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HARPER

BROTHERS

He looked beneath his tashes quickly from Jack to Guy and back again. Their slient acquiescence was not quite satisfactory. Then he called his own men and spoke to them in a tongue men and spoke to them in a tongue-unknown to the Englishmen. He hur-ried forward their preparations with a feverish irritability which made Jack Meredith think of the first time he had ever seen Durnovo, a few miles farther Sown the river, all palpitating and trembling with climatic nervousness. His face was quite yellow and there was a line drawn diagonally from the hostrils down each cheek, to lose itself

scarcely had the boat disappeared in the bend of the river before the rain broke. The thunder crashed out in aharp reports, and the men ceased rowing and crouched down in the cance. But Durnovo knew that be-hind him he had left a greater danger; smallpox had laid its hand on the camp at Msala. cely had the boat disapp

at Masia.

It is still said on the Ogowe river that no man travels like Victor Durnovo. Certain if is that in twenty-seven hours from the time he left Masia on the morning of the great storm he pre-sented himself before Maurice Gordon

in his office at the factory at Loango.
"Will you be at home tonight?" asked Durnovo, gently pushing aside the hospitable decanter. "I have got a lot of work to do today, but I should like to run in and see you this evening."

"Yes. come and dine."
Durnovo shook his head and looked down at his wrinkled and draggled clothing. "Well, I'll lend you a black coat.

Seven o'clock sharp!"

Durnovo hurried away with a glean of excitement in his dark eyes. Maurice Gordon did not resume his work at once. He sat for some time fally drumming with his fingers on the

dest,
"If I can only get her to be civil to him," he reflected aloud, "I'll get into this business yet." this business yet."

At 7 o'clock Durnovo appeared at the

Gordons' house. He had managed to borrow a dress suit and wore an orchid in his buttonhole. It was probably the first time that Jocelyn had seen him in this garb of civilisation, which is at the same time the most becoming and the most trying variety of costume left to sensible men in these days. A dress suit finds a man out sooner than any thing except speech.

Jocelyn was civil in her reception

more so, indeed, than Maurice Gordon had hoped for. She seemed almost giad to see Durnovo, and evinced quite a kindly interest in his movements. Durnovo attributed this to the dress suit, while Maurice concluded that his obvious hints thrown out before dinner had fallen on fruitful ground.

At dinner Victor Durnovo was quite charmed with the interest that Jocelyn took in the expedition, of which, he gave it to be understood, he was the chief. So also was Matrice, because Durnovo's evident admiration of Jocelyn somewhat overcame his natural ecrecy of character.
"Well," said Maurice, when Jocelyn

millionaire in about six months?"

He gently pushed the wine toward him at the same time. Durnovo had not slept for forty hours. The excite ment of his escape from the plague rid-den camp had scarcely subsided. The glitter of the sliver on the table, the shaded candles, the subtle sensuality of refinement and daintiness appealed to his hot blooded nature. He was a little off his feet perhaps. He took the decanter and put it to the worst use he could have selected.

"Not so soon as that," he said; "but in time-in time."

"Lucky beggar!" muttered Maurice Gordon, with a little sigh.

"I don't mind telling you," said Durnovo, with a sudden confidence begot-ten of madeira, 'that it's simiacine that's what it is. I can't tell you more."

"Simiacine," repeated Gordon, fingering the stem of his wineglass and looking at him keenly between the candle shades. "Yes. You've always been on

its track, haven't you?" "In six months your go-downs will be full of it—my simiacine, my sim-

"By Jove, I wish I had a hand in it!" Maurice Gordon pushed the decanter again—gently. nost surreptitiously.

"And so you may, some day. You help me and I'll help you—that is my ticket. Reciprocity - reciprocity, my

dear Maurice."
"Yes, but how?" "Can't tell you now, but I will in good time—in my own time. Come, let's join the lady—eh? Ha, ha!" But at this moment the servant brought in coffee, saying in his mas-

bed with a slight headache. During the three days that followed Durnovo's departure from Msala Jack Meredith and Oscard learned to know each other. These three days were as severe a test as could well be found, for courage, humanit, tenderness, loyalty, were by turns called forth by circumstance, Smallpox 'ges la Africa as it rages nowhere else in these days. The natives fight it or bow before it as

before an ancient and deeply to them, and it would have been easy enough for Jack and Oscard to prove to their own satisfaction that the presence of three white men at Msala was a danger to white men at assau was a danger to themselves and no advantage to the na-tives. It would have been very simple to abandon the river station, leaving there such men as were stricken down to care for each other. But such a thought never seemed to suggest itself. The camp was moved across the river, where all who seemed strong and healthy were placed under canvas, awaiting further developments.

The infected were carried to a spe-cial camp set apart and guarded, and this work was executed almost entirely by the three Englishmen, aided by a ew natives who had had the disc For three days these men went ab with their lives literally in their hands, tending the sick, cheering the despondent, frightening the cowards into some semblance of self respect and dignity. And during these three days, wherein they never took an organized meal or three consecutive hours of rest, Joseph, Mereditic and Oceana was to extract. Meredith and Oscard rose together to that height of manhood where master and servant, educated man and common soldier, stand equal before their

Maker. Owing to the promptness with which measures had been taken for isolating the affected the terrible sickness did not spread. In all eleven men were stricken, and of these ten died within three days. The eleventh recovered, but eventually remained at Msala

It was only on the evening of the third day that Jack and Guy found time to talk of the future. They had



full of it." never left Durnovo's house, and on this third day they found time to dine together.

"Do you think," Oscard asked bluntly when they were left alone to smoke, "that Durnovo spotted what was the matter?" "I am afraid that I have not the

slightest doubt of it," replied Jack lightly.

Guy Oscard gave a contemptuous lit-tle laugh which had a deeper insuft in it than he could have put into words. "Umph!" he grunted. "It is rather disgusting," he said after a pause. "I hate dealing with cowards."
"And I with fools. For everyday

use give me a coward by preference."
"Yes, there is something in that. Still, I'd throw up the whole thing

"So would I," said Jack, turning sharply in his chair, "if"-

Oscard laughed curtly and waited.
"If," continued Jack, "I could. But I am more or less bound to go on now. Such chances as this do not turn up every day. I cannot afford to let it go by. Truth is, I told—some one who shall be nameless—that I would make money to keep her in that state of life wherein her godfathers, etc., have placed her; and make that money I

"That's about my size, too," said Guy Oscard, somewhat indistinctly, owing to the fact that he habitually smoked a

"Is it? I'm glad of that. It gives us something in common to work for."
"Yes." Guy paused and made a huge effort, finally conquering that taciturnity which was almost an affliction to him. The reason that chap Durnovo ter's ear that Miss Jocelyn had gone to was honest enough, but I have another. I want to lie low for a few months, but I also want to make money. I'm as good as engaged to be married and I find that I am not so well off as I thought I was. People told me that I should have three thousand a year when the guv'nor ded, but I find that people know less of my affairs than I 630 CHARLES BUILDING

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W. W. CORY, Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.

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