Grahamstown named Cawood imported from Scotland a number of Shetland ponies. A lot of them were lost and found their way into Basutoland, where they multiplied exceedingly. They are now the pride of Basutoland and everybody rides one in that native state. You can buy one there for fifty or seventy-five dollars. They have the same little feet and long mane and tail as their Shetland ancestors, and even more of their sure-footedness. They carry their rider down steep mountain sides, along sheep walks, by precipitous edges, and always walk close to the brink. It is a rather nervous experience at first, but the Basuto pony never fails. Mounted on these the defeated Boer rides off before our troops and is lost among the hills, only to turn up to fight another day.

OOM PAUL'S BERLIN FORBEARS.

According to a widely-credited legend, President Kruger's family originally came from the town of Mehrlin, in the province of Brandenburg. Some people have even professed to point out the house where his forefathers lived. As a matter of fact, the founder of the family was really born in Berlin. According to a work just issued in Berlin and entitled "Paul Kruger, and the Origin of the South African Republic," he traces his descent to James Kruger, son of Franz Kruger and Elizabeth Kruger, nee Hartwigs, who was born in Berlin in 1686. This James Kruger entered the service of the Dutch East India Company, and went out to Cape Town in 1713. Later on he settled down at Stellenbosch. He married Johanna Kemp and by her had children, of whom the youngest, Hendrik Kruger, was born on April 8, 1725. This Hendrik had a son, Gerrit Kruger, who, on Nov. 12, 1768, married Susanna Lacijsa Boys and resided at Graaf Reinet. There a son was born to him, Stephanus Johannes Kruger, who was the grandfather of the President. Stephanus Kruger married Sophia Margaretha Steenkamp on Jan. 28, 1798. Of his six children, Casper Jan Hendrik Kruger was born in 1834. He married Elsie Francina Steyn of Bulhoek, near Colesberg, and settled down at Bulhoek. Here a son was born on Oct. 10, 1825, who was christened Stephanus Johannes Paulus, and is now the President of the Transvaal Republic.

THE HEROISM OF A VIENNA PHYSICIAN.

"I doubt whether the entire history of the world affords a more remarkable example of personal heroism than was exhibited by Dr. Franz Mueller of Vienna, who fell a victim to the disease when it was first under bacteriological investigation in that city, in 1877. Dr. Mueller contracted the maldy from the bacilli in 'culture tubes' and when he became certain that he was infected he immediately locked himself in an isolated room and posted a message on the window pane, reading thus:

"I am suffering from plague. Please do not send a doctor to me, as, in any event, my end will come in four or five days."

"A number of his associates were anxious to attend him, but he refused to admit them and died alone, within the time he predicted. He wrote a farewell letter to his parents, placed it against the window, so that it could be copied from the outside, and then burned the original with his own hands, fearful it might be preserved and carry out the mysterious germ. Mueller was a young man, on the threshold of a brilliant scientific career, and there was a chance that he might have been saved by treatment, but he refused to take it, because it entailed the risk of spreading the contagion abroad."