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THE MESSENGER FROM KHARTOUM

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

Author of "Dr. Jack," "Dr. Jack's Wife," "Miss Caprice," Etc., Etc.

"Do you know what I've a notion to do?" says Joe, deliberately. "Gather up the remains of this broken vial, wrap them up securely, and, by special messenger, send them to the baron in the morning, with some such line as this: 'First attempt a failure. Try again, dear baron.' Or perhaps I might say: 'If you could only have seen the chap who carried this plunge through the window, baron.'"

Mynheer Joe is inclined to be facetious, but his companion looks further and sees more clearly.

"That would be imprudent, my friend," he says.

"Well, you unmask your batteries and let him know that you have discovered his advance. That is what we call bad policy in a game."

"Ah, yes, I begin to see already."

"Far better to keep him in ignorance, and then you have the advantage. He may never know that you suspect him. Let it be set down that some rascally robbers attempted to get in your room and you fired 'em out."

"I had an idea, you understand, that by letting this man know I was on to his game I could hold him responsible for the future."

"Nonsense! The baron would be responsible for nothing. He's as slippery as an eel. Depend upon it, you can't meet him squarely. But if you ever get the better of him, it will be by using his own weapons."

There is sound advice in this, which Mynheer Joe may profit by. It must not be understood that he is ignorant of such characters. He has met all kinds and conditions of men during his years of travel, and even among the blacks of the Africa wilds been compelled to overcome strategy with the same tactics.

After a little more talk, Mr. Grimes retires to his room, and Mynheer Joe throws himself down upon his bed again. It is hardly probable that the same intruders will attempt anything more in that line, at least not on this night.

So the explorer takes cat-naps until morning comes. Then he finds the sky ablaze as the sun rises in a sea of red—a spectacle that is awe-inspiring in its grandeur. Being a lover of nature, Mynheer Joe glows over the view and regrets to see the bright colors fade away.

Another day in Egypt has begun, a day of eight-eighths to the many travellers who come to feast their eyes on the storied Nile, majestic pyramids, and full ruins, strange tombs hewn in the rocks of the Mokattam Hills above Cairo, and above all the massive Sphinx, that guards the remains of a temple under the sand, day that may have much to do with the fortunes of Mynheer Joe and those he calls friends.

CHAPTER XI.

Shepherd's is astir.

Parties are sallying forth, equipped for sight-seeing. Some go by the river, while others mount donkeys, according to what they mean to gaze upon. The scene in front of the hotel is one of confusion. Finely dressed dragomen of confusion. Finely dressed dragomen of confusion. Finely dressed dragomen of confusion.

The baron chances to be one of these men who imagine that the battle is won by the party who fights for victory; therefore he will not be apt to sit around with his hands in his pockets all day.

Already he has proven to what end he can be driven by necessity. None but a desperate fiend would ever think of getting a dangerous rival out of the way by such a plan as ruining his looks with acid. This same man is fertile in resource and dangerous as a foe. Mynheer Joe may learn to his cost that he was really safer among the howling, maddened derisives of the Mahdi than he is in Cairo to-day.

When the spectacle grows too bitter for him to longer gaze upon, the baron walks away, muttering to himself.

Mr. Grimes has from a place of concealment been watching this game, and chuckles when he notes the diplomat's discomfiture. Still keeping his eye upon him he sees the baron signal a French ex-crusader, who has some connection with the khedive's palace, being in his employ.

These two talk long and earnestly, during which the baron glances a number of times toward the trio on the piazza, and even the Frenchman looks earnestly that way.

"Some devilry afoot," mutters Mr. Grimes. "I'd give a little to be able to hear what is said, but must find out the truth in another way."

Watching the couple, he finally sees them shake hands heartily; the French officer bows, places a hand on his heart, makes a gesture and walks away. Whatever has been the purport of their conversation, the matter has undoubtedly been arranged.

As the baron passes Mr. Grimes, the latter quietly follows him, making sure to attract no attention. In this way he sees the Russian diplomat finally enter a peculiar house, which has something of the appearance of a gymnasium.

Loitering around, Mr. Grimes discovers an English gentleman, whom he knows, about to enter. He stops him, to ask a question, and learns that the building is an athletic club-room. His friend asks him to enter, which he willingly does, for this is exactly what he wants.

A number of men are within. Some box; others leap and swing dumb-bells; while not a few use the foils. Mr. Grimes discovers the baron, dressed in a suit that is worn in the exercise, about to enter into an engagement with one of the professors. The sight somehow makes him jump at conclusions. Does the baron contemplate a duel? Since his

with good reason, too; but Mynheer Joe seems to be above it."

"Let us drop the whole matter, Miss Molly," he says, quite willing it shall be forgotten.

She looks at him a little queerly, for it has already occurred to her woman's mind that there is something back of it all which she had not yet fathomed—something concerning an unknown quantity, the terrible danger at which her father has hinted without giving any details; and like others of the human family, Miss Molly is gifted with a certain amount of curiosity, that trait not wholly confined to her sex.

"Very well, it shall be just as you say, on one condition, Mynheer Joe," she replies.

"What is that?" he asks.

"Some time you will tell me what this danger is that hangs over the government's head."

"Yes, I promise; but it is no longer there, I assure you," he makes answer.

They drift on to general topics, and then Demosthenes Tanner's voice is heard in the land, as he figuratively demolishes a clumsy waiter who has had the misfortune to step on his pet corn.

He joins them and greets them with a warmth, that proves his mind has undergone no change, since they parted on the previous night. Turning his head right and left, he shows that it is still in a servicable condition.

"A little stiff in the neck, that's all, my boy. Wonderful stuff, hamamoolis! Only for having a bottle along, I'd have been laid up for a week. Jove! Feel that muscle! Like steel! I say, this business of exploring the wilds is no child's play, after all, is it?"

He rattles on, drawing two chairs up, placing his feet on one, and bringing into view an enormous cigar, which must have been made especially for a man of his size.

So Joe has to describe, how, on many an occasion, he and his men have been compelled to actually hew a way through a dense network of vines and fallen trees.

They degenerate, they get him to Khartoum, and as he had promised Tanner the story of that doomed city's fall, he proceeds to give a graphic description of what took place, from the time of Gordon's arrival up to the ill-fated 26th of January, when the Christian hero, a martyr to political hesitation at home, betrayed by those in whom he trusted.

Mynheer Joe would speak as little as possible of his own share in these tragic events, but they draw him out, and he is thus compelled to tell what happened.

While Molly sits there, her lovely eyes gleamed on the face of the speaker, deep admiration and even growing love kindling her fine features, the baron glares at the group from the other end of the piazza.

He realizes that the fates have dealt him a terrible blow, and that his case is indeed hopeless, unless fortune throws in his way a means of overturning circumstances.

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MARRIED HAPPINESS

is dependent upon the health of the wife more than on any other one thing. If a woman is troubled in a distinctly feminine way the most delicate nerves of her body are in a state of chronic irritation. She has headache and backache. She is listless and spiritless. She is cross and blue. She feels that life is not worth living and her temper reflects the condition of her nerves. Poor, suffering wife—poor, distracted husband. If the husband is a cheerful, good-humored man he will sympathize—if he is nervous, tired and irritable himself, he will probably go off to the club or seek elsewhere more congenial company.

A sick woman is to be pitied because she is miserable and because she has not yet learned that Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription will make her well.

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"My wife was sick for over eight years," writes Albert H. Polte, Esq., of Altamont, Grand County, N. Y. "she had uterine disease and was treated by two physicians and got no relief. At last I read about Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. I sent to the drug store, got one bottle and the first dose gave ease and sleep. She had not slept for three nights. Being sure that it would cure her I sent for five more bottles and when she had taken the sixth bottle she was sound and well. We now have a fine boy at our home."

The "Favorite Prescription" contains no alcohol and no opium or other narcotic, and is perfectly harmless in any condition of the system.

vicious plan to destroy Joe's looks had failed, will be endeavor to put the dashing explorer out of the way by a recourse to arms and the code of honor?

Mr. Grimes knows that this man has been a principal in many duels—that he is an expert swordsman and a dead shot. His size, instead of being against him, really gives him an advantage.

Hence Mynheer Joe's friend watches the work of the baron closely. Mr. Grimes is no swordsman himself, but he can tell good wrist-play, lunge and parry when he sees it.

Before five minutes pass by he realizes that the baron is simply immense. He plays with the professor as a cat might with a mouse, and, whenever he feels in the humor, dazzles the man's eyes with a flashing wall of steel, plucks his fall out of his grasp by a wonderful wrench, and laughs in a cold-blooded, sardonic way that sets Grimes wild.

Heaven help poor Mynheer Joe, he thinks, if he stands before this little giant with a sword in his hand! There is just about one chance in a dozen for him. He may outwit the baron in diplomacy, but cold steel held in the grasp of a wizard is a hard thing to beat.

So Mr. Grimes watches and shudders, as, in imagination, he sees his friend occupying the place of the professor. Before now, under such circumstances, the baron's cruel blade has passed through his body.

Mr. Grimes studies his method, hoping to find a weak spot. As has already been said he has considerable knowledge of the science, and after a time jumps at a conclusion.

"Heavens! This man, wonderful as he is, would stand a poor show against a left-handed swordsman! I have seen Joe do a number of things with his left hand. If he handles a sword in that way—well, Mr. Baron, you may be as astonished—that's all."

When the baron has enjoyed himself to the full with the professor, who is but a plaything in his hands, he saunters over to the shooting gallery to try his hand.

One would think his nerves might not be as steady as could be desired after his hot engagement with the foils, and Mr. Grimes feels an admiration for the man coupled with his aversion, when he sees him shoot after shot with as unerring accuracy, the various swinging targets being struck almost with every discharge of the revolver.

To be Continued.

A coincidence is the antiquated plea of a plagiarist.

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SICK HEADACHE

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They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Bile, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They Regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

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