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CHAPTER III.—THE MISSION STATION. We made the remains of our boat fast to the other canoe, and sat waiting for the dawn, and congratulating ourselves upon our merciful escape, which really seemed to result more from the special favor of Providence than from our own care or prowess. At last it came, and I have not often been more grateful to see the light, though so far as my cance was concerned it revealed a ghastly sight. There in the bottom of the little boat lay the unfortunate Askari, the sime, or sword, in his bosom, and the severed hand gripping the handle. I could not bear the sight; so hauls ing up the stone which had served as an anchor to the other canoe, we made it fast to the murdered man and dropped him overboard, and down he went to the bottom, leaving nothing but a train of bubbles behind him! Alas! when our time comes, most of us, like him, leave nothing but bubbles behind, to show that we have been, and the bubbles soon burst. The hand of his murderer we threw into the stream, and I saw a young crocodile seize it as it was slowly sinking. The sime, or sword, of which the handle was ivory, inlaid with gold (evidently Arab work), I kept and used as a hunting-knife, and very useful it proved.

Then, a man having been transferred to my cance, we once more started on in very low spirits and not feeling at all comfortable as to the future, but fondly hoping to fetch up at the "Highlands" station by night. To make matters worse, within an hour of sunrise it came on to rain in torrents, wetting us to the skin, and even necessitating the occasional baling of the canoes; and as the rain beat down the wind we could not use our sails, and had to get along as best we could with our paddles. At eleven o'clock we halted on an open

piece of ground on the left bank of the river, and, the rain abating a little, managed to make a fire and catch and boil some fish. We did not dare to wander about to search for game. At two o'clock we got off again, taking a supply of boiled fish with us, and shortly afterward the rain came on harder than ever. Also, the river began to get exceedingly difficult to navigate on account of the numerous rocks, reaches of shallow water, and the increased force of the current; so that ait soon became clear to us that we should not reach the Rev. Mackenzie's hospitable roof that night-a prospect that did not tend to enliven us. Toil as we would, we could not make more than an average of a mile an hour; and at five o'clock in the afternoon (by which time we were all utterly worn out) we reckoned that we were still quite ten miles below the station. This being so, we set to work making the best arrangements we could for the night. After our recent experience, we simply did not dare to land, more especially as the banks of the Tana were here clothed with dense bush that would have given cover to five thousand Masai, and at first I thought that we were going to have another night of it in the canoes. Fortunately, however, we espied a little rocky islet, not more than fifteen yards or so square, situated nearly in the middle of the river, For this we paddled, and, making fast the canoes, landed and made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit, which was very uncomfortable indeed. As for the weather, it continued to be simply vile; the rain coming down in sheets till we were chilled to the marrow, and utterly preventing us from lighting a fire. There was, however, one consoling circumstance about this rain; our Askari declared that nothing would induce the Masai to make an attack in it, as they intensely dislike moving about in the wet; perhaps as Good suggested, because they hate the idea of washing.

We ate some insipid and sodden cold fish-that is, with the exception of Umslopogaas, who, like most Zulus, cannot bear fish-and then commenced what, with one exception-when we three white men nearly perished of cold on the snow of Shebas Breast in the course of our journey to Kukuanaland-was, I think, the most trying night I ever experienced. It seemed absolutely endless; and once or twice I feared that two of the Askari would have died of the wet, cold, and exposure, for no African people can stand much exposure, which first paralyzes and then kills them. I could see that even that iron old warrior, Umslopogaas, felt it keenly; though, in strange contrast to the Wakwafis, who groaned and bemoaned their fate unceasingly, he never uttered a single complaint, To make matters worse, about one in the morning we again heard the owl's ominous hooting, and had at once to prepare ourselves for another attack; though, if anybody had attempted it, I do not think that we could have offered a very effective resistance. But either the owl was a bona fide one this time, or else the Masai were themselves too miserable to think of offensive operations, which, indeed, they rarely, if ever, undertake in bush veldt. At any

rate, we saw nothing of them. At last the dawn came gliding across the water, wrapped in wreaths of ghostly mist, and, with the daylight, the rain ceased; and then, oh, joy! out came the glorious sun, sucking up the mists and warming the chill air. Benumbed and utterly exhausted, we dragged ourselves to our feet, and went and stood in the bright rays, and were thankful for them. I can quite understand how primitive people became sun-worshipers, especially if their conditions of life rendered them liable to exposure.

In half an hour more we were again mak-



We perceived three figures hurrying down through a grove of trees to meet us.

ing fair progress with the help of a good wind. It seemed that our spirits nad returned with the sunshine, and we were ready to laugh at difficulties and dangers that had been almost crushing on the previous day.

And so we went on cheerily till about eleven o'clock. Just as we were thinking of halting as usual, to rest and try to shoot something to eat, a sudden bend in the river brought us in sight of a substantiallooking European house with a veranda round it, splendidly situated upon a hili, and surrounded by a high stone wall with a ditch on the outer side. Right against and overshadowing the house was an enormous pine, the top of which we had seen through a glass for the last two days, but of course without knowing that it marked the site of the mission station. I was the first to see the house, and could not restrain myself from giving a hearty cheer, in which the others, including the natives, joined lustily. There was no thought of halting now. On we labored, tor, unfortunately, though the house seemed quite near, it was still a long way off by river, until at last, by one o'clock, we found ourselves at the bottom of the slope on which the building stood. Running the canoes to the bank, we looked out, and were just hauling them up on the shore, when we perceived three figures, dressed in ordinary English-looking clothes, hurrying down through a grove of trees to meet us.

"A gentleman, a lady, and a little girl," ejaculated Good, after surveying the tric through his eye-glass, "walking in a civilized fashion, through a civilized garden. to meet us in this place. Hang me, if this isn't the most curious thing we have seen vet."

Good was right; it certainly did seem odd and out of place-more like a scene out of a dream or Italian opera than a real, tangible fact; and the sense of unreality was not lessened when we heard ourselves addressed in good broad Scotch, which, however, I cannot reproduce.

"How do you do, sirs?" said Mr. Mackenzie, a gray-haired, angular man, with a kindly face and red cheeks; "I hope I see you yery well. My natives told me an hour ago they wied two canoes with white men in them coming up the river; so we have just come down to meet you."

"And it is very glad that we are to see a white face again, let me tell you," put in the lady, a charming and refined-looking

We took off our hats in acknowledgment. and proceeded to introduce ourselves. "And now," said Mr. Mackenzie, "You

must all be hungry and weary; so come on, gentlemen, come on, and right glad we are to see you. The last white man who visited us was Alphonse-you will see Alphonse presently-and that was a year ago." Meanwhile we had been walking up the

slope of the hill, the lower portion of which was fenced off, sometimes with quince fences, and sometimes with rough stone walls, into Kaffir gardens, just now full of crops of mealies, pumpkins, potatoes, etc. In the corners of these gardens were groups of neat mushroom-shaped huts, occupied by Mr. Mackenzie's mission natives, whose women and children came pouring out to meet us as we walked. Through the center of these gardens ran the roadway up which we were walking. It was bordered on each side by a line of orange-trees, which, although they had only been planted ten years, had, in the lovely climate of the uplands below Mt. Kenia, the base of which is about 5,000 feet above the coastline level, already grown to imposing proportions, and were positively laden with golden fruit. After a stiffish climb of a quarter of a mile or so-for the hillside was steep-we came to a splendid quince fence, also covered with fruit, which inclosed, Mr. Mackenzie told us, a space of about four acres of ground that comprised his private garden, house, church, and outbuildings, and, indeed, the whole hill top. And what a garden it was! I have always loved a good garden, and I could have thrown up my hands for joy when I saw Mr. Mackenzie's. First there were rows upon rows of standard European fruit-trees, all grafted; for on the top of this hill the climate was so temperate that very nearly all the English vegetables, trees, and flowers flourish luxuriantly, even including several varieties of the apple, which, generally speaking, runs to wood in a warm climate and obstinately declines to fruit. Then there were strawberries and tomatoes (such tomatoes!), and melons, and cucumbers, and, indeed, every sort of vegeta-

able and fruit. "Well, you have something like a garden," I said, overpowered with admiration

not untouched by envy. "Yes," answered the missionary, "it is a very good garden, and has well repaid my labor; but it is the climate that I have to thank. If you stick a peach-stone into the ground it will bear fruit the fourth year, and a rose-cutting will bloom in a year. It

is a lovely clime." Just then we came to a ditch about ten feet wide, and full of water, on the other side of which was a loop-holed stone wall eight feet high, and with sharp flints plentifully set in mortar on the coping.

"There!" said Mr. Mackenzie, pointing to the ditch and wall; "this is my magnum opus; at least, this and the church, which is the other side of the house. It took me and twenty natives two years to dig the ditch and build the wall, but I never felt safe till it was done; and now I can defy all the savages in Africa, for the spring that fills the ditch is inside the wall, and bubbles out at the top of the hill, winter and summer alike, and I always keep a store of four months' provisions in the house."

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