

THE BLACK STONE

that this most interesting experience was over? The same dull round of the prosaic, the useless and the commonplace, could he ever go back to them now? The thought of Trust Companies and Boards of Directors palled him terribly. He wouldn't go back. There must be something else, some other work that he could do for Northby Pasha or some one else, to help vanquish the race of perverted supermen of which Conrad von Hengel had been so typical, so conspicuous an example.

And so riding with rather dejected mien he reached Damghah. The launch was at the beach and Hoagland was waiting. He invited Sadi Abdullah aboard that the money might be paid to him. But the Sherif shook his head and spoke to Daoud.

"Here upon the sands, Effendi, if it pleases you. Tell them to bring what was promised."

Alan understood and gave the orders to Hoagland with a laugh. But the captain showed a horrified expression.

"Three camel loads! My God, Mr. Jessup. Those damn things can carry a ton."

"Hardly," said the owner thoughtfully, "but Daoud promised. We wouldn't be here if it hadn't been for Abdullah."

"Three tons of gold! Don't do it, sir. They'll only begin fighting for it among themselves."

"I don't really need it, Hoagland. And I brought it for this purpose, you know."

"Come now, sir," whispered the Captain. "Our new guns command this beach. We can sweep it as clean as the palm of your hand. Just come aboard the launch, you and Mr. Daoud."

"No," broke in Alan wearily. "No more bloodshed. Bring three chests of the gold ashore, at once if you please, Hoagland."