

inches, but, with those exceptions, you're a boy—a positive boy."

"According to your way of thinking," I said, "people will begin to remark that I am showing signs of age when I celebrate my hundredth birthday, and the papers publish the usual lies about my retention of all my faculties. However, let's talk sense. You propose to go and look for your friend Smith. You say that it is the first wish of your life to find him, and that you won't go unless I go with you. You place me in a most awkward position, General."

"The position I place you in is not half so awkward a position as poor Smith is in, if the reports I have received are true," said the General. "I last saw him in Egypt, when he walked most unconcernedly into my tent one day to tell me he was on his way to the unknown portion of Northern Australia. Since then, nothing definite has been heard of him. I have made exhaustive inquiries, and according to the blacks, who have wandered down from the interior to the coast, the white man that this dreadful black queen they talk of has kept a prisoner is undoubtedly Smith. He always was a chap for going where no other white man had ever set foot, and he has had some narrow squeaks, but this time he appears to have gone once too often. This queen or chieftainess is an example of the black who dominates his or her fellows by possessing qualities that one associates solely with the white race. Possibly, she is not entirely black. Anyhow, she wields immense power, and if one of her subjects so much as winks when she doesn't want him to,