THE GOLDEN KEY

Or "The Adventures of Ledgard."

By the Author of "What He Cost Her."

CHAPTER IV.

Trent moved forward and greeted the newcomer awkwardly. "You're Captain Francis," he said. "We've been waiting for you."

The statement appeared to annoy the explorer. He looked nervously at the two men and about the hut.

"I don't know how you got to hear of my coming, or what you want with me," he answered brusquely. "Are you both English?"

Trent assented, waving his hand towards his companion in introductory fashion.

"That's my pal, Monty," he said. "We're both English right enough."

Monty raised a flushed face, and gazed with bloodshot eyes at the man who was surveying him so calmly. Then he gave a little gurgling cry and turned away. Captain Francis started and moved a step towards him. There was a puzzled look in his face—as though he were making an effort to recall something familiar.

"What is the matter with him?" he asked Trent.

"Drink!"

"Then why don't you see that he doesn't get too much?" the newcomer said sharply. "Don't you know what it means in this climate? Why, he's on the high-road to a fever now. Who on this earth is it he reminds me of?"

Trent laughed shortly.

"There's never a man in Buckomari—no, nor in all Africa—could keep Monty from the drink," he said. "Live with him for a month and try it. It wouldn't suit you—I don't think."

He glanced disdainfully at the smooth face and careful dress of their visitor, who bore the inspection with a kindly return of contempt.

"I've no desire to try," he said; "but he reminds me very strongly of some one I knew in England. What do you call him—Monty?"

Trent nodded.

"Never heard any other name," he said.

"Have you ever heard him speak of England?" Francis asked.

Trent hesitated. What was this newcomer to him that he should give away his pal? Less than nothing! He hated the fellow already, with a rough, sensitive man's contempt of a bearing and manners far above his own.

"Never. He don't talk."

Captain Francis moved a step towards the huddled-up figure breathing heavily upon the floor, but Trent, leaning over, stopped him.

"Let him be," he said gruffly. "I know enough of him to be sure that he needs no one prying and ferreting into his affairs. Besides, it isn't safe for us to be dawdling about here. How many soldiers have you brought with you?"

"Two hundred," Captain Francis answered shortly.

Trent whistled.

"We're all right for a bit, then," he said, "but it's a pretty sort of a picnic you're on, eh?"

"Never mind my business," Captain Francis answered curtly; "what about yours? Why have you been hanging about here for me?"

"I'll show you," Trent answered, taking a paper from his knapsack. "You see, it's like this. There are two places near this show where I've found gold. No use blowing it about down at Buckomari—the fellows there haven't the nerve of a kitten. This cursed climate has sapped it all out of them, I reckon. Monty and I clubbed together and bought presents for his Majesty, the boss here, and Monty wrote out this little document—sort of concession to us to sink mines and work them, you see. The old buffer signed it like winking, directly he spotted the rum, but we ain't quite happy about it; you see, it ain't to be supposed that he's got a conscience, and there's only us saw him put his mark there. We'll have to raise money to work the thing upon this, and maybe there'll be difficulties. So what we thought was this. Here's an English officer coming; let's get him to witness it, and then if the King don't go on the square, why, it's a Government matter."

Captain Francis lit a cigarette and smoked thoughtfully for a moment or two.

"I don't quite see," he said, "why we should risk a row for the sake of you two."

Trent snorted.

"Look here," he said; "I suppose you know your business. You don't want me to tell you that a decent excuse for having a row with this old Johnny is about the best thing that could happen to you. He's a bit too near the borders to civilization to be a decent savage. Sooner or later some one will have to take him under their protection. If you don't do it, the French will. They're hanging round now, looking out for an opportunity. Listen!"

Both men moved instinctively towards the open part of the hut and looked across towards the village. Up from the little open space in front of the King's dwelling-house leaped a hissing bright flame; they had kindled a fire, and black forms of men, stark naked and wounding themselves with spears, danced around it and made the air hideous with discordant cries. The King himself, too drunk to stand, squatted upon the ground with an empty bottle by his side. A breath of wind brought a strong, noxious odor to the two men who stood watching. Captain Francis puffed hard at his cigarette.

"Ugh!" he muttered; "beastly!"

"You may take my word for it," Trent said gruffly, "that if your two hundred soldiers weren't camped in the bush yonder, you and I and poor Monty would be making sport for them to-night. Now come. Do you think a quarrel with that crew is a serious thing to risk?"

"In the interests of civilization," Captain Francis answered, with a smile, "I think not."

"I don't care how you put it," Trent answered shortly. "You soldiers all prate of the interests of civilization. Of course it's all rot. You want the land—you want to rule, to plant a flag, and be called a patriot."

Captain Francis laughed. "And you, my superior friend," he said, glancing at Trent, gaunt, ragged, not too clean, and back at Monty—"you want gold—honestly if you can get it, if not—well, it is not too wise to ask. Your partnership is a little mysterious, isn't it—with a man like that? Out of your magnificent morality I trust that he may get his share."

Trent flushed a brick-red. An angry answer trembled upon his lips, but Oom Sam, white and with his little fat body quivering with fear, came hurrying up to them in the broad track of the moonlight.

"King he angry," he called out to them breathlessly. "Him mad drunk angry. He say white men all go away, or he fire bush and use the poisoned arrow. Me off! Got bearers waiting."

"If you go before we've finished," Trent said, "I'll not pay you a penny. Please yourself."

The little fat man trembled—partly with rage, partly with fear.

"You stay any longer," he said, "and King him send after you and kill on way home. White English soldiers go Buckomari with you?"

Trent shook his head.

"Going the other way," he said, "down to Wana Hill."

Oom Sam shook his head vigorously.

"Now you mind," he said; "I tell you, King send after you. Him blind mad."

Oom Sam scuttled away. Captain Francis looked thoughtful. "That little fat man may be right," he remarked. "If I were you I'd get out of this sharp. You see, I'm going the other way. I can't help you."

Trent set his teeth.

"I've spent a good few years trying to put a bit together, and this is the first chance I've had," he said; "I'm going to have you back me as a British subject on that concession. We'll go down into the village now if you're ready."

"I'll get an escort," Francis said. "Best to impress 'em a bit, I think. Half a minute."

He stepped back into the hut and looked steadfastly at the man who was still lying doubled up upon the floor. Was it his fancy, or had those eyes closed swiftly at his turning—was it by accident, too, that Monty, with a little groan, changed his position at that moment, so that his face was in the shadow? Captain Francis was puzzled.

"It's like him," he said to himself softly, "but after all the thing's too improbable."

He turned away with a shade upon his face and followed Trent out into the moonlight. The screeching from the village below grew louder and more hideous every minute.

CHAPTER V.

The howls became a roar, blind passion was changed into purposeful fury. Who were these white men to march so boldly into the presence of the King without even the formality of sending an envoy ahead? For the King of Bekwando, drunk or sober, was a stickler for etiquette. It pleased him to keep white men waiting. For days sometimes a visitor was kept waiting his pleasure, not altogether certain as to his ultimate fate, for there were ugly stories as to those who had journeyed to Bekwando and never been seen or heard of since. Those were the sort of visitors with whom his ebon Majesty loved to daily until they became pale with fright or furious with anger and impatience; but men like this white captain, who had brought him no presents, who came in overwhelming force and demanded a passage through his country as a matter of right were his special detestation. On his arrival he had simply marched into the place at the head of his column of Hausas without ceremony, almost as a master, into the very presence of the King. Now he had come again with one of those other miscreants who at least had knelt before him and brought rum and many other presents. A slow, burning, sullen wrath was kindled in the King's heart as the three men drew near. His people, half-mad with excitement and debauch, needed only a cry from him to have closed like magic round these insolent intruders. His thick lips were parted, his breath came hot and fierce whilst he hesitated. But away outside the clearing was that little army of Hausas, clean-limbed, faithful, well drilled and armed. He choked down his wrath. There were grim stories about those who had yielded to the luxury of slaying these white men—stories of villages razed to the ground and destroyed, of a King himself who had been shot, of vengeance very swift and very merciless. He closed his mouth with a snap and sat up with drunken dignity. Oom Sam, in fear and trembling, moved to his side.

"What they want?" the King asked.

Oom Sam spread out the document which Trent had handed him upon a tree-stump, and explained. His Majesty nodded more affably. The document reminded him of the pleasant fact that there were three casks of rum to come to him every year. Besides, he rather liked scratching his royal mark upon the smooth white paper. He was quite willing to repeat the performance, and took up the pen which Sam handed him readily.

"Him white man just come," Oom Sam explained; "want see you do this."

His Majesty was flattered, and, with the air of one to whom signing of treaties and the concessions is an everyday affair, affixed a thick, black cross upon the spot indicated.

"That all right?" he asked Oom Sam.

Oom Sam bowed to the ground.

"Him want to know," he said, jerking his head towards Captain Francis, "whether you know what means?"

His forefinger wandered aimlessly down the document. His Majesty's reply was prompt and cheerful.

"Three barrels of rum a year."

Sam explained further. "There will be white men come digging," he said; "white men with engines that blow, making holes under the ground and cutting trees."

The King was interested. "Where?" he asked.

Oom Sam pointed westward through the bush.

"Down by creek-side."

The King was thoughtful. "Rum come all right?" he asked.

Oom Sam pointed to the papers.

"Say so there," he declared. "All quite plain?"

The King grinned. It was not regal, but he certainly did it. If white men come too near they must be shot—carefully and from ambush. He leaned back with the air of desiring the conference to cease. Oom Sam turned to Captain Francis.

"King him quite satisfied," he declared. "Him say all explained before—he agree."

The King suddenly woke up again. He clutched Sam by the arm, and whispered in his ear. This time it was Sam who grinned.

"King, him say him signed paper twice," he explained. Him want four barrels of rum now."

Trent laughed harshly.

"He shall swim in it, Sam," he said, "less he shall float down to hell upon it."

Oom Sam explained to the King that, owing to the sentiments of affection and admiration with which the white men regarded him, the three barrels should be made into four, whereupon his Majesty bluntly pronounced the audience at an end and waddled off into his Imperial abode.

The two Englishmen walked slowly back to the hut. Between them there had sprung up from the first moment a strong and mutual antipathy. The blunt savagery of Trent, his apparently heartless treatment of his weaker partner, and his avowed unscrupulousness, offended the newcomer much in the same manner, as in many ways he himself was obnoxious to Trent. His immaculate fatigue-uniform, his calm superciliousness, his obvious air of belonging to a superior class, were galling to Trent beyond measure. He himself felt the difference—he realized his ignorance, his unkempt and uncared-for appearance. Perhaps, as the two men walked side by side, some faint foreshadowing of the future showed to Trent another and a larger world where they two would once more walk side by side, the outward differences between them lessened, the smouldering irritation of the present leaping up into the red-hot flame of hatred. Perhaps it was just as well for John Francis that the man who walked so sullenly by his side had not the eyes of a seer, for it was a wild country, and Trent himself had drunk deep of its lawlessness. A little accident with a knife, a carelessly handled revolver, and the man who was destined to stand more than once in his way would pass out of his life for ever. But in those days Trent knew nothing of what was to come—which was just as well for John Francis.

To be continued.)

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B 80

Antarctics Penguins.

Did man learn his military formation from the birds?

Recent observations of explorers in antarctic regions indicate that he did. At any rate he must have taken some hints from feathery aids.

The most interesting phenomenon of bird life was closely observed by Mr. G. Murray Levick, who thus describes it in his book "Antarctic Penguins":

"Many thousands of birds were on the sea ice between the ice foot and the open water leads, then about a quarter of a mile distant. Near the ice foot they were congregating in little bands of a few dozen, while farther out near the water massed bands several thousands strong stood silent and motionless. Both the small and large bands kept an almost rectangular formation, and in each band all the birds faced the same way, although different bands faced in different directions.

As we watched it became evident that something very unusual was going on. First, from one of the small bands, a single bird suddenly appeared, ran a few yards in the direction of another small band, and stopped. quick as a flash the centre band from which he had come executed the movement 'Left turn,' which brought them all into a position facing him. So well ordered was this movement that we could scarcely believe our eyes.

"Then from the small band the single bird had approached another bird ran out, on which his own party went through exactly the same manoeuvre that the first band had performed, so that the two bands now stood facing each other, some fifteen yards apart. Then spontaneously the two bands marched straight towards each other and proceeded to form one body. After that we saw the same manoeuvre executed in many places.

Up to Him.

Mr. Slowboy (calling on girl)—You seem—er—rather distant this evening.

Girl—Well, your chair isn't nailed to the floor.

PRINCESS ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT,

formerly Princess Alexandra, Duchess of Fife, who has joined the nursing staff at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington. She takes no privileges, but goes through the daily routine of dressing wounds and waiting on the invalided soldiers.

AEROPLANES TO BE MADE STEADY

FLYING MACHINE BALANCED IN THREE DIRECTIONS.

Orville Wright Predicts Problem of Equilibrium Will Shortly be Solved.

Orville Wright, in a communication to the Smithsonian Institution, predicts that the day is near when the flyer will be almost entirely relieved of the work of maintaining the equilibrium of his machine, and his attention will be required only to keep it on its proper course and to bring it safely into contact with the ground when landing.

"Mr. Wright says that a flying machine is balanced in three directions—about an imaginary axis fore and aft in its line of motion, referred to as lateral equilibrium; about another axis extending in a lateral direction from tip to tip of the wings, known as fore-and-aft or longitudinal equilibrium, and about a vertical axis which is generally referred to as steering, although its more important function is that of lateral equilibrium," says a statement issued by the Smithsonian.

Getting Equilibrium.

"Although a beginner finds most difficulty in mastering the lateral control, it is his lack of knowledge of certain features of the fore-and-aft equilibrium which leads to most of the serious accidents. In an ideal flying machine the centre of gravity would lie in the line of the centre of resistance to forward movement, and also in the line of thrust, but in practice this is not always feasible, since the machine must be built to land safely as well as to fly. In flying a low centre of gravity—that is, one below the centre of support—causes an oscillating movement about the lateral axis like that of a pendulum, which tends to form a disturbing turning movement. On the other hand, a high centre of gravity tends to cause the machine to roll over in landing, and consequently a compromise is adopted.

"The two principal methods used in preserving fore-and-aft equilibrium have been the shifting of weight so as to keep the centre of gravity in line with the changing centre of lift, and the utilization of auxiliary surfaces, known as elevators, to keep the centre of pressure in line with a fixed centre of gravity.

Auxiliary Surfaces.

"The first method has been found impracticable on account of the impossibility of shifting large weights quickly enough, but the second is used in most of the modern machines.

"Flying machines of the latter type should have their auxiliary surfaces located in the front or rear, and as far as possible from the main bearing planes, because the greater the distance the greater is the leverage, and consequently the smaller the amount of surface required. No part of either the main surface or auxiliary surface should be exposed on their upper sides in a way to create a downward pressure for maintaining equilibrium, since such a pressure requires twice the propeller thrust to overcome it that an equal carried weight would require.

"The downward pressure of air is used to some extent, however, on account of its adaptability, in producing more or less inherent stable aeroplanes."

A device described by Mr. Wright comprises a small horizontal windvane so mounted on the machine as to ride edgewise to the wind when the machine is flying at the desired angle of incidence.

Another method for maintaining fore-and-aft equilibrium utilizes the force of gravity acting on a pendulum or tube of mercury, and still another employs the gyroscopic force of a rapidly revolving wheel.

Using Japanese Bandages Now.

The triangular bandage first introduced by the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese war is now being widely used in the European war. It has been found that bandages of this type are suitable for binding up wounds in any part of the body and that one can be carried by each soldier without inconvenience. The Germans improved it by printing on the bandage itself in sterilized ink, various figures showing how it is to be applied. The British War Office then adopted the idea, and every British soldier now carries one of the printed bandages in a special pocket of his tunic. This bandage is often applied without assistance by the wounded soldier.

Gloomy Observation.

"Do you think the world is getting better?"

"I don't know anything about it," replied the melancholy observer. "It seemed to be doing very well for a time, but judging from the European news, I should say it is suffering a terrible relapse."

Electric fishes, such as the electric eel, the African catfish, and the electric ray have the power of discharging an electric shock sufficient at times to disable a man.

Foreign Devils.

In an interesting chapter of his book, "Home Life in China," Mr. Isaac Taylor Headland gives an account of the Chinese superstitions regarding the foreigner, one of which has resulted in their calling him Kueitzu, or "devil." A very amusing story, says he, is told of a red-haired, red-whiskered, blue-eyed British consul at Canton who was, as are most of the British officials, of an investigative disposition, and was anxious to know what it was that the Chinese call us of the West "foreign devils." Now be it understood that the Chinese idea of a deman is that he is a red-haired, red-bearded, blue-eyed being who quails at nothing that comes in his way. One day when a Chinese official was calling on the consul, the latter asked him:

"Why is it that the Chinese call us devils?"

The official at first hesitated, but being pressed, he finally said, "I do not care to tell you."

"But I should take it as a great favor if you would tell me. I am very anxious to know."

"I cannot tell you," said the official.

"Why not?" asked the consul.

"Because you would be angry if I told you."

"By no means. I would not be so unreasonable as to ask you a question and then be offended because you answered it. On the other hand, I should be greatly obliged to you."

Being thus pressed until he was unable to refuse, the official finally eyed the consul from head to foot, and said slowly and reluctantly, "Well it is because you look like devils."

This natural superstition of the people was taken hold of by the Boxers in 1900, and circulated still more widely by all kinds of placards, both in prose and verse. I have one before me in verse, a part of which reads as follows:

The devils are not human beings like you;
If you doubt what I say,
You may see any day,
That the eyes of the devils in color are blue.

In the original this reads:

Kuei-tzu-pu-shih-jen-so-ch'uan-
Ju-pu-hsin,
Tzu-hsi-k'an,
Kuei-tzu-yen-chu-tou-fa-lan.

Fighting the Submarine.

The warship of the present day, says the London Engineer, is a compromise between what we deem best and what we deem essential. The torpedo-proof bottom has become essential; therefore we must give up guns, or armor, or speed, or something else, in order to get it. On the other hand, it is probable that battleships and battle cruisers will not hereafter be supplied with torpedoes. Since actions are now fought at enormous ranges, and since vessels can be sunk by gunfire alone, torpedoes on big-gun ships are now useless. Omitting the torpedo tube will save little weight, but it will leave space for more ammunition. The Engineer also suggests that high-speed rams with bows of proper shape and requisite strength to sink an underwater craft will again come into use.

German helmets are nearly as light as straw hats.

Maxim guns fire so rapidly that they would become red-hot very quickly if they were not surrounded by water-jackets. The water in these has to be renewed after every 2,000 rounds have been fired.

At the outbreak of the war the Germans filled railway carriages with dummies made of straw, and dressed in French uniforms, in order to make people believe that they had captured numerous prisoners.

ABOUT THE HOUSEHOLD

Seasonable Dishes.

Banana Ice Cream.—To the crushed pulp of six bananas add one cupful sugar, one-half tea-spoonful salt. Pour in a quart of milk and pint of cream. Mix well and freeze.

Fruit Iced Tea.—Steep some fresh tea and put on ice. When cold pour in the juice of pineapple, strawberries, apples, banana and any other fruit you like all mixed together.

Huckleberry Pancakes.—Sift together in a deep bowl one quart of flour, two teaspoonfuls of salt, three tablespoonfuls of sugar, add three well-beaten eggs and four tablespoonfuls of milk. Beat to a smooth batter, then add one pint of cream, one pint of milk, the grated rind of one lemon and two cupfuls of huckleberries. Fry and serve very hot with powdered sugar.

Baked Stuffed Cucumbers.—Wipe and peel cucumbers, cut in two-inch pieces crosswise and remove seeds. Mix four tablespoons bread crumbs, two tablespoons finely chopped cooked ham and two tablespoons grated cheese (Parmesan is best). Moisten with tomato sauce and season with salt and pepper. Put cucumber cups in shallow pan, fill mith mixture, surround with hot water or chicken stock and bake half an hour. Then cover with buttered crumbs and bake until brown.

Peach Fritters.—Remove skins from three or four peaches and cut in small pieces. Mix and sift one cup flour, one and one-half teaspoons baking powder, three tablespoons powdered sugar and one-fourth teaspoon salt. Add one-third cup milk gradually, while stirring constantly, and one egg well beaten. Then add peaches. Drop by spoonful into hot fat and fry until delicately brown. Drain on brown paper, sprinkle with powdered sugar and send to table on folded napkin, with lemon sauce.

Lemon Sauce.—Put three-fourths cup sugar into saucepan, add one-fourth cup water and let boil five minutes. Remove from fire, add two teaspoons butter, bit by bit, and one tablespoon lemon juice.

Peach Cake.—Mix together two cups sifted flour, two teaspoons baking powder, one heaping tablespoon butter, one-half cup sugar and milk enough to make soft dough. Roll out half an inch thick and lay on flat, buttered baking pan. Have peaches ready, peeled and cut into lengths. Press these into dough in rows. Sprinkle with granulated sugar and bake. Cut in squares and serve hot with sweetened cream.

Potato Soup.—Pare four medium-sized potatoes, quarter and boil with small onion and two or three stalks of celery. When done, remove onion and celery, mash potatoes, add enough boiling milk to make of creamlike consistency (about three cups), one tablespoonful butter, one and one-half teaspoonfuls salt and one egg until light, put in tureen, strain soup through colander into tureen and serve.

Mock Venison.—Make a sauce of one tablespoonful brown flour, one tablespoonful butter and one cupful stock of water. When thoroughly cooked and smooth, add one tablespoonful currant jelly, one tablespoonful mushroom or Worcestershire sauce and bring to boil. Heat thin slices of mutton in this until hot, but do not let the mutton cook.

Breaded Parsnips.—Wash and trim parsnips, scrape (if large, split them) and boil ten minutes in salted water. Take from fire, drain, lay in cold water half-hour. Wipe dry, roll in beaten egg, then in bread crumbs, set aside for about an hour, then fry in deep, boiling fat as you would doughnuts. Take up in wire spoon and serve in hot dish. Oyster plant is good cooked in the same way.

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Household Hints.

Bran is far better than soap for cleaning paint.

Charcoal powder is excellent for cleaning fine knives.

Pie crust should be rolled in one direction—away from you.

Bread should be kept always wrapped up in a clean cloth.

A cloth moistened with alcohol is effective in cleaning piano keys.

Housewives will find the butcher's apron a great convenience, as it covers even the sleeves.

When a bedroom floor is to be washed, see that it is thoroughly dried and aired before night.

Never leave a package of coffee anywhere near butter, eggs or milk—they will absorb the flavor.

To polish a black marble clock rub over with olive oil and finish with a clean chamois leather.

Soups suffer less than anything else by being heated a second time, but they should be re-flavored.

Raisins kept in a covered or other dish with a small cup of water in the centre will keep moist and fresh.

Salt curdles new milk, so gravies, etc., should not be salted until the dish is prepared ready to serve.

If you have an earthenware bread pan with a cover, the loaves of bread can be put in it without wrapping up.

Kerosene will soften boots and shoes that have been hardened by water and will render them pliable as new.

Finger marks are best removed from furniture by washing with water colored with vinegar, then wipe with a dry cloth.

If you spill ink on a carpet, soak it up immediately with blotting paper, then wash out with warm water and clean flannel and dry with a soft duster.

A solution of salts of lemon and warm water will remove iron-mould from linen. The article should be well rinsed afterward in clean water and allowed to dry.

A good way to get rid of a mouldy smell in the cellar is to dust well over the walls and floor unslacked lime, leaving it on for a day or two then brushing it off.

When making small cakes sprinkle a little flour over the tins, instead of rubbing grease on. This answers the purpose just as well, and is less expensive.

Close green vegetables, such as cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, etc., should be soaked for a short time in vinegar and water to drain out any slugs or insects.

Wild flowers can be transplanted successfully if care is taken to put them in places with about the same exposure and character as they were in before. It is well to move a great deal of the natural soil with the roots.

CHERRY JELLY

From a recipe of Charles Francatelli, Chief Cook to Queen Victoria. Published in 1865.

Clean 2 lbs. cherries and a handful of red currants, and bruise stones and kernels in a mortar; place in small preserving pan with 1 lb. John Redpath's sugar loafs and ½ pint spring-water; boil on the stove-fire about five minutes, taking care to remove scum as it rises; pour into a beaver jelly-bag and filter in usual way. Mix juice with two ounces clarified isinglass, and pour into jars or mould.

ONTARIO ARCHIVES
TORONTO