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THE MESSENGER FROM KHARTOOM

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

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

SYNOPSIS OF THE OPENING CHAP-

The story opens at Cairo, where Mr. Grimes, who passes as an American silver king; Sandy Barlow, a newspaper correspondent; Mr. Tanner, a millionaire traveller and his daughter Molly, all meet. Mr. Tanner informs grimes that his dahabeah on its way down the Nile picked up Mynheer Joe a messenger from Gordon. As both Grimes and Sandy know Joe they go down to the boat to find him.

"Enter, gentlemen," says the old reis. Straight across the luxurious cabin strides the newspaper correspondent direct to the lamp, which, with a turn, he causes to send forth a flood of light. Then he faces the recumbent figure on the couch; recumbent no longer, for as though the voice of the reis at the cabin door has broken the chain of slumber which exhaustion has forged around him, the castaway of the Nile has raised his body with one arm and looks at them, in a way that proclaims his bewilderment; the bright light dazzles his eyes, too, so that with his other hand

It is a picture-Sandy, standing there, bending eagerly forward, his eyes glued upon the bearded face of the other, and actually holding his breath as he gazes spell-bound. The man who thus half raises himself upon the couch is worthy of a second look. His figure is splendid ly proportioned, though not above the ordinary in point of size. It is the face that must interest an observer most of all-a face that is marked by determination, valor and frank fearlessness. This man has seen suffering in the past; he shows it in his eyes, and yet it has not crushed the spirit that leads the explorer to seek new honor and renown amid the dangers of unknown wilds, pestilential swamps or in the depths of an African desert.

Eye looks into eye as Sandy Barlow stands there; then the correspondent exclaims, with a ring of satisfaction in

"Mynheer Joe, for all the world!" "Sandy, is it you, my dear fellow? Where under the sun did you drop from?" asks the other, holding out the hand that has been used to shield his eyes from the light, though he does not alter his position one particle.

The correspondent seizes hold of the hand thus offered in greeting, his very enthusiasm showing what he feels at

"Bless you, old boy, it's good for sore eyes to see you again, and looking as natural as ever. Never have I ceased to remember the days of 'auld lang syne,' when we two did the Nile in company. Talk about the fate in our first meeting-it doesn't hold a candle to Same old grasp, same old Joe!" and he works the prodigal's arm like a pump-handle, while rattling along in this strain.

"Quartered in Cairo, Sandy, writing up the beauties of Lower Egypt, as a winter resort, or have you been ap-pointed a consul here?" asks the other, with a jolly laugh that causes Mr. Grimes to wonder what stuff this man can be made of to be so composed and even merry after what he has gone

through. "That's not my luck. Still pegging away at the old business. Makes both ends meet and gives me a chance to see the world. But see here! Confound my stupidity! Here's a friend of yours waiting to see you, and I've been mon-

opolizing your time." Mynheer Joe raises himself to a sitting posture and faces the Silver King, who hesitates for a few seconds and then comes forward.

"Pardon me!" he says frankly. "You have made a mistaks, Sandy. I did not claim to be a friend of Mynheer Joe, only a fellow-countryman, and one who has heard much about him, and takes a deep interest in his welfare. Obed Grimes, at your service, Mr. Miner." The explorer possibly catches some significance back of his words. At any rate he looks at the stout gentleman with the florid countenance as though intent upon studying out a problem; but noticing the outstretched hand, accepts it in his usual hearty way. Now and then, during the subsequent interview while the correspondent plies him with questions, Mynheer Joe can be seen to keep a reflective upon Mr. Grimes. Perhaps he is endeavoring to place the wealthy miner; and yet the latter has

declared they have not met before. Sandy thinks only of one thing now. True he has been especially pleased to meet with one he regards so hig ly; but this feeling has now given way to the instinct of his craft. He has been educated up to being a newspaper man above all else, and like all others of his calling, has a keen nose for news. To be first at the wire with startling information is the dream of Sandy Bar-

low's life. Here he sees a golden opportunity for making a ten-strike. The whole civilized world hangs in suspense waiting definite news of the heroic Chinese Gordon's fate. Rumors have been rife almost daily, sometimes detailing his death, and again giving accounts of some wonderful victory over fifty thou-sand dervishes, as the followers of El Mahdi are called, his own force number-

ing but two thousand. Like a shuttlecock dashed hither and yon by the battledores, has this subject been kept on the go for weeks, and up to this black night in February no definite news hus been received which settles Gordon's fate.

Thus Sandy's dreadful impatience is explained; the wide-awake correspondent is aroused to the exigencies of the hour, and for the benefit of the civ lized werld would seize and send out an authentic account of the tragedy of ill-

lated Khartoum. Mechanically he draws out his note book and, pencil in hand, prepares to take down in shorthand what may be said-a proceeding Mynheer Joe eyes with a smile.

"Pardon me, friends, but I am almost starved. When I went to sleep, the captain here said he would have a meal eady for me when I awoke. hungry then, but, could keep awake only long enough to take a cup of coffee and bite. How is it, Captain?? Will you keep your word?"

The dusky Ben Hassan Effendi nods and gives a signal with his hands. Immediately two fellahin appear: One carries a tray covered with a white napkin: the other lays a cloth upon the little round table. Almost The magic a savory, steaming meal is thus placed in front of of the hungry Mynheer Joe. after which the magician waves his hand, and his followers vanish as if into thin air.

"Your pardon, gentlemen. I have fasted for some days now, and the much for me to withstand. Captain how long have I slept?" "Twenty-seven hours, gentlemen,"

gravely announces the old reis.
"Incredible!" exclams Mr. Grimes.

"Eat, my boy! Jove! You may go to sleep again, unless you get your jaws working! I've heard of such things as people sleeping for days," cries Sandy, with an air that plainly marks the martyr, and says: "Don't consider me -I can wait." So Mynheer Joe does ample justice to

the meal set before him, and, when ten minutes have passed, very little remains of what was brought in. At the same time something of the pinched look has left his face, and he seems more like the man Sandy remembers. The correspondent has been surveying

the interior of the cabin curiously, endeavoring to keep down the spirit of impatience that makes a minute seem an hour. He knows his friend has great need of all the sustenance he can secure at present, and hence will not allow his own selfish motives to triumph. As he finishes his survey of the gay

decorations upon the walls of the cabin. where scores of novelties add to the picturesque appearance of the scene. Sandy hears a sigh of deep satisfaction and wheeling about is just in time to see the captain, at a signal from the pilgrim, clap his hands, when the two attendants dart in, removing the debris. "Gentlemen-one favor. In the name erry have either of you-a cigar;

asks the recent diper in a tragic voice. He has a choice weed in a second, and ere three pass, fire has been applied to

"Richard is himself again-first cigar in seven months-think of it," he says melodramatically.

"Now, my dear fellow, pardon my beastly baste, but after midnight I lose the wire. Can you tell me whether Gor don is dead or alive".

Mynheer Joe drops his head suddenly,

and something like a groun come from his lips. "Gordon is dead," he replies, slowly. "with these eyes I saw him fall, and this right arm struck his murderer, cleaving him to the chin."

CHAPTER III.

At these words, both Americans look very grave, and even Ben Hassan, standing near by, seems as though appalled. Faith in the astonishing powers of Chinese Gordon has always given those who know him an idea that nothing could ever overcome him.

He was a man absolutely without fear, with a fine Christian character, respected everywhere by the natives, for his personality was something far beyond the ordinary. For six months and more, this valiant man has been shut up within the walls of Khartoom, with a few thousand miserable native troops facing fifty thousand dervishes of El Mahdi. Without the presence of Gordon, these troops would not hold out a day against the enemy.

There, with a few faithful officers and friends, he has held out from week to month, hurling back the legions of the False Prophet and holding the debatable ground against the slave traders, waiting for the rescue that will couse too late; for England, the more shame to her, being engaged in political dis cussions, delays sending a relief column until it becomes a necessity on account of the clamor of the people, which column will find Khartoom in the hands of the enemy, and Gordon-lost.

"This is sad news you bring, Joe." says the newspaper man, at length. "Sad, yes; but true, too true. Eng-land has, by her vacillating policy, murdered the bravest of her sons. How blind the powers that be! This will topple over the ministry quicker than anything else on earth. The people loved Gordon because his motives were always honorable."

always honorable."
The man from Khartoom speaks always honorable." quietly, as if he has long since learned to look upon the disaster with composure. He is not one given to emotion. at any rate, as a glance into his face would inform an observer.
"Tell us about it, Joe," bursts out the

impetuous Sandy, notebook and pencil in hand. The other passes one hand wearily

As you travel through southeastern Kansas about one hundred and twenty-five miles south of Topeka and eighty-five miles east of Wichita, the brakeman sticks his head in the doorway and yells: "Yreeky!" and a couple of minutes later the train pulls into Eureka, the prosperous county seat of Greenwood County.

One of the happy inhabitants of Eureka is Mrs. Sarah E. Taylor, and the reasons for her present happiness are set forth in the following letter addressed to Dr. R. V. Pierce, chief consulting physician to the "Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute," of Buffalo, N. Y.

Mrs. Taylor says:

"I had been a sufferer for fifteen years and in August 1896 was taken with severe cramping pain in my stomach. A hard lump about the size of a goose egg formed in my right side. It became so sore

ince. I began to do tay work.

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is a medicine that cures on rational, scientific principles. It is the discovery of a regua medicine that cures on rational, scientific principles. It is the discovery of a regularly graduated, practicing physician of high standing. It tones up the stomach, stimulates the liver and regulates the bow-les. It brings all the digestive organs into healthy activity. It neutralizes and eradicates all poisonous, effete matter in the blood and fills it with the rich, vital, red corpuscles of health and vigor.

The "Discovery" is a temperance medicine. It contains no alcohol in any form.

across his brow as though ne would clear away the cobwebs time had spus about his brain.

"It is hardly a propitious time for entering into details, my friend. I am willing to speak, but I know you will pardon me if I simply sketch the matter

"Yes, yes, tell what you please, Joe." Mr. Grimes and the reis say nothing; only moving a little closer to the messenger from Khartoum in order to hear how Gordon fell. It is a subject which must interest the whole world Millions will, later on, read the story of his desertion and death in the town on the Nile, and from every country under the sun will breathe curses against Old England for the cowardly policy that has ended in this way.

"You know what took Gordan Khartoum, and the sacred work to which he devoted his life. He was the deadly enemy of the slave trader, and long ago declared that his life would be spent in endeavoring to break up that terrible trade on the Upper Nile. The rattle of slave chains was the most hated sound he knew, and it was this that made him hold on even when doom stared him in

"I know his mind, for I have talked with him day by day, and found Gordon a rock. He could a dozen times have saved himself by flight, but he would not desert his post. Heaven sent him there, and at Khartoom he would remain, the rock of Egypt, until the longed-for line of British troops appeared in view, or doom come.

"What we went through with during those months Heaven alone knows. Day after day we fought the black dervishes of the desert, and thousands laid down their lives in front of Khartoum's walls. Now it was a sally; anon an attack. We might have won on a certain occasion but for the treachery of certain leaders. Gordon tried them later and all were shot. He would not stand insubordination.

Thus months passed. We endured all that can come during the pestilential senson from July, when the city was in-

(To be Continued.)

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