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### With Edged Tools

By HENRY SETON MERRIMAN Author of "The Sowers." "Roden's Corner." "From One Generation to Another," Etc.

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Lady Cantourne waited with perfectlly suppressed curlosity, and while she was waiting Millicent Chyne came into

the room. The girl was dressed with the room. The girl was dressed with the rabitual perfect taste and success, and she came forward with a smile of genuine pleasure, holding out a small hand neatly gloved in suede. Her ladyship was looking, not at Millicent, but "Ah!" said Miss Chyne. "It is very good of you to take pity upon two lone females. I was afraid that you had gone off to the wilds of America or

search of big game. Do you know, Mr. Oscard, you are quite big game man' the other day; also the

eimen smiled happly under "Mr. Oscard has just been telling me," interposed Lady Cantourne conversationally, "that he is thinking of ng off to the wilds again."

"Then it is very disappointing of him," said Millicent, with a little droop of the eyelids which went home. "It seems to be only the uninteresting people who stay at home and live humdrum lives of enormous duration."

"He seems to think that his friends are going to cast him and leaves him."

are going to cast him off because his ther died without the assistance edical man," continued the old

At this moment another visitor was announced and presently made his appearance. He was an old gentieman of no personality whatever, who was nevertheless welcomed effusively because two people in the room had a distinct use for inc. Lady Cantourne was exceedingly gracious. She remembered instantly that horticulture was among his somewhat antiquated accomplishments, and she was immediately consumed with a desire to show umed with a desire to show him the conservatory which she had had built outside the drawing room vindow. She took a genuine interest

window. She took a genuine interest in this abode of flowers and watered the plants herself with much enthusias:—when she remembered.

Added to a number of positive virtues the old gentleman possessed that of abstaining from tea, which enabled the two horticulturists to repair to the the two horticulturists to repair to the conservatory at once, leaving the young people alone at the other end of the drawing room.

"You see," he said, "It is only natural that a great many people should give me the cold shoulder. My story was a little lame. There is no reason why they should believe in me." mey should believe in une.
"I believe in you," she answered.

"It was a very unpleasant business," he said in a jerky, self conscious voice. "I didn't know that I was that sort, of fellow. The 'temptation was very great, I nearly gave in and let him do it. He was a stronger man than I. You know-we did not get on well toturn out a literary sort of fellow, and

out interrupting-like a man. She had the gift of adapting herself to her environments in a marked degree.

"And," he added curtly, "no one knows how much I wanted that three thousand a year."

The girl moved uneasily and glanced

She rose from her chair as if to join her aunt and the horticultural old gen-

"You must not say that," she said in little more than a whisper, and without looking round she want toward Lady Cantourne. Her eyes were gleaming with a singular suppressed excitement, such as one sees in the eyes of a man fresh from a med run. eyes of a man fresh from a mad run

cross country.

Guy Oscard rose also and followed nore deliberately. There was nothing for him to do but take his leave. "But," said Lady Cantourne graclously, "if you are determined to go away, you must at least come and say

coodby before you leave." "Thanks; I should like to do so, if I "We shall be deeply disappointed if

you forget," said Millicent holding out her hand, with a su rtedness and

All around him the vegetable kingicm had asserted its sovereignty. At comfort to the se his back loomed a dense forest, impenetrable to the foot of man, defying ever lurks in West and blood, his puny hand armed with ax or saw. "I say," he said. The trees were not high, few of them being above twenty feet, but from their branches creepers and parasites hung in tangled profusion, interlaced, joining tree to tree for acres-nay, for

As far as the eye could reach either bank of the slow river was thus covmile without variety, without hope. The glassy surface of the water was broken here and there by certain black forms floating like logs half hidden beneath the wave. These were crocodiles. The river was the Ogowe, and the man who cursed it was Victor Durnovo, employee of the Loango Trading association, whose business it was at that season to travel into the interior of Africa to buy, barter or steal lvery for his masters.

He was a small faced man, with a squarely aquiline nose and a black mustache which hung like a valance over his mouth. From the growth of that curtain-like mustache Victor Durnovo's worldly prosperity might have been said to date. No one seeing his mouth had before that time been prevailed upon to trust him. Nature has a way of hanging out signs and then covering them up so that the casual fail to see. He was a man of nedium height, with abnormally long arms and a somewhat truculent way of walking, as if his foot was ever ready to kick anything or any person

who might come in his way. Victor Durnove had sent his boatmen into the forest to find a few dates, a few handfuls of firewood, and while they were absent he gave vent to that wild unreasoning passion which is in-haled into the white man's lungs with the air of equatoral Africa.

"Curse this country!" he shouted. "Curse it, curse it—river and tree, man Presently a peacefulness seemed to ome over him, for his eyes lost their

glitter and his heavy lids drooped. His arms were crossed behind his head. Before him lay the river.
Suddenly he sat upright, all eagerness and attention. Not a leaf stirred. It was about 5 o'clock in the evening. the stillest hour of the twenty-four. In such a silence the least sound would travel almost any distance, and there was a sound traveling over the water to him. It was nothing but a thud reeated with singular regularity, but to is practiced ears it conveyed much. as yet hidden by some distant curve in the river. The thud was caused by the contact of six paddles with the gunvale of the cance as the paddlers with-

frew them from the water. ... Victor Durnovo rose again and brought from the boat a second riffe, conservatory at once, leaving the young people alone at the other end of the drawing room.

Millicent smoothed her gloves with lowncast eyes and that demure air by which the talented fair imply the construction. bank without his full permission, for they got within a bundled yards of his rifle. He was probably the best rifle shot but one in that country, and the other, the very best happened to be in the approaching cance.

After the space of ten minutes the boat came in sight—a long, black form

on the still waters. It was too far away for him to distinguish anything eyond the fact that it was a native

boat.
"Eight bundred yards," muttered Durnovo over the sight of his rifle. He looked upon this river as his own, and he knew the native of equatorial Africa. Therefore be dropped a bullet into the water, under the bow of the

cance, at 800 yards: which can only be written "P-ttt" berether. He always hoped that I would | tween his legs, and he had to wipe a shower of dust from his eyes. A puff

I suppose he was disappointed. I tried at one fime, but I found it was no good. From indifference it turned almost to batted. He disliked me intensely, and I am attaid I did not cars for him very much.

Millicent were much.

Durnovo was the first to speak when the boat came within hail. "Very sorry." he shouted: "Thought you were a native ! Must establish a funk-get in first shot, you know?"

toward the conservatory.

"It was not the money that tempted me," said Guy very deliberately; "It peans in the approaching craft, with a courteous wave of the hand, "no harm done."

There were two white men and six blacks in the long and clemsy boat. One of the Europeans lay in the bow while the other was stretched at his. ease in the stern, reclining on the canvas of a neatly folded tent. The last named was evidently the leader of the uttle expedition, while the manner and attitude of the man in the bow sug-gested the servitude of a disciplined soldier slightly relaxed by abnormal

circumstances. "Who fired that shot?" inquired Durnovo, when there was no longer any necessity to shout. "Joseph," replied the man in the stern of the boat, indicating his com-

panion. "Was it a near thing?" "About as near as I care about. It threw up the dust between my legs." The man called Joseph grinned. Nature had given him liberally of the wherewithal for indulgence in that relaxation, and Durnovo smiled rather constrainedly. Joseph was grabbing at the long reedy grass, bringing the canoe to a standstill, and it was some moments before his extensive

h. gave way to that impaise o eless which that you was mke money,

"I flemme you are Mr. Durnovo?" said the man in the stern of the boat, rising leisurely from his recumbent po sition and speaking with a courteous savior faire which seemed slightly out of place in the wilds of central Africa He was a tall man with a small aristocratic head and a refined face, which somehow suggested an aristocrat of old France.

"Yes," answered Durnovo. The tall man stepped ushore and held out his hand. "I am glad we have met you," he said. "I have a letter of introduction

to you from Maurice Gordon of Loango."
Victor Durnovo's dark face changed slightly. His eyes-billous, fever shot, healthy-took a new light.

"Ah!" he answered. "Are you friend of Maurice Gordon's?" There was another question in this, an unasked one, and Victor Durnovo was watching for the answer. But the face lie watched was like a delicately carved piece of brown marble, with a courteous, impenetrable smile. "I met him again the other day at Loungo. He is an old Etonian, like

This conveyed nothing to Durnovo longed to a different world, ducation was, like other things about him, an unknown quantity. "My name," continued the tall man, Meredith-John Meredith-some-

times called Jack." They were walking up the bank to-ward the dusky and uninviting tent, "And the other fellow?" inquired Durnovo, with a backward jerk of the

"Oh. he is my servant."
Durnovo, raised his eyebrows in somewhat contemptuous amusement and proceeded to open the letter which Meredith had handed him.
"Not many fellows," he said, "on this coast can afford to keep a European

with a half suppressed yawn, "that the country gets finer farther up; more

The proprietors of very dark eyes would do well to remember that it is dangerous to glance furtively to one side or the other. The attention of dark eyes is more easily felt than the glances of gray or blue orbs.

Jack Meredith's suspicions were aroused by the suspicious manner of

river as I do, and I do not recommend it. Look at me, on the verge of faun-dice; look at this wound on my arm, it with a scratch and has never healed. All that comes from a month up this cursed river. Take my advice. "I certainly shall," replied Meredith,

"Not a thing. I've been living on lantains and dried elephant meat for

the last fortnight." are pretty well provided, so perhaps you will give me the pleasure of your company to dinner? Come as you are; no ceremony. I think I will wash, ugh. It is as well to keep up these

N that part of Africa which lies within touch of the equator life is essentially a struggle. There is hunger about, and where hunger tions will be found also. Now, Jack Meredith was a past master in the concealment of these, and, as such, came to Victor Durnovo in the among men who said, in action if not in words, I am hungry or I am thirsty; I want this, or I want that; and if you

boat and a sharp report broke the are not strong enough to keep it, I will-silence a second time.

Then Victor Duraevo leaped to his This man was different, and Victor Durnovo did not know, could not find out, what he wanted. or him very much.

Ing greeting, and the man on the bank He had at first been inclined to laugh went to the water's edge, still carry- at him. What struck him most forcibly He had at first been inclined to laugh ing the riffe from which he was never | was Joseph, the servant. The idea of

a man swaggering up an African river with a European manservant was so preposterous that it could only be met with ridicule; but the thing seemed so natural to Jack Meredith, he accepted the servitude of Joseph so much as a matter of course that after a time Durnovo accepted him also as part and parcel of Meredith. Joseph took off his coat, turned up

his sleeves and proceeded to cook such a dinner as Durnovo had not tasted for many months. There was wine also, and afterward a cigar of such quality as appealed strongly to Durnovo's West Indian palate. The night settled down over the land

while they sat there, and before them the great yellow equatorial moon rose slowly over the trees. With the darkness came a greater silence, for the myriad insect life was still. "So," sald Durnovo, returning to the

subject which had never really left his thoughts, "you have come out here for "Not exactly. I came chiefly make money, partly to dispel so the illusions of my youth, and I am getting on very well. Picture book Ilasions they were. The man who drew the pictures had never seen Africa." The evening had turned out so very

differently from what he had exp that Durnovo was a little carried off his equilibrium. Things were so soclable and pleasant in comparison with the habitual loneliness of his life. The fire crackled so cheerly, the moon shone down on the river so grandly, the subdued chatter of the boatmen

Jack Meredith in the half mocking tone which he never wholly learned to

"Then I think I can put you in the way of it. Oh, I know it seems a bit remature; not known you long nough and all that. But in this country we don't hold much by the formallties. I like you. I liked the look of you when you got out of that boat so cool and self possessed. You're the right sort, Mr. Meredith."

"Possibly for some things. For sit-ting about and smoking first class clgars and thinking second class thoughts I am exactly the right sort. But for making money, for hard work and steady work. I am afraid, Mr. Durnovo, that I am distinctly the

ooked round as if to make sure that

the light of the great yellow broom fell full upon his clean cut sphinxlike face. The eyes alone seemed living.

"I can see you're a gentleman Durnove said. "I'll trust you. I want a man to join me in making a fortune. I'm afraid of this country. I'm gettle shaky; look at that hand. I've ber looking for it too long. I take you in like you in this country, and I'm beastly afraid of dying. I want to get leave until I set things going."

"Take your time," said Meredith.
quietly and soothingly. "Light that cigar again and lie down. There is no

Durnovo obeyed him meekly." "Tell me," he said, "have you ever neard of similacine?" "I cannot say that I have." replied

Jack. "What is it for, brown boots or "It is a drug, the most expensive drug in the market. And they mus have it, they cannot do without it, and they cannot find a substitute. It is the leaf of a shrub, and your hatful is

worth a thousand pounds."
"Where is it to be found?" usked Jack Meredith. "I should like some in a "Ah, you may laugh now, but you

scientific chaps called it simhcine, because of an old African legend which, like all those things, has a grain of truth in it. The legend is that the monkeys first found out the properties of the leaf, and it is because they live on it that they are so strong Do you know that a gorilla's arm is Dodgers not half so thick as yours, and yet he would take you and snap your back-bone across his knee? He would bend a gun barrel as you would bend a cane "We will discuss it after dinner. My chap is a first rate cook. Have you got the chap is a first rate cook. Have you got to find out its properties. It seem that it can bring a man back to life when he is more than half dead There is no knowing what childre. that are brought up on it may turn out to be. It may double the power of the human brain; some think it

Jack Meredith was leaning forward, watching with a certain sense of fascination the wild, disease stricken face, listening to the man's breathles periods. It seemed that the fear of death, which had got hald of him. gave Victor Durnovo no time to pause

for breath. "Yes," said the Englishman, "yes "There is practically no limit to th demand that there is for it. At pres ent the only way of obtaining through the natives, and you know their manner of frading. They send a little packet down from the interior. and it very often takes two months and more to reach the buyer's hands. The money is sent back the same way and each man who fingers it keeps little. The natives find the leaf in the forests by the aid of trained monkeys and only in very small quan-

titles. Do you follow me?" "Yes, I follow you."

Victor Durnovo leaned forward until his face was within three inches of Meredith's, and the dark, wild eyes

flashed and glared into the English-man's steady glance. "What," he hissed—"what if I know where simiscine grows like a weed? What if I could supply the world with simiacine at my own price? Eh-h-h! What of that, Mr. Meredith?"

He threw himself suddenly back and wiped his dripping face. There was a silence, the great African silence that drives educated men mad and fills the wild tales of devils and spirits.

Then Jack Meredith spoke without

"I'm your man," he said, "with a few more details."

Victor Durnovo was lying back at full length on the hard, dry mud, his arms beneath his head. Without altering his position, he gave the details, speaking slowly and much more quiet-

ly. It seemed as if he spoke the result of long pent up thought.
"We shall want," he said, "at least £2,000 to start it, for we must have an armed force of our own. We have to penetrate a cannibal country of the flercest devils in Africa. It is a pla-

[TO BE CONTINUED.] \$100 H HE HE ( 2004)

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# is similacine. He can hang ou to a tree with one leg and tackle a leopar with his bare hands—that's similacine at home they are only just beginnin to find out its properties. It seems



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