

MEDICAL.



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KING SOLOMON'S MINES.

Continued from page 6.

gave him a big battle-axe and a horn-mug, he might have sat as a model for that picture. And by the way it is a curious thing, and just shows how the blood will show out, I found out afterward that Sir Henry Curtis...

The other man who stood talking to Sir Henry was short, stout, and dark, and of a quite different cut. I don't know why, but it is difficult to mistake a navy man. I have gone shooting-rips with several of them...

I asked a page or two back, what is a gentleman? I'll answer it now: a royal naval officer is, in a general sort of way, though of course, there may be a black sheep among them here and there. I fancy it is just the wide sea and the breath of God's winds that washes their hearts and blows the bitterness out of their minds...

Well, I suppose they don't mind it, but for my part I had rather earn my bread as a hunter. One's halfpence are as scarce perhaps, but you don't get so many kicks. His name I found out—by referring to the passenger's list—was Good—Captain John Good.

Soon after we got under weigh evening closed in, and brought with it very dirty weather. A keen breeze sprung up off land, and a kind of aggravated Scotch mist soon drove everybody from the deck. And as for that Dunkeld, she is a flat-bottomed punt, and going up light as she was, she rolled very heavily.

"That pendulum's wrong; it is not properly weighted," suddenly said a voice at my shoulder, somewhat testily. Looking round I saw the naval officer I had noticed when the passengers came aboard.

"Indeed, now what makes you think so?" I asked. "Think so. I don't think at all. Why there—as she righted herself after a roll—if the ship had really rolled to the degree that thing pointed to, then she would never have rolled again, that's all."

Just then the dinner-bell rung, and I was not sorry, for it is a dreadful thing to have to listen to an officer of the royal navy when he gets on to that subject. I only know one worse thing, and that is to hear a merchant skipper express his candid opinion of officers of the royal navy.

Captain Good and I went down to dinner together, and there we found Sir Henry Curtis already seated. He and Captain Good sat together, and I opposite them. The captain and I soon got into talk about shooting and what not; he asking me many questions, and I answering as well as I could.

"Ah, sir," called out somebody who was sitting near me, "you've got the right man for that; Hunter Quatermain should be able to tell you about elephants if anybody can."

"Excuse me, sir," he said, leaning forward across the table, and speaking in a low, deep voice, a very suitable voice it seemed to me, sir, but is your name Allen Quatermain?"

"The big man made 'fortunate' into his beard." "That's true," said I, thinking of my boy Harry.

"I found out, Mr. Quatermain, that I would have given half my fortune to know that my brother George, the only relation I have, was safe and well, and that I should see him again."

"But you never did, Curtis," jerked out Captain Good, glancing at the big man's face. "Well, Mr. Quatermain, as time went on, I became more and more anxious to find out if my brother was alive or dead, and if alive to get him home again. I set inquiries on foot, and your letter was one of the results."

So, to cut a long story short, I made up my mind to come out and look for him myself, and Captain Good was so kind as to come with me.

"Yes," said the captain, "nothing else to do, you see. Turned out by my lord's of the admiralty to starve on half pay. And now perhaps, sir, you will tell us what you know or have heard of the gentleman called Neville."

"(To be Continued.)"

Avoid the Small Annoyance of life if you would be happy. A very slight headache will make us miserable and give a sense of discomfort to all with whom we come in contact.

"I was," I answered, rather surprised that this gentleman should be so well acquainted with my movements, which were not, so far as I was aware, considered of general interest.

"You were trading there, were you not?"

put in Captain Good, in his quick way. "I was. I took up a wagon-load of goods, and made a camp outside the settlement, and stopped until I had sold them."

Sir Henry was sitting opposite to me in a Madeira chair, his arms leaning on the table. He now looked up, fixing his large gray eyes full upon my face. There was a curious anxiety in them I thought.

"Did you happen to meet a man called Neville there?" "Oh, yes; he outspanned alongside of me for a fortnight to rest his oxen before going on to the interior. I had a letter from a lawyer a few months back asking me if I knew what had become of him, which I answered to the best of my ability at the time."

"Yes," said Sir Henry, "your letter was forwarded to me. You said in it that the gentleman called Neville left Bamangwato in the beginning of May in a wagon with a driver, a voo-looper, and a Kafir hunter called Jim, announcing his intention of trekking if possible as far as Inyati, the extreme trading post in the Matabele country, where he would sell his wagon, for six months afterward you saw the wagon in the possession of a Portuguese trader, who told you that he had bought it at Inyati from a white man whose name he had forgotten, and that the white man with a native servant had started off for the interior on a shooting trip, he believed."

"Then came a pause. "Mr. Quatermain," said Sir Henry, suddenly, "I suppose you know or can guess nothing more of the reasons of my—of Mr. Neville's journey to the northward, or as to what point that journey was directed?" "I heard something," I answered, and stopped. The subject was one I didn't care to discuss.

Sir Henry and Captain Good looked at each other, and Captain Good nodded. "Mr. Quatermain," said the former, "I am going to tell you a story, and ask your advice, and perhaps your assistance. The agent who forwarded me your letter told me that I might implicitly rely upon it, as you were," he said, "well known and universally respected in Natal, and especially noted for your discretion."

I bowed and my confusion, for I am a modest man—and Sir Henry went on. "Mr. Neville was my brother."

"Oh," I said, starting, for I now knew who Sir Henry had reminded me of when I first saw him. His brother was a much smaller man and had a dark beard, but now I thought of it, he possessed eyes of the same shade of gray and with the same keen look in them, and the features, too, were not unlike.

"He was," went on Sir Henry, "my only and younger brother, and till five years ago I did not suppose we were ever a month away from each other. But just about five years ago a misfortune befell us, as sometimes does happen in families. We had quarreled bitterly, and I behaved very unjustly to my brother in my anger."

Here Captain Good nodded his head vigorously to himself. The ship gave a big roll just then, so that the looking-glass, which was fixed opposite us to starboard, was for a moment nearly over our heads, and as I was sitting with my hands in my pockets and staring upward, I could see him nodding like anything.

"As I dare say you know," went on Sir Henry, "if a man dies intestate, and has no property but land, real property it is called in England, it all descends to his eldest son. It so happened that just at the time when we quarreled our father died intestate. He had put off making his will until it was too late. The result was that my brother, who had not been brought up to any profession, was left without a penny. Of course it would have been my duty to provide for him, but at the time the quarrel between us was so bitter that I did not—to my shame I say it (and he sighed deeply)—offer to do anything. It was not that I grudged him anything, but I waited for him to make advances, and he made none. I am sorry to trouble you with all this, Mr. Quatermain, but I must make things clear, eh, Good?"

"Quite so, quite so," said the Captain. "Mr. Quatermain will, I am sure, keep this history to himself."

"Of course," said I. "For I rather pride myself on my discretion."

"Well," went on Sir Henry, "my brother had a few hundred pounds to his account at the time, and without saying anything to me he drew out this paltry sum, and, having adopted the name of Neville, started off for South Africa in the wild hope of making a fortune. This I heard afterward. Some three years passed, and I heard nothing of my brother, though I wrote several times. Doubtless the letters never reached him. But as time went on I grew more and more troubled about him. I found out, Mr. Quatermain, that blood is thicker than water."

"That's true," said I, thinking of my boy Harry. "I found out, Mr. Quatermain, that I would have given half my fortune to know that my brother George, the only relation I have, was safe and well, and that I should see him again."

"But you never did, Curtis," jerked out Captain Good, glancing at the big man's face. "Well, Mr. Quatermain, as time went on, I became more and more anxious to find out if my brother was alive or dead, and if alive to get him home again. I set inquiries on foot, and your letter was one of the results."

So far as it went it was satisfactory, for it showed that till lately George was alive, but it did not go far enough.

So, to cut a long story short, I made up my mind to come out and look for him myself, and Captain Good was so kind as to come with me.

"Yes," said the captain, "nothing else to do, you see. Turned out by my lord's of the admiralty to starve on half pay. And now perhaps, sir, you will tell us what you know or have heard of the gentleman called Neville."

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