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With Edged Tools.

By Henry Seton Merriman.

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"What have you learned?" she asked in a low voice, half fascinated by the danger into which she knew that she was running.

"That I love you," he answered, standing squarely in front of her and announcing the fact with a deliberate honesty which was rather startling. "I was not sure of it before, so I stayed away from you for three weeks; but now I know for certain."

"Oh, you mustn't say that!" She rose hastily and turned away from him. There was in her heart a sudden feeling of regret. It was the feeling that the keenest sportsman sometimes has when some majestic monarch of the forest falls before his merciless rifle—a sudden passing desire that it might be undone.

"Why not?" he asked. He was desperately in earnest, and that which made him a good sportsman—an unmatched big game hunter, calm and self-possessed in any strait—gave him a strange deliberation now, which Millicent Chyne could not understand.

"Why not?" "I do not know—because you mustn't."

And in her heart she wanted him to say it again.

"I am not ashamed of it," he said, "and I do not see why I should not say it to you—or to any one else, so far as that goes."

"No, never!" she cried, really frightened. "To me it does not matter so much. But to no one else—no, never! Aunt Marian must not know it—nor Sir John."

"I cannot see that it is any business of Sir John's. Of course, Lady Cantourne would have liked you to marry a title; but if you cared for me she would be ready to listen to reason."

In which judgment of the good lady he was no doubt right, especially if reason spoke with the voice of £5,000 per annum.

"Do you care for me?" he asked, coming a little closer.

There was a whole world of gratified vanity and ungratified curiosity for her in the presence of this strong man at her elbow. It was one of the supreme triumphs of her life, because he was different from the rest. He was for her what his first tiger had been for him. The danger that he might come still nearer had for her a sense of keen pleasure. She was thoroughly enjoying herself, and the nearest approach that men can experience to the joy that was hers in the joy of battle.

"I cannot answer that—not now." And the little half-shrinking glance over her shoulder was a low minded, unmaidenly invitation. But he was in earnest, and he was, above all, a gentleman. He stood his ground a yard away from her.

"Then when," he asked, "when will you answer me?"

She stood with her back turned toward him, looking out over the smooth waters of the Solent, where one or two yachts and a heavy black schooner were creeping up on the tide before the morning breeze. She drummed reflectively with her fingers on the low stone wall. Beneath them a few gulls whirled and screamed over a shoal of little fish. One of the gulls had a singular cry, as if it were laughing to itself.

"You said just now," Millicent answered at length, "that you were not sure yourself—not at first—and therefore you cannot expect me to know all at once."

"You should know at once," he argued gravely. "If it were going to be 'no.' If you do not say 'no' now, I can only think that it may be 'yes' some day. And"—he came closer; he took the hand that hung at her side, conveniently near—"and I don't want you to say 'no' now. Don't say 'no'! I will wait as long as you like for 'yes.' Millicent, I would rather go on waiting and thinking that it is going to be 'yes' even if it is 'no' after all."

She said nothing, but she left her hand in his.

"May I go on thinking that it will be 'yes' until I come back?"

"I cannot prevent your thinking, can I?" she whispered, with a tender look in her eyes.

"May I write to you?"

She shook her head.

"Well—I—I— Now then," he pleaded, "Not often. Just to remind you of my existence."

She gave a little laugh, which he liked exceedingly and remembered afterward.

"If you like," she answered.

At this moment Lady Cantourne's voice was heard in the distance calling them.

"There!" exclaimed Millicent. "We must go at once. And no one—one, must know of this."

"No one shall know of it," he answered.

CHAPTER IX.

THOSE who for their sins have been to Loango will scarcely care to have its beauties recalled to memory. And to such as have not visited the spot one can only earnestly recommend a careful advance.

Suffice it to say, therefore, that there is such a place, and the curious may find it marked in larger type than it deserves on the map of Africa, on the west coast of that country and within an inch or so of the equator.

"This is not cheery," Jack Meredith observed to his servant as they found themselves deposited on the beach within a stone's throw of the French factory.

"No, sir, not cheery, sir," replied Joseph. He was very busy attending to the landing of their personal effects and had only time to be respectful. It was Joseph's way to do only one thing at a time, on the principle no doubt that enough for the moment is the evil thereof. His manner implied that when those colored gentlemen had got the baggage safely conveyed out of the boats on to the beach it would be time enough to think about Loango.

It had been arranged by letter that Jack Meredith should put up, as his host expressed it, at the small bungalow occupied by Maurice Gordon and his sister. Gordon was the local head of a large trading association somewhat after the style of the old East India company, and his duties partook more of the glory of a governor than of the routine of a trader.

Of Maurice Gordon's past Meredith knew nothing beyond the fact that they were schoolfellows strangely brought together again on the deck of a coasting steamer. Maurice Gordon was not a reserved person, and it was rather from a lack of opportunity than from an excess of caution that he allowed his new found friend to go up the Ogowe river knowing so little of himself—Maurice Gordon of Loango.

On reaching the bungalow Meredith was pleasantly surprised. It was pretty and homelike, surrounded by a garden wherein grew a strange profusion of homely English vegetables and tropical flowers.

Joseph happened to be in front, and as he neared the veranda he suddenly stopped at the salute; moreover, he began to wonder in which trunk he had packed his master's dress clothes.

An English lady was coming out of the drawing room window to meet the travelers. She nodded in answer to the servant's salutation and passed on to greet the master.

"My brother has been called away suddenly," she said. "One of his sub-agents has been getting into trouble with the natives. Of course you are Mr. Meredith?"

"I am," replied Jack, taking the hand she held out; it was a small white hand—small without being frail or diaphanous. "And you are Miss Gordon, I suppose? I am sorry Gordon is away, but no doubt we shall be able to find somewhere to put up."

"You need not do that," she said quietly. "This is Africa, you know. You can quite well stay with us, although Maurice is away until tomorrow."

She was tall and fair, with a certain stateliness of carriage which harmonized wonderfully with a thoughtful and pale face. She was not exactly pretty, but gracious and womanly, with honest blue eyes that looked on men and women alike. She was probably twenty-eight years of age; her manner was that of a woman rather than that of a girl—of one who was in life and not on the outskirts.

"We rather pride ourselves," she said, leading the way into the drawing room, "upon having the best house in Loango. You will, I think, be more comfortable here than anywhere."

"I see you have all the new books."

"Yes, we have books and magazines; but, of course, we live quite out of the world."

She paused, leaving the conversation with him as in the hands of one who knows his business.

"I," he said, filling up the pause, "have hitherto lived in the world—right in it. There is a lot of dust and commotion; the dust gets into people's eyes and blinds them; the commotion wears them out; and perhaps, after all, Loango is better!"

"If once met a Sir John Meredith," she said suddenly.

"My father."

He paused, drawing in his legs and apparently studying his neat brown boots.

"Should you meet him again," he went on, "it would not be advisable to mention my name. He might not care to hear it. We have had a slight difference of opinion. With me it is different. I am always glad to hear about him. I have an immense respect for him."

She listened gravely, with a sympathy that did not attempt to express itself in words. On such a short acquaintance she had not learned to expect a certain lightness of conversational touch which he always assumed when speaking of himself, as if his own thoughts and feelings were matters for ridicule.

"Of course," he went on, "I was in the wrong. I know that. But it sometimes happens that a man is not in a position to admit that he is in the wrong—when, for instance, another person would suffer by such an admission."

(To be continued.)

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Entry must be made personally at the local land office for the district in which the land is situated.

Entry by proxy may, however, be made on certain conditions by the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of an intending homesteader.

The homesteader is required to perform the homestead conditions under one of the following plans:

(1.) At least six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each year for three years.

(2.) If the father (or mother, if the father is deceased) of the homesteader resides upon a farm in the vicinity of the land entered for the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by such person, residing with the father or mother.

(3.) If the settler has his permanent residence upon farming land owned by him in the vicinity of his homestead, the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by residence upon the said land.

Six months' notice in writing should be given to the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa of intention to apply for patent.

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

N. B.—Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for.—31-26.