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JUST ARRIVED AT MRS. J. K. OLIVER'S A Fine Supply of FRESH OYSTERS.

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Taking the hint, we got up, and went down to the stream to wash, after which the morning meal was served. At breakfast one of the women, no longer quite young, advanced and publicly kissed Job. He sprung to his feet, and pushed the woman, a buxom party about thirty, from

"Well, I never!" he gasped; whereupon she embraced him again.

"Be off with you! Get away, you minx!" he shouted, waving the wooden spoon with which he was eating his breakfast up and down before the lady's face. "Beg your pardon, gentlemen. I am sure I haven't encouraged her. Oh Lord! she's coming for me again. Hold her, Mr. Holly; please hold her! I can't stand it; I can't indeed. This has never happened to me before, gentlemen, never! There's nothing against my character;" and here he broke off, and ran as hard as he could go down the cave; and for once I saw the Amahagger laugh. As for the woman, however, she did not laugh. On the contrary, she seemed to bristle with fury, which the mockery of the other women about only served to intensify. She stood there literally snarling and shaking with indignation; and seeing her, I wished Job's scruples had been at Jericho-forming a shrewd guess that his admirable behavior had endangered our throats. Nor, as the sequel shows, was I wrong.

The lady having retreated, Job returned in a great state of nervousness, and keeping his weather eye fixed upon every woman who came near him. I took an opportunity to explain to our hosts that Job was a married man, and had had very unhappy experiences in his domestic relations, which accounted for his presence here, and his terror at the sight of a woman; but my remarks were received in grim silence, it being evident that our retainer's behavior was considered as a slight to the "household" at large, although the women, after the manner of their more civilized sisters, made merry at the rebuff of their compan-

At first we were much puzzled as to the origin and constitution of this extraordinary race, points upon which they were singularly uncommunicative. As the time went on-for the next four days passed without any striking event-we learned something from Leo's lady-friend Ustane, who, by the way, stuck to that young gentleman like his own shadow. As to origin, they had none, at least so far as she was aware. There were, however, she informed us, mounds of masonry and many pillars near the place where She lived, which was called Kor, and which the wise said had once been houses wherein men lived, and it was suggested that they were descended from these men. No one, however, dared go near these great ruins, because they were haunted; they only looked on them from a distance. Other similar ruins were to be seen, she had heard, in various parts of the country, that is, wherever one of the mountains rose above the level of the swamp. Also the caves in which they lived had been hollowed out of the rocks by men, perhaps the same who built the cities. They themselves had no written laws, only custom, which was, however, quite as binding as law. If any man offended against the custom, he was put to death by order of the Father of the "household." I asked how he was put to death, and she only smiled, and said that I might see one day soon.

They had a queen, however. She was their queen, but she was very rarely seen, perhaps once in two or three years, when she came forth to pass sentence on some offenders, and when seen was muffled up in a big cloak, so that nobody could look upon her face. Those who waited upon her were deaf and dumb, and therefore could tell no tales, but it was reported that she was lovely as no other woman was lovely, or ever had been. It was rumored also that she was immortal, and had power over all things, but she, Ustane, could say nothing of all that. What she believed was that the queen chose a husband from time to time, and as soon as a female child was born, this husband, who was never again seen, was put to death. Then the female child grew up, and took the place of the queen when its mother died and had been buried in the great caves. But of these matters fione could speak for certain. Only She was obeyed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and to question her command was certain death. She kept a guard, but had no regular army, and to disobey her was to die.

I asked what the land was, and how many people lived in it. She arswered that there were ten "Households" itae this



Suddenly the woman rose, and laid her hands upon Leo's golden curls.

that she knew of, including the hig "Household" where the queen was; that all the "Households" lived in caves, in places like this stretch of raised country, dotted about in a vast extent of swamp, which was only to be threaded by secret paths. Ofted the "Households" made war on each other until She sent word that it was to stop, and then they instantly ceased. That and the fever which they caught in crossing the swamps was what kept their numbers from increasing too much. They had no connection with any other race; indeed, none lived near them, or were able to thread the vast swamps. Once an army from the direction of the great river (presumably the Zambesi) had attempted to attack them, but they got lost in the marshes, and at night, seeing the great balls of fire that move about there, tried to come to them, thinking that it was the enemy's camp, and half of them were drowned. As for the rest, they soon died of fever and starvation, not a blow being struck at them. The marshes, she told us, were absolutely impassable except to those

who knew the paths, adding, what I could well believe, that we should never have reached this place where we then were had

we not been brought there. These and many other things we learned from Ustane during the four days' pause before our real adventures began, and, as may be imagined, they gave us considerable cause for thought. The whole thing was exceedingly remarkable, almost incredibly so, indeed, and the oddest part of it was that so far it did more or less correspond to the ancient writing on the sherd. And now it appeared that there was a mysterious queen clothed by rumor with awful and wonderful attributes, and commonly known by the impersonal but to my mind rather awesome title of She. Altogether, I could not make it out, nor could Leo, though of course he was exceedingly triumphant over me because I had persistently mocked at the whole thing. As for Job, he had long since abandoned any attempt to call his reason his own, and left it to drift upon the sea of circumstance. Mahomed, the Arab, who was, by the way, treated civilly, indeed, but with chilling contempt, by the Amahagger, was, I discovered, in a great fright, though I could not quite make out what he was frightened about. He would sit crouched up in a corner of the cave all day long, calling upon Allah and the Prophet to protect him. When I pressed him about it, he said that he was afraid because these people were not men and women at all, but devils, and that this was an enchanted land; and, upon my word, once or twice since then I have been inclined to agree with him. And sc the time went on till the night of the fourth day after Billali had left, when something happened.

We three and Ustane were sitting round the fire in the cave just before bed-time, when suddenly the woman, who had been brooding in silence, rose, and laid her hands upon Leo's golden curls and addressed him. Even new when I shut my eyes I can see her proud imperial form. clothed alternately in dense shadow and the red flickering of the fire, as she stood the wild center of as weird a scene as ever witnessed, and delivered herself of the burden of her thoughts and forebodings in a kind of rhythmical speech that ran something as follows:

"Thou art my chosen-I have waited for thee from the beginning! Thou art very beautiful. Who hath hair like unto thee, or skin so white!

Who hath so strong an arm? who is so much a Thine eyes are the sky, and the light in them is the stars.

Thou art perfect and of a happy face, and my heart turned itself toward thee. Ay, when mine eyes fell on thee, I did desire Then did I take thee to me-thou, my Beloved,

And hold thee fast, lest harm should come unto Ay, I did cover thine head with mine hair, lest the sun should strike it; And altogether was I thine, and thou wast al-

together mine. And so it went for a little space, till Time was in labor with an evil Day; And then what befell upon that day? Alas! my Beloved, I know not!

But I, I saw thee no more-I, I was lost in the And she who is stronger did take thee; ay, she who is fairer than Ustane. Yet didst thou turn and call upon me, and let

thine eyes wander in the darkness. But, nevertheless, she prevailed by Beauty, and led thee down horrible places; And then, ah! then, my Beloved-"

Here this extraordinary woman broke off her speech, or chant, which was so much musical gibberish to us, for all we understood of what she was driving at, and seemed to fix her flashing eyes upon the deep shadow before her. All in a moment they acquired a vacant, terrified stare, as though they were trying to realize some half-seen horror. She lifted her hand from Leo's head, and pointed into the-darkness. We all looked, but could see nothing; but she saw something, or thought she did, and something evidently that affected even her iron nerves, for, without another sound, down she fell senseless between us.

Leo, who was growing really attached to this remarkable young person, was in a great state of alarm and distress, and I, to be perfectly candid, was in a condition not far removed from superstitious fear. The

whole scene was an uncanny one. Presently, however, she recovered, and sat up with an extraordinary convulsive

"What didst thou mean, Ustane?" asked Leo, who, thanks to years of tuition, spoke

Arabic very prettily. "Nay, my chosen," she answered, with a little forced laugh, "I did but sing unto

thee after the fashion of my people. Surely I meant nothing. How could I speak of that which is not yet?" "And what didst thou see, Ustane?" I

asked, looking her sharply in the face. "Nay," she answered again; "I saw naught. Ask me not what I saw. Why should I fright ye?" And then turning to Leo with a look of the most utter tenderness that I ever saw upon the face of woman, civilized or savage, she took his head between her hands, and kissed him on the forehead as a mother might. "When I am gone from thee, my chosen; when at night thou stretchest out thine hand and canst not find me, then shouldst thou think at times of me, for of a truth I love thee well, though I be not fit to wash thy feet. And now let us love and take that which is given us, and be happy, for in the grave there is no love and no warmth, nor any touching of the lips. Nothing perchance, or perchance but bitter memories of what

belong to-morrow?" (To be Continued.)

might have been. To-night the hours are

our own; how know we to whom they shall

Perhaps no local disease has puzzled ard baffled the medical profession more than nasal catarrh. While not immediately fata it is among the most distressing, nauseous, and disgusting ills the flesh is heir to, and the records show very few or no cases of radical cures of chronic catarrh by any of the multitude of modes of treatment until the introduction of Ely's Cream Balm a few years ago. The success of this preparation has been most gratifying and surprising.

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An Open Letter.

Nov. 25th, 1886, - Messrs. T. Milburn & Co. - I wish I had used B. B. B. sooner, which would have saved me years of suffering with erysipelas, from which I could get no relief until I tried B. B. B. which soon cleared away the itching, burning rush that had so long distressed me, Mrs. Edward Romkey, Eastern Passage, Halifax, N.S.

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KINGSTON AGENCY.

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May 9.

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--1887.---

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