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*To Harry H. Kreamer,
— From Cousin Erast. —
Chicago, Christmas 1894.*

THE FALLEN RACE.

BY

AUSTYN GRANVILLE,

AUTHOR OF

"THE SHADOW OF SHAME," "THE LEGEND OF
KAARA," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY OPIE READ.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE artistic success of a story, whatever that may mean, does not necessarily depend upon the tediousness with which the story is told. A book can be excellent and also interesting. Of late, however, a number of people pretend to believe that dullness in fiction is a great virtue, that weariness of detail is the essence of truth and that a broad spread of colorless words argues the genius of the writer thereof; and there may be a reason for believing this, but I haven't been able to find it. Syndicated letters sent from a community where the flowers are odorless, point out the mission which fiction should take upon itself. An obscure mission is never a very useful one, and the aim of fiction must be shadowy if it stands in need of explanation. But it has no such need. Mankind is better for having seen a master's painting or the sculptured fancy of a creative mind; and the novel with no apparent aim—with nothing but its own art, is an educator. Men who have euphemized themselves into a state of calculating morality

are perhaps to be addressed solely by the intellect, but the people are moved by emotion. The critic, sitting on his cool roost, cawed and cackled at Haggard's "She"—declared it a wanton impossibility. And "The Tempest" might so be declared, while the record of a police court might be affirmed as an absolute truth. Truth is not always divine. A hog is truth—a grunting and marauding truth—but the hog is hardly so inspiring as that "grievous" piece of fiction, "Prospero." The facts of the ancient world are obscure; the fancies, bright. Mere fact is an amateur photographer, snapping his machine; imagination is a painter. But we are told that the day for colors is gone; that we must have black and white. The day for absurd romanticism is gone, but the day for the good story will never pass away. The human family will always be a nursery, amused by tales. We have quite enough of hard thinking. Life at best is a struggle, and in the breathing spell between two strong endeavors, we seek amusement. And the book that brings us this amusement has accomplished as high a mission as the philosopher who has shown us an easier way to live.

In "The Fallen Race," my friend Mr. Aus-

tyn Granville tells an interesting story; and he tells it well. The scene is laid in a country with which he is familiar; and his characters are vigorous men and women. But no depravity is slyly insinuated, nor is a frowning lesson, sloughing the scales of a worn-out moral, seized and flung into the tale.

But few Australian romances have been published here, not because there is no interest attaching to that country, but because so few writers have made a study of the Bushman's Continent. Mr. Granville spent a number of years there; and with the trained observation of a practiced writer, he gathered the material and received the impressions which he now sets forth in this pleasing book. The presentation of a new race of human beings always abounds in interest. Some of the greatest writers have given their strongest forces to this class of imaginative work, and nearly always with success. In "The Fallen Race" we have a new species, differing from any that hitherto have been presented; and there is a skill in the treatment of them that suggests the actual discoveries of a traveler rather than the wild children of a writer's fancy.

OPIE READ.

PROLOGUE.

It was 3 o'clock on the 21st day of December in the year of grace, 1888.

The white stone of the pavements over which what little breeze there was blew the fine dust of the streets in stifling clouds, reflected the intense heat with an insufferable glare. While the inhabitants of northern latitudes, wrapped in the warmest clothing, sought by every means in their power to keep up the circulation in their benumbed and half-frozen bodies, the citizens of Melbourne, Australia, were sweltering in a stifling atmosphere.

In one of the editorial rooms of the *Argus*, the principal newspaper of the great colony of Victoria, two individuals were seated in their shirt sleeves, vainly endeavoring to keep cool. In this endeavor one of them, evidently a visitor, seemed to be partially successful, when his comparatively composed demeanor was con-

trasted with that of the person with whom he was engaged in conversation.

This latter gentleman, no less a personage than the editor-in-chief of the great journal, had become so intensely interested in the conversation of his visitor that he was totally unconscious of the fact that he was seated directly in a streak of fierce sunshine, which, penetrating through a rent in the canvas awning before the window, fell with unbroken force upon his unprotected head.

As he sat thus facing his visitor, it was easy to see that the information which the other was imparting was of absorbing interest, for the editor's eyes were riveted upon those of his companion with a fixed expression, and his head was inclined to one side in an attitude of the strictest attention.

The gentleman who sat opposite, and who was thus coolly engrossing the time of the greatest newspaper magnate in the colony, was in many respects a remarkable personage. He appeared to be a man close upon forty years of age. His

most peculiar characteristic, you would have said, was that he had lost all capacity for surprise. You could have sworn that if the great gun at the Heads had suddenly walked up and discharged itself in the street below, Dr. Paul Gifford, for such was his name, would not have been in the least startled at the unusual occurrence.

A man of middle height, his clear blue eyes contrasting strangely with a skin tanned by exposure in all weathers to a deep brown, almost, indeed, an olive tint, he sat easily in his chair, his light coat of some alpaca material thrown over one arm, the other resting on the desk before him, on which a small map lay extended. This map, which was roughly executed in what appeared to be red ink, though the blood of some wild animal had in reality furnished the draftsman with his writing fluid, bore marks of frequent handling. They were marks such as might have been occasioned by a traveler taking it from his pocket for the purpose of frequent consultation, and the

sparks from some camp fire had fallen upon it and burned minute holes over the major portion of its surface. Its geographical limitations appeared to be indicated on the south by the southern portion of the Great Australian Bight, and to diverge as far north as the 22d degree of latitude, where, at the intersection of the 122d meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, its lines suddenly broke off, its northern boundary presenting an uncertain and wavering line of dots, as if the draftsman had been unable to penetrate further into that desolate region known to geographers as the Great Australian Desert.

To the west, however, a trail, denoted on the map by dotted lines, wound away in a slightly northerly direction, and an observer, glancing over the shoulder of the visitor, as he followed with a steady finger the course of this trail through what had been hitherto regarded as an impassable country, would have seen that it terminated at a point marked for the first time on any map as "Lake Anono."

The shore line of this lake, which was deeply indented with bays and inlets, could not have been less than 700 miles in extent, and toward one end of the lake the draftsman had again marked a small, narrow island as "Anono Island."

The hours wore away, and still Dr. Paul Gifford, pausing neither for rest nor refreshment, remained closeted with the editor of the *Argus*. It was not until the sun had sunk behind the house-tops, indeed, that it dawned upon the mind of the latter gentleman that his visitor must by that time be in need of both. With an air of exultant glee, as of one who triumphs over some hated rival, the editor hooked his arm within that of Dr. Paul Gifford and escorted him to his club, confident that he had secured in the person of the Doctor, a man, the recital of whose strange adventures in the columns of the *Argus*, would bring added renown to that enterprising and powerful journal.

All that night, in a secluded portion of the club, the indefatigable editor sat and scribbled,

taking down word for word, as they fell from the lips of the Doctor, sentences calculated to surprise the public of Melbourne when it should awaken in the morning. All night long messengers hurried between the club and the printing office of the newspaper, while busy men placarded the silent and deserted streets with mammoth posters fresh from the press, bearing the legend:

THE
STRANGE NARRATIVE

... OF ...

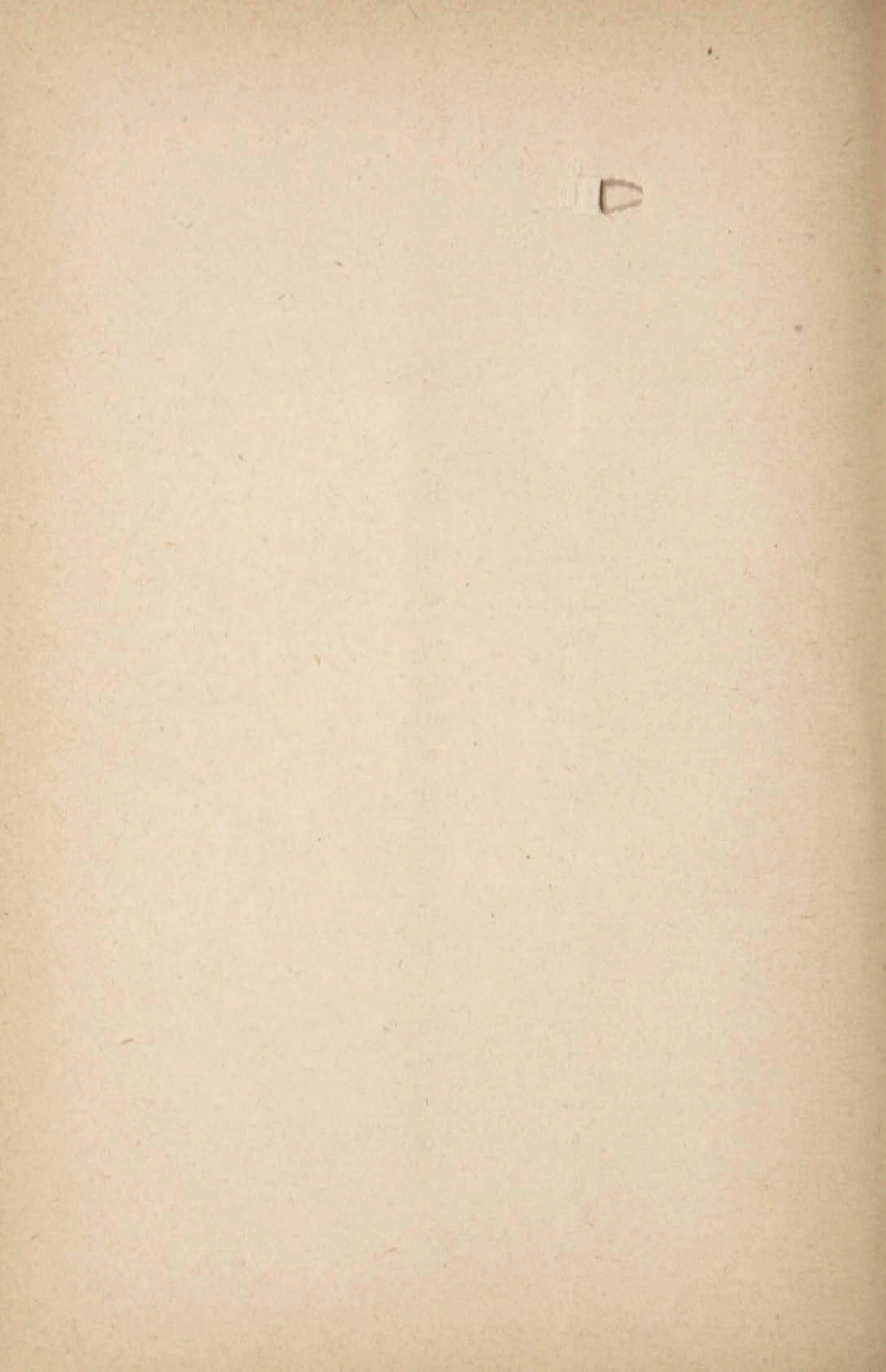
DR. PAUL GIFFORD,

The Long Lost Explorer,
The Discoverer of the Fabled
Fallen Race.

EXTRA SUPPLEMENT!

READ TO-DAY'S ARGUS!!

Every citizen of Melbourne who found that newspaper on his breakfast table next morning read therein substantially the same announcement in startling headlines, and thus gathered through that medium a verbatim account of Dr. Paul Gifford's remarkable adventures as it had fallen but a few short hours before fresh from the lips of the great traveler himself.



THE FALLEN RACE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE EXPEDITION.

MOST of the present generation will doubtless recollect the wave of apprehension which swept through the different colonies, and found an echo in the press of Europe and America, when, after an absence of some three years, it was at last reluctantly admitted by old travelers that the expedition which had set forth so hopefully on the 4th of May, 1874, under the able command of Lieutenant George H. Frisbee, must have succumbed to the hardships of the desert.

There was something inexpressibly pathetic in the thought, that, wait as they might through the long and dreary years, the chances were a thousand to one that none of those brave men

who had risked their all in the cause of scientific exploration would ever again return to gladden the eyes of those they loved.

The great colony of Victoria, under whose auspices the expedition had been promulgated, and whose citizens had so liberally subscribed to the undertaking, was deeply moved. In her principal cities, on an appointed day, solemnly set apart by the governor, the firing of minute guns and the display of flags at half-mast sufficiently attested the sentiment of her heterogeneous population.

On the 4th day of May, in the year of our Lord 1874, no braver sight could have been witnessed than that presented by Collins Street in the city of Melbourne, to which broad and spacious thoroughfare the people had thronged at an early hour to witness the departure of the Frisbee Expedition, bent upon solving the great problem of the hour: "What are the Interior Resources and Geographical features of the Center of Our Continent?" On the solution of this problem the greatest minds of the

country had been brought to bear. Funds had been lavishly subscribed, and it was sanguinely expected that from the lips of the able explorer to whom the command of the expedition had been entrusted, a solution to this hitherto unanswerable question would surely come.

The preliminary parade of our forces, previous to taking the train for Landridge, whence we were to embark for Port Augusta, in the colony of South Australia, was, of course, merely a sop to public opinion. We knew that half Melbourne would be there, curious to see with their own eyes what sort of men it was who thus could be persuaded to leave their comfortable homes and brave the dangers of the desert in the cause of science.

At the conclusion of a rather stormy voyage of a week's duration, the expedition landed at Port Augusta, where a halt was called for three days, and the finishing touches given to our arrangements, which were of the most complete character. I doubt if any expedition ever went forth better equipped than the Frisbee.

The party consisted of the able traveler after whom the expedition was named, Lieutenant George H. Frisbee, late of the Colonial Navy, two subordinate officers named respectively Wright and Young, an English baronet on a visit to the colonies, Sir Henry Winsted, an old and experienced traveler, who had contributed largely to the funds of the expedition, and myself, acting in the capacity of physician and surgeon. Our working force numbered, all told, twenty picked men, many of them old hands in the field. Forty strong horses carried the necessary provisions, blankets, weapons and ammunition; and when these were divided into packs, each pack did not weigh, on starting, to exceed 200 pounds.

Notwithstanding the completeness of our arrangements, and the fact that we were equipped with every aid that ingenuity could devise or money procure, it was not without many inward misgivings that our little party set out at daybreak one morning from Port Augusta, and, skirting the marshy land to the

north of that settlement, set our faces in the direction of the Flinders Range.

Thoughts of the fate of so many of our predecessors who had perished of hunger and thirst like poor Burke and Wills, or been lost in the impenetrable scrub like members of Sturt's party, would force themselves unbidden upon the mind; but as we ascended the hills, and breathed for the first time the pure air of the open country, this feeling of depression was succeeded by a sense of exhilaration. In the best of spirits we moved rapidly forward. Our course lay in a northeasterly direction along the Flinders Range, between which and the low-lying shores of Lake Torrens, it was known the country was fertile, and in this district several small streams running from the mountains to the lake bed would furnish us with water. Beyond this, two smaller lakes, named respectively, South and North Lake Eyre, after the famous explorer of that name, held out similar advantages.

Passing through the Owinia country, we

reached the head of this latter lake in good order, having been exactly three weeks in accomplishing the distance from Port Augusta. Here we called a halt of four days, some of the party suffering severely from dysentery, and the horses needing rest. The shores of this beautiful lake abounded with wild fowl, and Sir Henry Winsted, who, like all Englishmen, was an enthusiastic sportsman, and the crack shot of the expedition, kept our camp kettles well supplied.

It was upon one of these numerous hunting expeditions, which had extended for some little distance up the Barcoo River, that the Baronet returned one night, bringing into camp a native whom he had induced to accompany him. This native, whose name was Jacky-Jacky, had before had dealings with white people, understood some English, and had a fair knowledge of the country through which we proposed to take our course. While not engaged in camp duties, I retained this man in the capacity of body-servant. His endurance was wonder-

ful, and he would keep pace alongside my horse with untiring strides during the hottest portion of the day. From this fellow I acquired a fair smattering of native Australian, a language abounding with deep gutturals and strange whispers, but more easily acquired than one would at first credit, on account of the limited range of its vocabulary. This strange being subsequently developed two prominent characteristics—a great devotion to me personally and an unquenchable liking for camp whisky, of which, however, acting in the capacity of general commissary of stores, I took care he should have no more than was good for him.

Despite the unavoidable hardships of the march beneath the fierce Australian sun, the hours devoted to repose when gathering around our camp fire at night—men and officers, all discipline for the nonce being laid aside, exchanged yarns or engaged in general conversation—were not without their special charm. The utter freedom from the ordinary constraints

of civilization, the novelty of our situation, and the rough freedom of camp life, to men accustomed to roughing it in the bush, was a condition of things to be rather enjoyed than otherwise. Provisions and water were plenty, and no signs of sickness, save an occasional attack of dysentery, had appeared among the men. By slight detours, we had been able to avoid the roughest portions of the country, and our progress toward the center of the continent, up to within three months of our leaving Port Augusta, might have been termed fairly satisfactory.

We were now skirting along the banks of the Albenga. This river, which we had struck in a diagonal northwesterly course some 150 miles from the head of Lake Eyre, to the basin of which it was undoubtedly tributary, presented at this season of the year when we had thus far journeyed to its source, little more than a succession of stagnant pools. The evaporation in these heated regions is so enormous during the summer months, as to dwindle even

deep rivers to meager proportions. The rainy season, on the other hand, swells these intermittent pools, oftentimes, into terrific floods, inundating the country for miles around.

It was now the month of August, and the country upon which we had entered appeared to be suffering from a great drought. The pools in the bed of the Albenga became scarcer and scarcer, until frequently a day's march over the arid waste intervened between them. The character of the country, too, underwent a decided change. It became more rocky in its formation, and what vegetation there was was sparse and scanty. Despite our uttermost efforts, several of the horses perished for want of fodder. The remainder, with redoubled loads—for provisions must be carried at all hazards—staggered painfully along under the burning sun, the blackening tongues of the poor brutes lolling from their parched mouths sufficiently attesting their agonies of thirst.

CHAPTER II.

INTO THE DESERT.

ON the fifth day from our leaving our regular water supply, at the hour of fiercest heat, one of the weakest of the party gave out. Before sundown we had scooped a shallow grave in the sand to receive his body. This event cast a gloom over the entire expedition, and several of the men became mutinous and clamored for a return. Our leader, however, was determined to persevere. He argued that to go back would entail immense suffering, hardship and even loss of life. By continuing straight on through the desert, we must eventually arrive at fertile territory. The men grumbled, but they obeyed.

On the seventh day three more of the party were taken sick and died and five of the horses were used up and unable to proceed. The re-

mainder of the expedition plodded wearily along, the horses being lightened of all but the absolute necessities of life.

It was at noon of this day, when we were encamped for a brief space beneath a rocky escarpment, whose overhanging ledges afforded a refreshing shelter from the intense heat, but around the base of which we had vainly searched for water, that the gallant Frisbee drew me to one side. His face betokened the gravest anxiety, and his once stalwart frame appeared bowed with the weight of a great responsibility—that responsibility which devolved upon him as leader of the expedition.

“This is very serious, Doctor,” he said, speaking low, so that the men should not hear. “If we don’t find water within the next twenty-four hours it will go hard with us.”

I had had a scheme in my head for the past hour or two as I had sat under the rock looking out on the burning landscape, and I now unfolded it to Captain Frisbee. Many of the

party were so worn out as to be a great drag on the others. Still, there were among us many brave and seasoned men, whose marvelous physiques seemed to defy all hardship, and among them two or three capable upon an emergency like the present of making extraordinary exertions. If those of the party who were unable to proceed could be left in the present camp, under the shade of the ledge, these strong ones could push on with such of the animals as were fittest, find water, fill their water skins and return for the others.

After listening patiently to this plan, Captain Frisbee remained silent for a few moments, as one who revolves important matters in his mind, and then, somewhat to my surprise, said that he heartily approved it.

"The only question," said he, "is as to who is to stay here, and who is to go. Your place, of course, Doctor, is with the sick; my place, out there at the head of my men," pointing with a wasted finger in the direction of the burning desert.

The remainder of that day was passed in completing the necessary arrangements. The men were mustered under the shadow of the great rock, and Captain Frisbee personally inspected the entire party. Such as were deemed the best fitted to face the hardships of that awful march were selected, leaving behind the weaker and more emaciated. The same care was exercised in the selection of the horses. Such poor provisions as we had were divided with scrupulous impartiality, a little dried meat and a few pounds of flour to each man being all that remained. About twenty gallons of tepid water, and that reeking with impurities, constituted all our store of that precious element, so indispensable to the prolongation of existence in a climate where the thermometer stood during the major part of the twenty-four hours, as my own small but reliable glass attested, in the neighborhood of 110 degrees F. It was very important to divide this water properly. Men on the march would require nearly double *per capita*

than those left in camp. It was accordingly divided into three skins, the marching party taking two and we reserving one. The extremity of our position may be imagined, when it is remembered that in those sun-scorched plains a whole pint of water seems but a mouthful, and frequent draughts are necessary to keep the tongue and mouth moistened. Yet in camp we would be reduced to but two gills in every twenty-four hours, while those about to leave us would have only double that meager measure with which to allay their burning thirst.

Our little company had now been reduced by death to fourteen souls. Of these, six of the strongest had been selected for the march, leaving eight behind. Captain Frisbee, of course, assumed command of the outgoing expedition, while the camp was put for the time under my command. Among the number left behind were some malcontents. I requested that Jacky-Jacky be allowed to remain with me, as I knew I could rely upon him.

Captain Frisbee acceded to my request. Another man, James Nelson, was also of my party. I placed him in charge of the stores and water and saw that he was well armed. I was afraid that at any moment the men, rendered desperate by thirst, might suddenly rush on the water, or attempt in the dead of night to get at our little store of meat and flour, now rapidly dwindling, which was all that stood between us and absolute starvation. The mortality among the horses had been so great that but three were found capable of accompanying the expedition. Two left behind died that night in great agony, for want of water. One of these animals had been a great pet of Jacky-Jacky's, and the poor fellow's lamentations at the untimely fate of his favorite, beside which he had trotted so many weary miles, were quite painful to witness.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIEF EXPEDITION DEPARTS.

It was still dark the following morning when I felt a hand on my shoulder, and looking up found Captain Frisbee bending over me. I staggered painfully to my feet. It lacked yet an hour of daybreak.

"Shall I wake the men, Captain?" I asked.

"No, not yet, they are tired. Let them sleep another hour. I awoke you to say something of importance before we separate. Let us go out in front."

We walked a little way from the camp and seated ourselves upon a boulder. I glanced casually at Captain Frisbee. By the faint light there was, it struck me that he looked desperately worn and ill. Acting on the impulse of that impression, I urged him to let me take his place, but the brave officer would not listen to such a proposal.

"No, no, Gifford," he said, "my place is there," and he again indicated the line of the horizon to the northwest.

"Yes, poor fellow," I thought, "and your grave too," but I said nothing.

An hour later the first faint streaks of dawn were visible in the east. Within twenty minutes of the time when they were aroused, the five men who were to accompany Captain Frisbee on his perilous journey were ready for the march. Their three horses, which had been browsing during the night on the scant herbage which clothed the sloping side of the rock, now stood ready loaded with the two water skins and the provisions. It was at this moment that Captain Frisbee drew me a little to one side, and said:

"Good-bye, Gifford; God grant we get through all right; but if—" and his voice faltered a little despite his utmost efforts—"if we don't return in ten days at the farthest, you will know then it is all over. You have enough provisions and water left to last that

time if properly husbanded. If you see no signs of our party by then, my advice is to send out a second relief party to the northeast Finke Creek can not be far distant, and it seems to me there is a smell of water in that direction."

He wrung my hand, and with his farewell yet sounding in my ears, I saw him join the little cavalcade waiting for him at the foot of the rock.

Long and earnestly I gazed after the retreating party, as it wound in the glowing morning light slowly over the great plain. Gradually it grew less and less distinct, until, at last, a mere speck on the great landscape, it faded from view. Just before this happened, however, I raised my glass, and imagined I saw Captain Frisbee turn and wave a parting salute in the direction of the great rock where the rest of his comrades stood, and which must have been visible to him and his party long after they had faded from our sight. As I lowered my glass, a vague presentiment of the

fate awaiting this devoted man must have filled my mind. Though I did not know it for years afterward, mine were the last eyes that traced his course into the wilderness, the distant salute he gave me, his farewell to the world.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIGHT FOR LIFE.

THERE now remained in camp, beneath the shadow of the great rock, but eight forlorn and desolate creatures, the remnants of that well-equipped expedition which had so proudly marched down Collins Street, Melbourne, but four short months previously.

The awful thought would obtrude itself upon the mind: Would any of the party ever return to tell the tale?

For the next two days existence was uneventful enough. I endeavored to preserve something like discipline in our sadly depleted ranks. I made my usual round of the camp every morning and evening, and reported to myself the results of my own visits in the absence of my superior officer. I endeavored to keep the men cheerful and in as good health

as possible under the circumstances, but with the exception of Jacky-Jacky, who, being an aborigine, was as much at home in the desert as a white man in the city, they were a sick and sorry set of men. On the third day, one of them being seized with the black vomit, died. The fourth and fifth days each claimed victims. The little water we had now remaining had grown intolerably putrid and undrinkable. I tried straining it through sand, but the thirsty soil absorbed so much of the precious moisture that this plan had to be abandoned.

On the evening of the eighth day a fifth man succumbed, and the sun arose on the morning of the ninth on the festering corpses of our companions, which we, the hardly less fortunate survivors, had not the strength left to bury. All day long we anxiously strained our aching eyes across the hot and glowing desert, awaiting in vain the approach of that assistance which we knew Captain Frisbee, if he had succeeded in striking water, would surely send us.

At last, despair settled slowly down upon our little party, now consisting solely of the man James Nelson, Jacky-Jacky and myself. Our last horse had died the day before. The water was almost gone, and our provisions were reduced to a few pounds of sour flour. In our weakened state, our stomachs revolted at this dreadful mess, the burning landscape swam before our eyes, and death seemed about to claim the remnants of the ill-fated expedition.

Lying in the shadow of the great rock on the morning of the tenth day, I was tracing feebly the record of the last twenty-four hours in my diary. I had determined to place this, before the final moment came, in some conspicuous but sheltered spot, where, if the foot of a white man in future years should penetrate to those solitudes, it might tell of our fate. In it, at the request of poor Nelson, I now inscribed in a few words his simple but touching farewell to his family. He had left a wife and two children unprovided for in Melbourne. He was very feeble and evidently dying.

Jacky-Jacky, lying prone upon the earth, was endeavoring to forget the pangs of starvation in sleep.

Suddenly, as I lay there ruminating upon the past, the idea of dying thus in the prime of manhood, like a dog in the desert, shocked me inexpressibly. A voice within me seemed to say: "Arouse yourself; make one more fight for life!"

Up to that moment, I had succumbed to the inevitable. Now there was aroused within me a spirit of stubborn resistance. I sprang to my feet with an energy that surprised myself, and exclaimed aloud, in a kind of frenzy; "Go on; thou shalt not die! The beasts can live in the desert, and so canst thou. Be swift as the wild horse, as courageous as the mountain lion; bear hunger like the wolf, pass through the desert, and thou wilt be saved!"

Having finished this tirade, I looked around. Poor Jacky-Jacky was sitting up rubbing his eyes. He had been aroused from sleep to be confronted with a person whom he thought

had been driven crazy. But it was not so. It was simply an extraordinary instance of the exercise of will power. The mental man, in a gigantic struggle, had mastered the physical, and promised to keep the latter at bay with all his weak and fleshly requirements, at least for the time being.

I did not hesitate for a moment. For a wonder the day was cloudy and the heat less unendurable than usual. Calling Jacky-Jacky to me, I communicated to him my intention of at once setting out in the direction indicated by Captain Frisbee. Hastily bidding him to collect what water and provisions remained, I went over to awake Nelson. He was lying on his face, apparently asleep. I stooped over and shook him gently, but he paid no attention. With a heart filled with sad forebodings, I turned him on his back. The open and blackened mouth, the staring eyes, gazing into nothingness, told their tale but too plainly. Severed from my last white companion, I stood alone, save for the presence of the aborigine, lost in the wilderness.

CHAPTER V.

OUT OF THE DESERT.

How it came about that I, Paul Gifford, who am a small man, of a weakly constitution, and not much accustomed to the hardships of travel, should have been able to sustain myself at this critical moment of my life by the mere exercise of the powers of the will, and undertake with impunity to penetrate into that scorching desert, I shall, I suppose, never clearly comprehend. Let the fact, however, be recorded, for those who may care to read, that, having once determined not to lay down and die like unto a beast of the field, I did become, as it were, a new man, infused with fresh vigor and spirit, and feeling that I had put away earthly and physical hindrances of all sorts.

As I look back through the vista of years at my strange pilgrimage, wherein I was destined

to make such new and wonderful discoveries as hereinafter are unfolded, I cannot but consider myself as having been ordained, by some special dispensation, to work out this particular end and carry the blessings of civilization among a strange and barbarous species. It may be, that much wrought upon by the scenes of the previous weeks and the hardships which I had undergone, my mind had revolted unconsciously from the tyranny of the flesh, and in its condition of unusual exaltation sustained my sinking frame during those subsequent days, when, closely followed by my humble but faithful companion, I struck out boldly across the desert. Howbeit, that on the third day's march, during which I had made inconceivable progress, I was aroused from the waking trance, into which I had fallen, by a loud cry from my servant:

“*Noluli, noluli, Katanah!*” (“Water, water, my master!”)

Looking up, I beheld on the yet distant horizon unmistakable signs of a great body of

water. Yes, there it was, at last! There was the blue line of what appeared to be some vast inland lake stretching for miles away on every hand. Could it be Lake Amadeus? If so, one of Stuart's stations might be within easy reach and we should be saved.

As these thoughts surged through my brain, my mind, relieved in some measure from the frightful strain to which it had been subjected, refused to any longer sustain my exhausted frame. My brain reeled and my head swam around. Staggering feebly forward, I caught at a small tree, missed it, and uttering a faint cry and clutching blindly at the air, fell senseless upon the ground.

When I awoke again, it was sunset. The fever which had tormented my lips for so many days had vanished. My mouth was moist and cool, and a delightful sensation of rest and ease pervaded my whole body. At a little distance from me Jacky-Jacky was seated, leisurely devouring some succulent fruit, which, while it was new to me, was evidently good to

eat. When he saw that I was awake and apparently restored to health, the good-hearted fellow was nearly beside himself with joy.

"*Batah-batah, katanah. Huni-huni, vistel katambuh!*" ("Good, good, my master. Eat, eat. It will make you fat.")

Then, while I was sucking the fruit, I learned from the faithful fellow that I had fallen insensible; that he had dragged himself forward to the banks of a small stream which ran into the lake and had there drunk his fill. He had gathered some of the strange fruit and had eaten it, filled the canteen, and returning, had found me still insensible, though breathing. He had forced my lips open and poured water down my throat, little by little, for fear of choking me, and finally, I had recovered consciousness.

Overjoyed at my good fortune, I took some more of the fruit he offered and ate it greedily, nor did I experience any harm from it. It was small and round, and not unlike a pomegranate in flavor, but was of a

species entirely foreign to me. Jacky-Jacky had brought with him several clusters, and intimated that they grew in plenty. In my long tramp I had still retained possession of my flat, traveling medicine case. I now opened it, and took from it a small dose of pepsin, which I knew would counteract any ill effects which this foreign fruit might possibly have upon my empty stomach and depleted frame. Having done which, and gathered together some dry grasses to form my bed, I turned in beneath the shade of some bushes and was soon lost in a refreshing slumber.

It was broad daylight when I awoke. I was so stiff as to be hardly able to move, but I managed to drag myself, with the assistance of the aborigine, to the brink of the river, where a bath in the clear and limpid waters afforded me much refreshment. My limbs, which were badly swollen, were also much relieved by this treatment. We rested all this day by the river, eating freely of the small round fruit and drinking copiously of the water. Toward

evening, I again sank to sleep, and passed a comfortable and uneventful night, my mind, under the circumstances, being singularly free from care.

The next morning, being much stronger, I decided to push forward down the stream and reach the lake. Along the shores of this body of water I proposed to travel in a northwesterly direction. The thought then occurred to me that Captain Frisbee and his party might either have struck some river debouching into the lake, or perhaps the lake itself, in which latter case, if I followed the shore-line in their direction, I might be fortunate enough to fall in with that portion of the expedition again. I argued that the party must have surely struck some of the numerous streams which appeared at intervals of some miles to run into the lake, being then ignorant of the fact that their sources welled up in springs in oases not far distant. I knew that if Frisbee had struck water he would fill his water skins and make back trail to our relief. In the

face of the appearance of this vast body, I could not but believe that he had struck water somewhere; but if he had, why had ten days gone by without his return? Under no circumstances would I believe that he had abandoned us. No, he must have been delayed by the enfeebled condition of his men and horses; reached the camp at the foot of the great rock at last; found the bodies of the dead and discovered that Jacky-Jacky and myself were missing. Concluding that I had taken his advice and come due north, and knowing the trend of the lake shore, he would doubtless try to strike it by following the course I had pursued, thus overtaking me and marching on together to the lake. As I rapidly ran over these possibilities in my mind, I bitterly regretted that I had neglected to leave some sign of my course behind me when I left the camp. But it was no use crying over spilled milk. Finally, I decided that the best thing to do would be to remain where I was, and keep a sharp lookout along the lake shore.

So for the next two days the black and I turned in by the lake. The pomegranates (I call them that for want of a better name) proving rather monotonous, I set about devising means to catch some fish. This was not a very easy thing to do, as we were unprovided with two essentials to success, a hook and a line. However, I made out to twist together, with infinite care and pains, a line of sufficient length and strength from the black's hair, the head covering of these aborigines being not kinky and short as the African's, but long and coarse and of surprising thickness. So greatly did Jacky-Jacky's hair partake of this last quality, indeed, that though I pulled, no doubt, many hundreds of hairs from his head before I succeeded in getting my line, yet did his cranium appear to be as thickly covered as when I started, the only complaint he made being of a soreness of the scalp, at which I did not wonder. For a hook I turned up a common brass pin which I discovered stuck about my clothes, and by the aid of a small file on one of my surgical instruments I made a very tolerable barb.

The manufacture of this apparatus, crude as it was, occupied me all day. I had jokingly told Jacky-Jacky that I would pay for the loss of his hair by a good fish supper, but he was incredulous.

Cutting a long pole at the mouth of the river, I thus completed my equipment. Then I cast my eye around for bait. Fish there were in plenty. I could see them rising, now and then, and snapping at the flies on the surface of the water.

Flies! Of course, the very thing. My bait was swarming around me at that very moment.

Taking off my hat, I soon had half a dozen tempting ones in my possession. I put one on my hook and handed the remainder to Jacky-Jacky, who put them into his mouth, the only safe place of which he knew.

Carefully I stepped behind a clump of bushes, where a small rock jutting above the surface of the water broke the stream into gentle ripples, and cast my line. The big fly fell with a light plash upon the water, and drifted quietly downward. I was about to draw it up to repeat the

experiment, when there was a rush forward, a breaking of the surface of the water, a snap, a sudden check on the line and the placid surface of the pool was broken into spray, as the huge fish which had taken the bait rushed madly about in his endeavor to get free.

It was an exciting moment. The rod bent with the strain, but stood it bravely. I knew the big brass pin would hold. Our supper now depended entirely upon the strength of Jacky-Jacky's hair. If he had been a common mortal we would have had no fish that night, but as it was, the line being well twisted, defied the efforts of the fish to break it. Soon, tired out, I saw his body glittering only a few inches below the surface of the water. He made another frantic effort to break off, but I checked him. Slowly and carefully I drew him around into a small eddy. The line became entangled in some weeds. If he should struggle now we would lose him. But he was too exhausted. Carefully I descended the sloping bank, and stooped slowly over my prize. In another moment I had flung him, triumphantly, high and dry, on the top of the bank.

CHAPTER VI.

WE EAT FISH, AND I RECEIVE AN INSPIRATION.

No one but the unfortunate being who has been deprived of substantial food for a long period can have any idea of the delights of the meal which we now indulged in. Fire we had not, nor could we in our ravenous condition have waited long enough to make one, though Jacky-Jacky, like most of the aborigines, was skilled in the art of producing flame by the friction of sticks, a trick of which I have never yet seen a white man master, let him persevere even for hours.

It was enough for us now, that we had fish. There was plenty of him, too, for he must have weighed not less than four pounds, being of the salmon-trout variety, and proving, even when eaten in a raw state, a great delicacy to us in our famished condition. For my own part, I was careful not to overload my weak-

ened stomach, but I permitted Jacky-Jacky to gorge himself at will, as these blacks can fast or feast with impunity.

We breakfasted next morning on the remains of the salmon-trout, Jacky-Jacky making a fire for my especial benefit, but preferring to eat his own fish, as on the previous evening, raw. For the next three days we lay in camp, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Frisbee and his party. During this time we caught and dried in the sun a plentiful supply of fish, and I spent the intervening hours in endeavoring to patch up my clothes, which frequent contact with the scrub thorn had reduced to a very ragged condition. Jacky-Jacky devoted his leisure time to alternate surfeits of fish and basking in the shade of a huge gum tree, under which we had improvised our camp. It was a curious thing to watch him keeping in the shadow of the massive trunk, he rolling over in his sleep in the opposite direction to the course of the sun, so that from morning to evening in his endeavors to keep in the shade, he would complete half the circuit of the tree.

It now being fourteen days since the departure of Captain Frisbee from the camp at the great rock and there being no sign of his return, I decided to strike camp and proceed by easy marches along the shore of the lake in a northwesterly direction. This time, however, I took care to leave word for Frisbee, in case he should strike our last camp. Assisted by the black, I raised a cairn of stones about six feet high, and between two of the largest I placed a leaf of my diary, on which was recorded the history of my march from the rock and my probable future movements. This paper was carefully wrapped in several large leaves of the eucalyptus, in order to protect it from the weather.

The next morning we started early, Jacky-Jacky carrying the dried fish, and I bearing my instruments, medicines, papers, etc., and the precious fishing apparatus with which we trusted to replenish our present store of provision, when it should become exhausted, from the friendly waters of the lake.

During the long hours of our march, I had

ample opportunity to survey the coast line of this great body of water, which trended away upon either hand in an almost unbroken streak, save that here and there, at intervals, it appeared to be indented by some creek or inlet. The general character of the shore was high, and in parts it appeared to be thickly wooded. Looking out to sea, however (for no other term could properly be applied to this vast body of water), as far as the line of vision extended, nothing but an unbroken expanse met the eye. Judging by the slight general curvature presented by that portion of the shore along which our route extended, it seemed that this mighty inland ocean could not be less in extent than some of the great lakes of the North American continent.

Far from the habitations of man, it was with a feeling of strange and intense exaltation that I thus wandered along a shore, perhaps now, for the first time, echoing to the sound of human footsteps. Again that strange but strongly defined impression took hold upon my mind, that I was reserved for some great

discovery. With but remote chances of rescue before me, I was compelled to penetrate into this hitherto inaccessible region. By a special dispensation in my favor, I had been brought safely through a desert generally fatal to human life to this comparatively fertile and habitable country. My spirits rose as I contemplated the grandeur of the scenery, and reflected that through my exertions, perhaps, at no distant day, this vast and unexplored region of the Australian continent was to be opened to civilization and the world.

As the thought recurred to me, I was so overcome with emotion as to be unable to proceed. A strange desire possessed me to be entirely alone in that vast solitude. I bade Jacky-Jacky to continue one hour's journey along the coast, stating that I would join him later, having gone which distance (about four miles at our then rate of traveling), he was ordered to stop, light a fire and prepare our noonday meal. Though he hardly knew what to make of my apparently strange request, the poor black, as he invariably did, gave it im-

plicit obedience. For some minutes I stood and watched his retreating form as it slowly disappeared over a high bluff, and then, throwing myself down in the long grass, I allowed my day-dreams full scope.

My condition of mind at this period of my life was a peculiar one. I had seen, one by one, my late companions sink exhausted and die in the desert. Death itself had stared me in the face, and even now my own fate was uncertain. A ragged, homeless wanderer, in an unknown region, with, for aught I knew, mile upon mile of burning desert presenting an impassable barrier to my return to civilization and all that man holds dear, with loving friends far away, no doubt mourning me as one dead, I still felt most unaccountably happy. There are moments which come to some men, which in their intensity of either joy or pain, seem to embrace within the short scope of their existence an infinitude of rapture or misery. I believe that during the hour which elapsed before I resumed my journey, there was crowded into that brief space, in the extreme exaltation of

soul which I experienced, a rapture so transcendent and overpowering as to almost partake of paradisaical delights. If the choice had been freely offered me to go forward and explore that unknown land, unfitted as I then undoubtedly was to cope with its unforeseen and unexpected dangers, or to return with all the comfort and luxury that a modern railway could have afforded, if such could have miraculously found its terminus close beside me in that out-of-the-way place, I should have unhesitatingly decided upon the former course. As one in a trance, I rested my head on my arm and gazed out upon that vast expanse of water. I saw upon its mighty bosom the navies of a great people. Along its extensive shores I witnessed rising, as if by magic, the spires of teeming and prosperous cities; the hum of industry from a thousand streets was borne to me upon the freshening breeze; huge marts and palaces rose on every hand, and the sails of a great commerce whitened the offing. I heard the trees in the forest succumb to the cheery blows of the woodsman's axe, and where the wild

beast had lately sought its prey, the sturdy farmer, following his patient oxen at the plow, planted his feet in the fragrant furrows.

Elated, I arose from my seat, and turning my face in the direction in which the form of the black had disappeared an hour previously, I set sturdily forward to overtake him. Along the shore, by a sort of natural path, skirting the broad bay, I wandered on, the nature of the track now taking me to the top of some high bluff, where I could look down upon the waves flashing below me, and now descending by gentle gradients to the very edge of the lake. For over an hour did I thus pursue my way, when, ascending at last a slight eminence, the welcome sight of the smoke of a fire caused me to quicken my footsteps. From where I stood I could not see my servant, but I had no doubt but what the fire was his. I thought, however, that he had pitched his camp at an unnecessary distance from water. Five minutes' more walking brought me close to the spot. Making my way in the direction of the smoke through the bushes, I heralded my approach

by a prolonged "*Coey!*" that peculiar cry by which the Australian bushman discovers himself when lost in the scrub.

To my astonishment no answering call broke the silence of the forest. For a moment I remained in an attitude of hesitation, not moving forward or backward. It occurred to me that perhaps the poor fellow had met with an accident through some wild animal. An intense desire, however, to know the worst impelled me forward. Parting the bushes, I advanced cautiously until I came to the edge of the circle, within which the fire was burning. I was about to advance still further, when, glancing over to the fire, a sight met my gaze which instantaneously arrested my progress.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DISCOVERY OF A NEW RACE.

LOOKING from behind the leafy shelter of the bushes, my eyes fell, first upon the fire itself, and then upon three perfectly round objects, about four feet in height, covered with fur and looking like exaggerated hedgehogs. As I gazed on them, my first idea was that I was suffering from some strange hallucination brought about by long fasting and the sufferings I had undergone in the desert. Some moments, indeed, elapsed, before I would allow myself to believe that what I saw was not some strange creation of the brain, conjured up by a diseased imagination. Little by little, however, I regained possession of my senses, and an intense curiosity got the better of me.

Shifting a little way to the right, and cautiously creeping through the underbrush, I approached still nearer to these strange objects,



THE DOCTOR'S DISCOVERY.

and from this second and better coigne of vantage was enabled to note, with some degree of particularity, their general appearance.

The three circular animals, for such they appeared to be, seemed to be basking in the heat of the fire, on which their small, oblong and very human eyes, placed about eight inches above the center of the body, appeared to be fixed with an air of weird fascination. Every now and then one of these animals would roll over a little nearer to the blaze, and stretching forth two diminutive, fur-covered paws, would feel the heat upon its palms for a moment, withdraw them and roll back again into its former position. Another, in its turn, would then repeat this performance, and it seemed as if the three of them would never tire of thus testing the warmth of the element. To say that I was paralyzed with astonishment, would but faintly convey my condition of mind at this moment; but I was destined to receive, a moment later, an even greater shock. To my intense surprise, when these animals had thus warmed themselves for, perhaps, the

twentieth time in the manner thus described, the middle one opened what I took to be its mouth, and uttered in a low, but so distinct a tone that it reached me plainly, the words:

"*Chailoo, chailoo!*" ("Warm, warm!") the words, as I knew, being in the aboriginal dialect.

"*Etchee, etchee!*" ("Yes, yes!"), responded the creature on either side of the one which had just spoken.

There could be no doubt about it. I was among a new race, remarkable and outlandish in their physical structure, to be sure, but possessing, undoubtedly, some human characteristics, and among them the gift of speech.

Just at this moment, while I stood contemplating the scene before me, a small bandicoot issued forth from the bush, on the side opposite to where these creatures sat, and commenced nibbling some fresh grass at the foot of a gum tree.

Almost before one could have spoken, each of these creatures lifted a short pair of ears, opened their eyes with an expression of sur-

prise and delight quite human, and one, uttering a short, sharp cry, rolled itself with inconceivable velocity in pursuit of the bandicoot. The little animal turned to flee, but short as was the distance which intervened between the foot of the gum tree and the shelter of the bush, it could not escape. With lightning rapidity, the huge ball whirled itself in a succession of gigantic bounds through the air; there was a snapping of the shining white teeth, a sudden snatching of the hairy paws, and whirling around on its base, the creature held the little bandicoot aloft in triumph. Turning over on its side and holding its prey firmly in its short arms, it again put forth its remarkable gyrating powers, and with a dozen rapid turns of its body rejoined its comrades. The strength with which it had grasped its prey must have been enormous, for, notwithstanding its return journey had occupied but a few seconds, I noticed that when it released its grasp from the bandicoot, the little animal had ceased to live.

CHAPTER VIII.

ATTACKED BY THE NONDESCRIPTS.

ALL this time I was wondering as to the whereabouts of Jacky-Jacky. I felt reasonably certain, from the action of these creatures, that, half human as they undoubtedly were, they were ignorant of the uses of fire. The curiosity with which they gathered around the blazing sticks, on a day when the thermometer must have stood at not less than 90 degrees F. in the shade, was enough to materially strengthen this opinion; and it was shortly confirmed, when, a few moments later, I saw them strip the hide from the bandicoot and eat him raw, smacking their uncouth lips and licking their paws with their long prehensile tongues with evident relish. Certainly, then, the fire had not originated with them. It was most unlikely that other footsteps than our own had penetrated into that inaccessible and unknown

region. I had not lit it. Ergo, it must have been Jacky-Jacky. I began to be fearful that he had fallen a prey to and had been devoured by these nondescripts; and I shuddered as I contemplated the possibility of my also falling into their power. On looking around, however, I was somewhat reassured by observing no signs of any struggle having taken place. No human bones, nor debris of any sort was strewn upon the short grass, which undoubtedly would have been the case had they been feasting on my poor servant; and I now surmised that he must have become alarmed at the noise of the unwieldy bodies of the animals approaching him through the bush and that he was in hiding somewhere not far off. The thought occurred to me, that he might have trekked back up the lake shore, on purpose to intercept and warn me, and that in some way we had missed each other.

Preparing at this moment to retreat, with the intention of regaining the shore of the lake, I trod upon a dry stick. Yielding to the weight I imposed upon it, it snapped in

two with a sharp noise. Instantly I observed signs of uneasiness on the part of the circular creatures. Pricking up their little hairy ears, they listened intently for a few moments, wheeling their bodies around in the direction from which the sound proceeded.

From my hiding place I could hear them conversing in low but harsh whispers. Suddenly, the largest of the three, the one who had displayed such remarkable activity in the capture of the bandicoot, rolled rapidly away from the others, and approached with great speed in my direction. His sharp eyes had detected a slight displacement in the bushes where I stood, and he had evidently made up his mind to investigate the cause. Retreat was impossible. Before I could make a single step backward, his apparently unwieldy form rolled before me, and his brown eyes were looking steadfastly into my own with an expression of mingled anger and alarm scintillating in their liquid depths.

It was at this moment, while in reality trembling in the utmost fear of my life, that I

was most sensible that my safety depended on my preserving perfect coolness. Without waiting for the creature to advance further, I determined on taking the initiative. Striding boldly forward within the circle, I passed slightly to one side of the animal, and before it could recover from its astonishment at the strange sight of a human form, I dashed straight for the fire, seized a burning stick in my hands, and turning, faced my foes.

The two creatures who had remained by the fire, startled by the sudden apparition, involuntarily retreated. The leader, however, having by this time recovered somewhat from his first surprise, now advanced slowly and hesitatingly, uttering, from time to time, short, porcine grunts, rolling with a spiral movement in front of me, and evidently waiting for an opportunity to spring. Retreating a few revolutions, it cast a wicked look upon me, and then rushed forward with the rapidity of lightning. Watchful of its slightest movement, I bounded on one side, and the creature, missing its prey, landed in the midst of

the glowing embers, scattering them to the right and left.

There was a smell of burned hair, followed by the discordant cries of the creature who had thus leapt into the fire, which were not only expressive of pain, but unbounded astonishment, thus confirming my original belief that these animals were strangers to this element.

Amid the noise and confusion the three of them made, I was able to distinguish distinctly several words in the aboriginal tribal tongue, though the language employed among these queer creatures differed materially from that used by any natives with whom I had been thrown in contact, having softer and less harsh terminations.

The three nondescripts had now retreated to a little distance, and the burned one, sitting up between the other two, gave vent occasionally to grunts of uneasiness. The other two, while talking rapidly, were evidently endeavoring to assuage the suffering of their comrade, licking his wounds with their long prehensile tongues, and smoothing his ruffled fur with their little, hairy paws.

Having, evidently, nothing to fear from them at present, I now regarded these peculiar creatures a little more closely, and was able more particularly to note the unique appearance which they presented. The largest of the three, which I took to be a male, stood about four feet six inches in height. His body presented an almost complete sphere, and was thickly covered with coarse, short hair, which was of a brown color in those parts which the fire had not singed. He was totally devoid of any sign of neck or head, save where a ring of fur, slightly darker than that which covered the rest of his body, surrounded his mouth, eyes and other organs. His two companions, whom I conjectured to be females, were not so large by nearly one-third. The texture of the hair which covered their bodies was finer and longer, though the general character of their anatomical construction did not differ greatly from that of the larger animal. Their eyes, too, as they were turned in what I thought was a reproachful manner upon me, lacked the fierce and hostile expression of the animal who had made the attack.

Presently, after what was apparently a hurried conversation between the three, the smaller female, a curious little animal with bright eyes that twinkled on the surface of her beautifully marked body with an expression half curious, half timid, advanced slowly toward me. I was so taken with the humor of the situation, that being still near the fire which I had hastily raked together, and having a good sized stick in my hand with which to defend myself if needs be, I yielded to the impulse of the moment and raised my ragged cap to the creature in a bantering way, exclaiming in the native dialect, "Good morning."

Hardly had I uttered these words, than to my intense astonishment the little creature echoed back my salutation, and in a dialect not unlike that in which I had addressed her, distinctly repeated the words: "Good morning."

It now became apparent to me that the best thing I could do was to make overtures of peace and friendship. The fire was dying out behind me, and I did not have the means at hand to replenish it. The big male was

still sitting up and glaring at me rather savagely as he licked his wounds with his long tongue. It dawned upon me that when the fire went out I should be at the mercy of this strange trio. Mustering what knowledge I had of the aboriginal dialect, I thus essayed to speak:

“What does the person who is round want of me? Does she wish for knowledge? The great fire king, who burns his foes with tortures most painful, can give it to her. Does she desire to triumph in war? The fire king can teach her. Speak, O strange creature, and tell thy wants. The mighty fire king can satisfy them.”

Before I had finished this boshy harangue, which was delivered in my most stilted style, and in a manner best calculated to impress my barbarous audience, the other female, hearing the sound of a voice not unlike her own, had timidly approached, although the old bull still kept at a respectful distance. These two females, now whispering together, cast upon me looks in which curiosity and reverence

struggled for the mastery. Presently, one of them, seeing that I made no hostile movement, advanced cautiously, rolling over and over slowly, until within a few feet of me.

I have no doubt but that we should have soon come to a very pleasant understanding, but, unfortunately, at this moment, just when I was evidently inspiring confidence, I experienced a most unaccountable desire to sneeze. Control my features as I might, I could feel that dreadful titillating sensation in my nostrils, presaging the approach of what my friends in Melbourne used to facetiously term "the loudest sneeze in the colony." When I sneeze, I will not deny it, I do sneeze. There is nothing half-hearted about it. The smallest female had just opened her mouth, no doubt to make some friendly remark, when to my horror, that awful sneeze went off like a cannon. I doubt if it had been a cannon, and loaded with grape and canister at that, whether it could have produced a greater sensation. Recollect too, that these creatures had never heard, in all probability, such a peculiar noise emanating

from a living being before. I learned, subsequently, that they took it as a sign of tremendous anger on the part of the fire god, as I had styled myself. Helter-skelter, end over end, and whirling with the rapidity of balls propelled from some gigantic catapult, the two females disappeared into the bush, and the old male, clasping his little hands across his fat person and uttering a piercing yell, swiftly following their example, in a moment the three were lost to sight.

After waiting a few minutes to see whether they would return, I bethought me of endeavoring to entice them back by the use of the "coey, coey," that peculiar cry which is general throughout the whole of Australia, and by means of which men lost in the bush are frequently enabled to discover each other's whereabouts.

At first, softly, and then louder, I gave vent to a prolonged cry, but it brought no response. Not a sign of the strange creatures! There I was, left alone, standing in the circle by the now extinct embers of the fire, with the half-burned brand in my hand.

Suddenly, away off to the right I heard a faint cry. "Coey, coey," it came on the light breeze. I turned around. The cry was from the direction of the lake. I answered it; I called at the top of my voice and waited.

"Coey, coey," again came the answer. In a few minutes I heard the bushes parting, and to my intense delight Jacky-Jacky stood before me once again.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ANONOS ARRIVE IN FORCE.

ONE must be in the wilderness, far away from friends and home, surrounded by dangers, exposed to hardships and threatened momentarily by a thousand and one freaks of fortune, to appreciate the feelings with which I contemplated the black visage of my aboriginal servant as it appeared cautiously gazing through the bushes in my direction. That my sentiments of joy were shared by my humble follower was evident from the fact that no sooner did he see me than, breaking from his leafy cover, he rushed forward, manifesting by every action the extreme delight with which he again found his master.

On questioning him closely I discovered that my previous surmises were correct. He had left me sitting in solitary reflection on the lake shore and had pursued his way in the direction

ordered for about an hour, at the conclusion of which time he had halted to light the fire and prepare a meal, as I had directed him. He had intended lighting his fire on the lake shore, but there being no wood close at hand he had penetrated into the bush and discovered the open glade in which we then stood. He had there lit his fire, taking the spot to be, as indeed it was, an excellent place in which to pitch a camp, and having no doubt but that the smoke would attract my attention sufficiently to enable me to make out his whereabouts. He had hardly procured his flame, however, before he was startled by the noise of what he conceived to be some large beast of prey breaking through the bush in his direction, and, becoming frightened, he had beat a hasty retreat. So dense was the bush into which he had been compelled to penetrate, that for a brief period he had been unable to regain the lake shore. All this time he had been in an agony of fear that I would see the smoke of the fire, make for camp and fall into the clutches of the animals by which he himself had been

so alarmed. Making the most desperate efforts, therefore, he had forced his way through the thickly-matted scrub and gained the beach. Anxiously he had cast his eyes along this beach and even climbed the high bluff without a sight of me rewarding his efforts. Undeterred by this circumstance, however, the faithful fellow had pursued his search for some time, running now rapidly along the shore, and now plunging into the bush, and giving vent occasionally to loud cries, with which he endeavored to attract my attention. These, however, in the tumult and excitement of what was passing within the circle of the camp, had been unnoticed by me, and he was about to abandon his search in despair, when suddenly my voice had echoed through the trees in a series of prolonged signals.

As this faithful fellow now stood before me, his eyes glistening with emotion, the recollection of the many hardships we had shared together, and of the undaunted bravery with which he had faced them, all came vividly before me. For the first time in our acquaint-

ance I began to regard Jacky-Jacky not alone in-the light of an humble camp follower, and as one who, being of a despised race, was infinitely beneath me; but standing there, face to face with him, equipped beyond question with all the best characteristics of manhood, I regarded him as fully the equal of any white comrade. I am not ashamed to record that, overcome with my emotions, I then and there stretched out my hand, and though Jacky-Jacky would have resisted the impulse, I would have it, and, seizing his palm in mine, I shook it warmly.

"Jacky-Jacky," I said, "you are a brave man and a good friend. If ever we return to civilization and it pleases God to rescue us from the bush I will greatly reward you."

The brave fellow shrugged his shoulders with almost a Frenchman's gesticulation, and though he said but little, after the manner of his race, I know that he highly appreciated this expression of friendship on my part.

I then detailed to my companion the events which had occurred since I had struck the

camp, and great was his astonishment when I described to him the appearance of the strange creatures which I had discovered around the camp fire which he had lit. Although positively certain that no living eye but mine had ever beheld one solitary specimen of this remarkable race, I was not satisfied until I had closely questioned Jacky-Jacky, who had been a great traveler, in regard to his knowledge of the existence of such creatures. Finding that he had not in his own remarkable wanderings with former expeditions and among the peoples of his own tribe ever caught a glimpse of such an animal as I attempted to describe, I questioned him yet still further as to whether there existed among his or neighboring tribes any tradition in regard to the existence of the non-descripts, but without eliciting a particle of information in return. No, he had never heard of such creatures, and if he did not believe implicitly every word that his white friend had uttered, and were not the scattered embers of the fire around the camp some evidence of the truth of the tale, and had he not been disturbed

himself by their approach, he would have imagined that I was dreaming, or suffering, perhaps, from some hallucination of the mind brought on by hardship and exposure. When, however, I had assured him of the correctness of these things and convinced him unmistakably of the truth of my assertion, and furthermore assured him that I had heard them converse in his own language, the wonder of this shrewd yet simple man grew beyond bounds. He became intensely interested. The fire of a strange enthusiasm illuminated his fine face, and now he, grasping my hand as a token of fresh allegiance and as one who by reason of his physical superiority and native training was fitted to lead the way, boldly volunteered to follow in the tracks of the retreating animals and solve the mystery.

"But, Jacky-Jacky," I said, "let us rest a little, rebuild our fire and cook food, for I am hungry and weary, and it is not well for a white man to travel in the heat of the day. When the sun is lower in the heavens let us take the track, and then I am with you for good or for ill."

Yielding to the force of argument and seeing that I had become unduly excited beyond my strength, the demeanor of the aborigine sensibly changed.

From the ardent zealot, inspired with the hope of a great discovery in natural history, he became again the humble, submissive companion to whom I had only to express the slightest wish for it to become law.

"The master is right," he said. "We will rest awhile. We both need it."

I sank down on a bunch of soft grass to meditate upon the occurrences of the morning, while Jacky-Jacky busily engaged himself in raking together the scattered embers of the fire and in preparing the meal which had been so strangely interrupted.

Soon, on a series of sharp skewers, planted in the ground at even distances from each other, he had placed small portions of the fish which we had dried in the old camp. Disappearing into the woods, he shortly returned with two or three curious looking roots, having scraped and prepared which, he cooked as an

addition to our repast by baking them in the glowing embers.

From the clear waters of the lake he then brought, in our canteens, a plentiful supply of fresh water, and, rubbing his hands together with evident satisfaction, he announced that our meal was ready.

It was at the conclusion of this repast when, in a strangely languid frame of mind, I had stretched myself under the shade of a large gum tree, and Jacky-Jacky, imitating my example, was curled up fast asleep not far away, that to my half-unconscious ear a strange, crackling sound was borne upon the light breeze, which, coming from the direction of the lake, tempered in some degree the fierceness of the midday heat.

The bush in these parts is never so quiet but that slight noises are to be heard at all times. In the moonlight stillness flying opossums may be seen hurtling through the air; the native cats and carnivorous marsupials, variously marked and spotted, dwell among the rocks and in holes; the ant-eater, of about

the size of a squirrel, with beautiful white stripes and a long and bushy tail, prowls about in the thick places; the platypus, frequenting the lagoons and marshes, plunges along on its short legs and broad web feet; and various noises of all kinds are so frequent in their occurrence, as to generally attract but little attention.

There was something, however, in the prolonged, cracking sound which now came to my ear, as of many bushes being trampled down by the approach of feet, which aroused me instantly from my dormant condition to an attitude of wakefulness. If I had been in India, I should have accounted for it by saying that a herd of elephants was passing not far away, so prodigious was the concussion on the tympanum of the ear; but being in Australia, where animals of no such dimensions are found, I was at a loss to conjecture what it might be.

I sat up and listened intently. Should I awake Jacky-Jacky? Perhaps his long acquaintance with the bush would enable him to solve the mystery. I looked over to where he

lay, snugly curled up fast asleep. The thought that in a few hours he would again be upon the march, having, perhaps, to do most of the work in breaking our way through the bush, restrained me from arousing him. No, I would let the poor fellow sleep on.

Rising, I walked across the circle, and pursuing for a short distance into the scrub a narrow natural path, I listened intently to the noises which had aroused me. Could it be that some vast herd of animals, such as the kangaroo or wombat, could be moving past us in a southerly direction? I had heard in former days strange stories of the marvelous fecundity of the large marsupials of Australia, which, though thinned out near the coast by the ravages of man, were reported to exist in immense droves in the interior of the continent. I knew that these animals, in the summer time, at that period when the rivers, dried up by the extraordinary evaporation, no longer afforded them a sufficient supply of drinking water, were wont to move in vast numbers to fresh territory; but this sound, as of an approaching

army of creatures, seemed to come from and not to move in the direction of the lake, toward which a herd short of water would naturally be going. It seemed to me, too, that as I listened in wonder to the increasing volume, that it was less concentrated in one direction than when my attention had been first attracted to it. It appeared to be spreading now more to the right, now more to the left of us, until from every side there seemed to arise the sound of breaking branches in the ample undergrowth.

Now, for the first time, being seriously alarmed, I rapidly retraced my steps to the camp, only to find my companion, whose quick ear had detected the approaching disturbance even in his deep sleep, alert and wide awake. A look of concern was on his face; hurriedly he joined me, and together we consulted as to the best means to secure our safety.

My first thought was to climb a tree, but a single glance at the smooth stems of the surrounding eucalypti showed that they afforded but little foothold even to an expert climber;

and that while Jacky-Jacky might have succeeded in reaching their lower branches and thus concealing himself in the foliage, I must inevitably be left below.

And now the marvelous native ingenuity of the aborigine, when thrown upon his own resources, came to the fore. No sooner had I abandoned this plan of retreat in despair, than the black immediately proceeded to avail himself of the materials with which nature had provided him, and in a few moments had overcome the apparently insurmountable obstacle of climbing a smooth trunk not less than nine feet in circumference, and about twenty feet in height. Wrenching from its parent stem a small native vine or creeper, apparently frail and not above the thickness of an ordinary lead pencil, but in reality as tough as green hide and as pliable as whip-cord, he hastily twisted it, passed it around the trunk of the gigantic gum tree next to us, encircling within its folds, at the same time, his own body, so that the huge body of this monarch of the forest and the slight form of the black remained encom-

passed by the same circle. Securing the ends of this vine together with a dexterously turned knot, he twisted them in a peculiar manner so as to insure their not slipping. Then, leaning back against the vine and bracing his weight against the trunk of the tree, he commenced the ascent, slowly at first, in order to test the strength of his girdle, and then faster and faster, until with greater celerity than I could have credited, by shunting the girdle up and up, clasping the while the smooth trunk with his naked legs, he accomplished the whole of the seemingly impassable distance between the earth and the lower branch of the tree. In another moment, Jacky-Jacky had disappeared from sight in the shade of the dense foliage.

Before I could fully realize his intentions, he had slipped out of the circle, and soon it glided down the smooth trunk to my feet. Imitating his movements as closely as possible, I now placed the girdle around my own body, and slowly, and with much difficulty, commenced the ascent of the huge gum tree.

But what had appeared to be an easy feat

for the agile aborigine, to me, unaccustomed to such exercise, proved a task of almost insurmountable difficulty. I was compelled frequently to pause and take rest, bracing myself back against the girdle, which, however, bore the strain famously.

I was about six feet from the branch when the noise of the approaching herd of animals which had been growing louder and louder with every passing moment, told me that they would soon break into the clearing. I was so exhausted as to be unable to proceed much further without assistance. I shouted loudly to Jacky-Jacky, whose face I could now distinguish on the lower branch some six feet above me. The poor fellow, his features wearing an expression of the most intense anxiety, leaned far over and encouraged me to put forward my best efforts. I was about fourteen feet from the ground. I knew that if the approaching herd of animals should prove to be of a large marsupial species, like the kangaroo, that any one of them could easily leap to my present position; that I should be torn down and instantly stripped to pieces by their terrible forepaws.

Gathering all my strength, I put forth my uttermost exertions to reach the lower bough. Jacky-Jacky reaching down his hand was about to seize my uplifted arm, when the train of wild creatures broke into the circle. I heard them coming, but I did not see them, for a dizzy feeling was upon me.

“Up, up,” called the black, as he now swung dependent from the limb by one hand and leg, and reaching down clutched me by the ragged collar of my shirt. It was a desperate situation. Arousing all my energies, I put forth superhuman efforts. Jacky-Jacky, pulling manfully upon my collar, materially assisted me, and the next moment I found myself seated beside him, panting, but safe, on the lower limb of the gum tree.

CHAPTER X.

OUR SURRENDER IS DEMANDED.

BEING then a matter of twenty feet from the ground, and deeming ourselves well out of reach, we looked down upon the remarkable scene below us with feelings in which astonishment, fully as much as alarm and apprehension, was blended. Peering out from the sheltering branches of the gum tree, we now perceived rolling toward us with the steady gait of a large body of troops, vast masses of creatures, in nature precisely the same as our three late visitors, with the exception that they appeared to be all males, as I could see by the character of the stiff, bristling fur with which their bodies were clothed, and which is so marked a characteristic of the male kangaroo. Nor could I indeed, detect among them a single glimpse of one whose soft, sleek fur and general attributes might proclaim her to be of the gentler sex.

There could now have been within the precincts of the circle, which was at least a hundred yards across, no less than several thousands of these creatures closely packed together; but with such precision were their ranks formed, that I at once perceived that they acted under the leadership of a single mind.

Outside of the circle we could still hear the approach of further reinforcements as they rolled through the bush on their way to join their comrades; while from all sides the numerous scouts which had been thrown out to circumvent and surround us began to come in toward the center body.

In a state of complete bewilderment, Jacky-Jacky, brave man as he was, was so frightened by this formidable array of animals, that I believe that he would have fallen from the tree had I not held him up. I recollected then that this was his first sight of these curious and ferocious looking beings, whose huge, muscular bodies and wiry, though short arms, and whose rows of grinning teeth must have appeared extremely formidable and menacing

when seen for the first time in such numbers.

The degree of apprehension with which I viewed them, too, perhaps, was partially overcome because of the scientific interest which I took in their anatomical construction and general appearance, which of course could not be shared in the same degree by the poor black.

We now perceived an opening through the ranks of the animals, and glancing along, we beheld what was apparently an aged specimen of their race advancing at a deliberate and dignified rate down the pathway thus made for him.

As this old fellow wheeled along at this slow pace, I saw that he was received everywhere with evidences of profound respect; and from this, and from the fact that he halted to give certain orders from time to time, I conjectured that he must be the commander-in-chief of this army. This remarkable looking specimen of the race could not have stood less than five feet high from the ground, but age had turned his fur to a pure

white, and when he opened his mouth to give his order to those who were evidently his lieutenants in command, I noticed that several of his front teeth were missing.

While I fell to conjecturing the probable age of this extraordinary animal, and lost in admiration of the knowledge of military tactics which he displayed as he wheeled his men hither and thither within the confined limits of the circle, I did not fail to note that our presence had, as yet, not been discovered. This was due, no doubt, to the deep foliage of the tree in which we had taken shelter. Unfortunately, at this moment, the girdle by which we had ascended, and which had hitherto hung dependent by a single inequality on the bark, slipped from its insecure hold and fell with a slight noise to the foot of the tree. The animals, being closely packed within the circle, had been pressed over against the roots of the tree where we lay concealed, and the girdle, slipping down the trunk and making a slight noise in its descent, immediately attracted the attention of one of

them. Raising his eyes, he gave vent to a whistling sound, so prolonged, so fierce, and at the same time so humanly expressive of astonishment, that I was overcome with amazement.

Instantly two of the body-guard of the old chief rolled rapidly to the spot. The creature which had first discovered us raised its arm and pointed with its little hairy paw to the place where we sat.

"We are lost!" exclaimed poor Jacky-Jacky in a low whisper to me.

"No, we are not," I replied, endeavoring to reassure him; "see how far we are from the ground. Those awkward things can never climb this smooth trunk."

"It is no matter," replied Jacky-Jacky in a doleful voice, "nothing can save us. I now know what these creatures are."

He then proceeded to tell me what had before escaped his memory, of a certain lost tribe of aborigines, who many ages ago had wandered back into the interior of the continent and had never been heard from again. The center of

Australia at that time had been largely overrun by that enormous marsupial, the kangaroo. With these creatures the lost Assuloo tribe was supposed to have assimilated, they being a very low and degraded race, living chiefly on roots, and being in a very small degree removed from the brute creation. He related now the traditions which from time to time had been handed down in his tribe respecting the product of this strange union, and as I gazed upon the curiously formed creatures before us, and marked the almost human intelligence with which they performed the duties assigned them by their leader, I had little difficulty in tracing in their uncouth features some distinct characteristics of the early aborigine, while in their fur-covered bodies, the general activity of their movements, the half leaps with which they moved, although circularly, from place to place, the distinguishing features of that gigantic marsupial, the Central Australian kangaroo, were plainly to be discerned.

Yes, I knew then the prodigious thing which

it was my lot to witness. I was in the midst of the fabled Fallen Race, which rumor had for years accredited with an existence in the very center of the Australian continent. I remembered my grandfather saying that when he was quite a youth a single member of this lost aboriginal tribe had come into the settlements, saying that all his people in the interior had been massacred by a vast herd of kangaroos; but he had been laughed at as a madman and had died shortly after from the results of his exposure and the hardships of the desert. It was said he was the last of his race.

As I gazed upon the extraordinary spectacle before me, my imagination conjured up the terrible scenes which must have taken place on the day when the Assoluloos were attacked by the fierce marsupials. It must have been a wholesale massacre of men, women and children—no, the women had been reserved for a more dreadful fate. It had been a brute rape of the Sabines with more than Latin ferocity and mercilessness—the extermination of the fathers, brothers and husbands of the enforced female captives.

Weird, inconceivable, but doubtless an incontestible, fact.

My brain whirled with the horror of the thing.

It was like a hideous nightmare.

While I was engaged in making these observations, the old chief with his two lieutenants had been gazing up quietly in our direction, and now not more than twenty feet intervened between us.

This veteran, speaking to the creature on his right, addressed him for a few moments in a low tone and then called up to us, in the uncouth tribal dialect so common among the aborigines, to come down.

"Answer him," said I to Jacky-Jacky, "and ask him what guaranty of safety we shall have if we surrender."

Jacky-Jacky put the question.

"He says he will give his word we shall not be harmed."

"That won't do," I replied, "the moment we come down, they will make mincemeat of us. We had better stay where we are. Tell

him we will not come down, without some better guaranty of safety than that."

Thereupon Jacky-Jacky, who was, of course, more an adept in the aboriginal tongue than I was, held a lengthy palaver with the old chief.

"He says," said Jacky-Jacky, when, after a long talk, they had evidently arrived at no understanding "that he will keep his army here until we are compelled to come down by hunger. That if we can stand it, he can. They have their pouches well stored with food. See," and he pointed over to the ranks of the army, where the command having been evidently given, the creatures were now taking from a pouch which had hitherto escaped my notice, and which was cunningly constructed by nature beneath their breasts, different kinds of fruits and roots, with which they proceeded to regale themselves with evident relish. This was also a signal for the old chief and his two lieutenants to partake of food, and for about fifteen minutes the beggars sat directly under our tree and proceeded in like manner to enjoy themselves.

This concluded, the old chief again entered into conversation with us.

Finally he said:

"Time is precious with us, O stranger. I must return with the army of the White Queen very shortly to the city of Anono. My orders are to bring you to the presence of the Queen alive and unharmed, although you have ventured into her territory uninvited. You will do better to trust me than to incur the enmity of our soldiers. I can not wait any longer. If you do not quietly go with me, I will at once set a regiment at work to dig up the tree."

This short speech was delivered in so earnest a manner, and the old chief so evidently meant business, that had I been alone, I would unhesitatingly have surrendered myself, especially seeing that sooner or later I should be unable to retain my cramped position on the bough, and should be compelled to come down. There was something honest, too, in his straightforward manner of speaking, which made me inclined to trust him. This course I should have at once pursued, had it not been for the evident terror of poor Jacky-Jacky. He being not altogether unaccustomed to sleeping in trees

and able to go without food for days at a time by simply tightening his waist-band, took a different view of the situation. In accents of terror, he implored me not to leave him, declaring that these creatures would soon get tired and go away, and suggesting that perhaps, under cover of darkness, we could steal down the trunk, make our way through the sleeping ranks of the army and escape into the woods.

We did not then know, of course, of the peculiar faculty which these animals possessed of seeing equally as well in the dark as in the light, nor that they were capable of continuing without sleep for days at a time, without experiencing the slightest inconvenience.

Yielding, however, to his entreaties, I bade him return a refusal to the old chief's demand, which he did with much gesticulation, after the manner of his race, defying him to do his worst.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FELLING OF THE TREE.

ON hearing this ultimatum, the old chief turned around and rolling over on his side addressed his two companions in tones which were inaudible.

The effect of what he said, however, soon became apparent. The two lieutenants, passing rapidly along the ranks of the army, selected from their number over one hundred of the largest and most powerful of the soldiers, and brought them in a body to the foot of the tree. We soon saw for what object this contingent had been summoned.

In the most skillful and masterly manner, the lieutenants then marshaled their forces around the tree, and at a given signal they formed in a series of complete and unbroken circles, numbering twenty-five in each circle, about the trunk. The nearest circle at once com-

menced digging about the roots of the tree with their little hairy paws and long prehensile tongues, throwing the dirt on one side and working, so to speak, shoulder to shoulder.

At the expiration of about five minutes, a large trench had been dug about two feet deep. Out of this trench the first twenty-five now rolled back, and the next rank, advancing, took their places, and while the others were resting continued in like manner to widen and deepen the trench, they in their turn being succeeded by the third twenty-five, and they in their turn, being followed by the last twenty-five of the one hundred sappers who had thus been brought up to fell the tree.

I could not, amid the growing apprehension with which I witnessed this extraordinary excavation being carried on, conceal the admiration which I felt for the ingenuity displayed. Utterly oblivious of personal danger, I now became so absorbed in the work that I forgot for the moment that its object was my own destruction. Not so, however, with the black. As with every relay of sappers the foundations

of the tree began to be sensibly undermined, he became terror-stricken. His teeth chattered in his head. His eyes rolled from side to side and he clung convulsively to the limb whereon we sat; and as again fresh ranks of the creatures took their positions in the trench, the tree swayed slightly from side to side, the officer in command uttered a shrill, warning cry, and the sappers dispersed in all directions. There was a grating sound as of breaking roots and parting fibres. Top-heavy with its weight of leaves, the gigantic eucalyptus swayed for a moment in the freshening breeze; convulsively we clung to the bough; we had barely time to save ourselves by hastily sliding down the smooth trunk, when, with a loud crash, the whole fabric, yielding to the pressure which the sappers brought to bear on one side of it, fell thundering to the ground.

CHAPTER XII.

WE ARE TAKEN PRISONERS.

HARDLY had our feet touched the ground before we found ourselves surrounded and made prisoners.

Strange to say, however, contrary to our expectations, not the slightest harm was offered us, and beyond the temporary restraint upon our liberty, we suffered no inconvenience.

While this was in the highest degree reassuring to me, it had directly the opposite effect upon my companion, who informed me in low tones that we were evidently reserved for the pot.

I, however, who had kept a close watch upon the movements of our captors and now marked the gentle demeanor which characterized their treatment of us, had no apprehension on this score. On the contrary, they were evidently desirous of treating us with consideration.

When he had recovered somewhat from the excitement which the novelty of his position had wrought in him, Jacky-Jacky also came gradually to this opinion, and its correctness was later confirmed when the old chief, approaching within the circle of our captors, in a commanding tone ordered them to fall back and leave us more room. This maneuver they executed apparently with some reluctance, taking but one revolution and then sitting upright again and evidently regarding us with looks of intense curiosity.

The old chief, with a manner not devoid of a certain uncouth courtesy, bade us to be seated on the grass beside him and his two lieutenants. Wondering what next would happen, we accordingly did so, and waited for him to begin the conversation, which he presently did as follows:

“Great white stranger,” he began, “and you of form identical but color most extraordinary, know that I am sent by Azuela, the Great White Queen of Anono, of whom I am the chief counselor, and of whose armies the captain, to bring

you to her presence. Be not alarmed for your safety, for see all these," waving his hand in the direction of his army, "obey my will and the will of the Great White Queen whose dominions lie within the land of Anono, and who holds her court in the city of the same name."

He paused, and passing his paw deferentially in front of his wide mouth, with a slight inclination of his rotund body, he intimated that he was prepared to listen to our reply.

Although from my slight acquaintance with the language of the aborigines, I was able only to catch the general purport of the captain's speech, it now became evident that their intentions were of a peaceful nature.

Jacky-Jacky, who had expected no less a fate than to be slaughtered with dreadful tortures, or reserved as a special tidbit for the chief's table, however, having been able to follow what he said almost word for word, now suffered a broad grin to spread over his countenance, and turning to me, remarked that by my leave he would act as interpreter between us if I had anything to say in reply.

Thereupon I informed the chief, through the medium of Jacky-Jacky, that we came from the land of a great white people, very powerful, makers of fire and thunder, who could command the skies and who would visit any violence shown our persons with terrible punishment and tortures.

The chief evidently received this announcement with some incredulity.

“Many, many moons have I passed in the land of the Anonos, and save the great tribe of leaping Amakus, no enemy has as yet been sufficiently powerful to set themselves up against the armies of the Great White Queen. Nevertheless, O white one, do I esteem thy intentions as honorable and peaceful, and do give thee assurance that whilst thou dwellest with us, no harm shall happen unto thee or thy companion, the man of dark skin and straight fur.”

Here the old chief leaned forward and passed his little paw curiously over the head covering of Jacky-Jacky, examining its texture with much apparent curiosity and delight.

All this time the army, keeping at a respectful distance, in accordance with the commands of their chief, also regarded us with looks of most intense curiosity, and from the rapid exchange of words between them, I could see that we were the objects of ceaseless comment among the soldiers.

Turning now to the chief, I bade Jacky-Jacky inform him that we would be willing to accompany him to the presence of the White Queen, to whom we were anxious to pay our respects, and should look to him for security while within her dominions.

The old chief then stated that he proposed to set out within half an hour for the city of Anono, and on inquiring the distance, found that the city was distant about five thousand revolutions—the form of measurement in vogue among the Anonos, and the same corresponding to our yards, only that the circumference of one of these creatures being at least twelve feet, I calculated the distance to be not less than twenty thousand yards, or roughly speaking, twelve miles, having discovered which,

I signified my willingness to the chief to accompany him whenever he chose to take his departure.

Half an hour had scarcely elapsed before the old fellow, summoning his two lieutenants, directed them to put the army in motion, and to commence their homeward march, he stating briefly that he would bring up the rear at some little distance.

And now I was afforded an excellent opportunity to view the movements of these extraordinary creatures as they filed past me quietly. Yielding implicit obedience to the commands of their leaders, who passed up and down the lines, giving their commands in shrill and piercing tones, they defiled rank by rank from the little glade in a northerly direction. The old chief, rolling gently before us through the bush, led us to the summit of a high bluff, from which position I was able to see the maneuvers of the homeward-bound army. Moving at a pace which could not have been less than ten miles an hour, this vast body of fur balls, for such they appeared to be to my un-

accustomed eye, rolled past the bluff with military precision, wheeling to avoid unexpected obstacles, at the command of their officers, and sweeping in a resistless mass through the dense underbrush.

So rapidly did this army move, indeed, that, though they must have numbered ten thousand and they were but twelve abreast, but a few minutes had elapsed before the end of the line defiling from the forest came in sight, and descending from the bluff, the old chief, Jacky-Jacky, and myself, took up our position in their rear.

I soon found out that, notwithstanding, by reason of this vast body passing over it, the natural inequalities of the road had been somewhat smoothed and straightened, it was yet impossible for either Jacky-Jacky or myself to keep up with the advance of the main army. While we were stepping one yard, the old chief by a single revolution of his immense frame would cover four times the distance, and thus kept Jacky-Jacky and I on the run to such an extent, in our endeavors to keep up with him, that the perspiration broke out from every pore,

and it was only with extreme difficulty that we were enabled to keep the main body in sight.

Presently, being utterly exhausted by the unwonted exertion, I came to a halt, and explained to the old chief, who was as cool as when we started, that we were unable to go at such a pace. I had some little difficulty at first in explaining the reason why, but the intelligent creature at length became satisfied that the structure of man would not allow him to cover ground at the same pace as a ball, rolling almost of its own volition, and capable, no doubt, of attaining enormous speed. Indeed, the facility of movement exhibited by the creature I had first seen, in the chase after the bandicoot, convinced me, that if occasion required, these wonderful animals were capable of flying over the surface of the earth at a rate which would soon leave behind the fastest racer.

Seeing that we were quite unable to travel at the pace set, the old chief accommodated himself to us in so far as to roll over very slowly, and even then we had to maintain a very brisk

walk in order to keep up with him. In consequence of this diminished speed, the army was soon entirely out of sight, but we had no difficulty, of course, in following their trail, beaten down as the bushes were by the thousands which had preceded us.

While thus journeying side by side with the old chief, I took occasion to interrogate him in regard to the city which we were approaching, and more particularly in regard to his mistress, the Great White Queen.

It was then, for the first time, that he informed me that she was a creature much the same as myself, of white skin, and long fur on the head, the same as my own. She was a being, not dark like Jacky-Jacky, but of very fair complexion. I gathered also, from what he said, that she was good, rich and powerful.

How a white woman, for such I conjectured from the chief's description the Queen must be, could have ever penetrated into that remote region, I was at a loss to conceive. In a few hours, however, at the most, I should be able to learn all these things, and suppressing my curiosity

as well as I could, I bent my best energies toward covering the distance which intervened between us and the city of Anono.

CHAPTER XIII.

WE ENTER THE CITY OF ANONO.

It was along toward sundown, when the fierce heat of the day had given place to a refreshing coolness, that we ascended a gentle eminence on the shores of the lake.

From this point a wide view of the country was visible. Fagged out, I had toiled after the old chief to the top of the hill, he being a few yards in advance, when on my arrival at the summit I found him sitting up, complacently gazing toward the northeast. Bidding me approach, he raised one paw and pointed seaward. Following with my eye the direction indicated, I was rewarded by a remarkable sight. I saw that we had been following, for the last hour, behind the bluffs, which had heretofore hidden the lake from our view, the shore of a long and narrow island, which, jutting out into the lake, approached so closely to the mainland

that not more than two hundred yards of clear water intervened between it and the shore. In the center of this island lay what I took to be a large city, around which fortifications of some miles in extent had been erected, and seemingly embracing within its confines the habitations of the Anonos.

As I looked more closely upon this strange aggregation of dwellings, I perceived for the first time that they were constructed after the manner of huge barracks on the outside of the city, while in the center of the town a series of rudely constructed dwellings, irregular in form, but having generally the appearance of streets, were plainly to be seen. In the immediate center was what I took to be a citadel, standing upon a slight eminence.

While I stood gazing in astonishment at this remarkable sight, the voice of the old chief broke upon my ear:

"O, white stranger, thou now beholdest the city of the Anonos. Yonder fortress is the residence of the Great White Queen," and he indicated with his little hairy paw the citadel I had before noticed.

“What say you, shall we go thither, or will you rest here a while, and listen further?”

It did not at first seem very plain to me how we were to reach the island, there being nearly two hundred yards of deep water intervening between it and the main land. How the Anonos accomplished the feat, however, was presently explained to me by the chief, as he stated that they had passed over an hour ago, by swimming, and were now comfortably settled in their barracks in the city.

I hastened to explain to the old chief, that, though Jacky-Jacky was a good swimmer, I was not myself much at home in the water, and that if I attempted to cross to the island I should in all human probability be swept away by the current and drowned.

That I failed to make him comprehend this, however, was evident, and I did not wonder at it later when, descending to the shore of the lake, the old chief, wishing to cleanse his fur of the dust which had accumulated in it during our travels, rolled out upon the lake, which sustained his body without permitting it to

sink more than a few inches below the surface, at once assuring me that the slight specific gravity of these creatures and their circular form made the water almost as much their natural element as the land.

When, after a little more travel we arrived on the point at the main land directly opposite the gates of the city, I cast about in my mind for some means by which I might go over without swimming, and fortunately espying some driftwood in a little inlet, with Jacky-Jacky's assistance, I proceeded to form a raft by binding some pieces together with vines and withes gathered on the lake shore. Carrying then in our hands two short pieces of driftwood to serve as paddles, we seated ourselves on our rude craft, and, preceded by the old chief, who floated like a cork on the surface of the water, we set out in the direction of the island.

It was really comical, as we thus paddled along, to observe the old gentleman as he rolled over and over in the water. As he performed this operation, as on the land, on his side, and as the buoyancy of his body did not suffer him

to sink very far below the surface, his mouth and eyes were at all times out of the water. The pace he made, apparently without much exertion, was astonishing. Whatever strange power of propulsion his peculiar anatomical construction might afford him, it was here exhibited in a remarkable degree. I could not see that he used his paws in any way, but rolled over and over, as a boy would do on the grass, simply by an apparent effort of will. But if the aquatic feats of the old chief were a matter of wonderment to us, no doubt the strange spectacle of two creatures, abnormally developed in the matter of arms and legs and possessed of heads and necks, thus seated on a raft and propelling themselves along the surface of the water, must have been a wonderful sight to him. Every now and then he would sit bolt upright on the surface of the lake and stare at us until his little eyes blinked again and again, uttering from time to time ejaculations of astonishment, and then rolling over on his side, as if he gave the problem up in despair, he would resume his journey.

After a few minutes' hard paddling against the somewhat heavy current that set around the point of the island, we succeeded in landing our raft a few yards below the point from which we had started, and carefully hauling it up on to the low beach in case we should need it in the future, I announced our readiness to enter the city.

As we approached the fortifications I saw that they were fringed with a long line of Anonos of all sizes, from the little Anono, not over a foot in height, and evidently not yet attained to its full growth, to the fully fledged animal, watchful lest its careless offspring should roll from the battlements.

Passing through the main entrance in the fortifications, we entered the city, and advanced between long lines of these creatures in the direction of the citadel. To this building, however, the old chief informed me he would not conduct us until he had had an audience with the Queen and that for that night we would be lodged in his own residence.

Turning rapidly to the right, he proceeded

in a southeasterly direction for a couple of hundred yards, and soon halted before a large house constructed, unlike the more common habitations (which were simply shanties of willows) of stone and clay, the materials having been selected with greater care than that given to ordinary dwellings, and presenting a not altogether uninhabitable appearance.

The entrance to this dwelling consisted of a large, round hole in the center of one wall, into which the old chief easily rolled, but to obtain entrance through which both Jacky-Jacky and I were compelled to stoop considerably.

By the scant light which penetrated through a small aperture in the opposite wall, I perceived that the interior of the dwelling was entirely devoid of furniture of any description. A round hole in one corner of the apartment, scantily covered with leaves and dried grass, denoted the spot where the old chief was accustomed to sleep. At the further end of the apartment a raised dais of dried mud, having circular indentations cut in its side to admit the protuberance of the body, in-

dicated the spot upon which he took his meals and where we would be invited to partake of our refreshment. This the old chief now spread before us, it consisting of such sustenance as his simple larder afforded. To this Jacky-Jacky, who was not unaccustomed to the aboriginal mode of living, was enabled to do some justice, while I contented myself by eating a small portion of the fish which I had brought along with me, and which, with my case of surgical instruments and my canteen, had constituted my sole baggage upon the march.

Night came, and soon, thoroughly worn out with the varied events and fatigues of the day, I expressed a wish for the repose my exhausted condition so loudly called for. No sooner had I done this, than acting under the instructions of my host, two Anonos entered, carrying in their pouches large bundles of dried grass, forming a very comfortable couch on which to pass the night.

On these, I in one corner and Jacky-Jacky in another, stretched our weary frames. Soon, notwithstanding the novelty of the

situation, overcome by fatigue, I had sunk into a deep slumber, to dream of the White Queen to whom we were to be presented the next day, and to wonder whom she would prove to be.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GREAT WHITE QUEEN.

THE sun was already high in the heavens when I awoke the following morning. The bright rays streamed in through the little aperture in the side of the house, partially illuminating the interior of the apartment in which we had passed the night, but the round hole which served in lieu of a doorway appeared to be obstructed from the outside by a large rock which had been evidently rolled against it to prevent our egress.

Rising to my feet, I gazed around. Jacky-Jacky, curled up on his grassy bed, still remained wrapped in profound slumber. Conscious of the hardships and fatigues which he had lately experienced, I forbore awaking him, and for the next few minutes I stood ruminating on the strange position in which fortune had placed me and listening to the ster-

torous breathings of my faithful companion. Outside I could hear the sound of voices, and listening intently at the opening, I fancied I could distinguish the rumbling sound occasioned by the passage of large bodies of Anonos along the street. Whilst I was thus standing, listening, two small, black and hairy paws were suddenly inserted between the stone and the entrance of the building, and presently it was swung back as on a pivot, and the burly form of the old chief rolled through the opening. He was followed by two animals of somewhat smaller dimensions, very dark in color, and with very little fur on their hides. These, rolling up to the low dais, and opening their pouches, took therefrom a supply of food. This they deposited on the dais, and without uttering a word, rolled slowly back through the doorway.

The old chief now invited both myself and Jacky-Jacky, who was by this time awake, to come forward and break our fast, an opportunity we were not slow to avail ourselves of, as we were both hungry. The morning meal

thus provided for us differed somewhat in character from that of which we had partaken on the previous evening—a species of dried flesh, from what animal I was then unable to conjecture, being served not unappetizingly on a broad leaf. Different kinds of luscious fruits, one with a long and yellow skin, and tasting not unlike the banana, were also spread before us. Refreshed by the long night of uninterrupted repose, the first which we had spent under any kind of a roof since leaving the camp at the Great Rock, both Jacky-Jacky and myself ate and enjoyed the food thus set before us, at the conclusion of which, in reply to a question from the old chief, I announced that we were in readiness to proceed to the presence of the White Queen, whom he informed us was awaiting our arrival at the citadel. Before going thither, however, I was desirous of appearing to the best advantage. I asked for water and the old chief, though somewhat astonished at such a request, thereupon summoned one who was evidently a body-servant, and trusting him with my canteen, di-

rected him to fill the same with water from the lake. Placing the canteen carefully in his pouch, the little animal disappeared through the doorway, and in an incredibly short space of time returned with it full of water. With this I now proceeded to bathe my face and hands, and taking from my case of instruments a pocket comb which I had cherished with tender solicitude during all my travels, I proceeded, as well as I could without a mirror, to render myself presentable. My beard, which was matted and tangled and grown to an inordinate length, I combed carefully out and put in order. With the aid of a small pair of scissors, I bade Jacky-Jacky reduce my hair, which had grown to an unbecoming length, to decent proportions. My boots I had long ago cast aside as useless, their tattered condition making them more of an impediment than an assistance in my travels, and my ragged pantaloons, shamefully torn in the lower portion of the leg, I cut off entirely to the knee. Hatless and almost shirtless, I no doubt presented a sorry enough looking object,

but totally ignorant of the use of clothes as they were, my ragged garments yet attracted much curiosity and admiration from the loungers about the door of the building, as, following the chief through the hole by which we had entered the night before, I passed out and once more stood in the sunlight.

As we proceeded along the broad and well-beaten path, flanked on either side by dwellings of the same description as that in which we had passed the night, I was enabled to take a more detailed survey of our surroundings. We were evidently in the midst of a city of no mean proportions, and the constant passing to and fro of large bodies of Anonos engaged in various occupations, spoke eloquently as to the density of the population. On every side of us exclamations of astonishment fell from the lips of these creatures as we moved slowly along, the old chief rolling in front of us and leading the way at a pace suited to our comparatively slow method of procedure. Soon we turned to the right and entered the large square, in the center of which, raised on a slight emi-

nence, we saw the citadel. This really remarkable building was circular in form, and I estimated roughly that it would cover nearly three acres. The whole was surrounded by a broad and lofty wall, on the surface of which several Anonos were posted, evidently as sentinels. The stone of which these walls was built appeared to have been selected with great care, being more uniform in size and presenting a neater appearance than that of any structure which I had yet seen.

Passing through a large aperture, where several Anonos stood on guard, the old chief led us within the confines of the citadel.

"You are now," said the old chief, addressing himself to me through the medium of Jacky-Jacky, "in the outer court of the palace of the White Queen. You must stay here for a few moments while I go inside and announce your arrival."

Having said this the old fellow, turning to the right, disappeared through yet another aperture. In a few minutes he returned, and following his guidance, we passed along the path in the direction he had before taken.

On entering this last passage-way I noticed for the first time that it was of a height sufficient to admit the passage of a human being without stooping, a circumstance which struck me the more forcibly from the hints which the old chief had permitted, from time to time, to fall from his lips on our way up to the citadel; and with a strange feeling at my heart, it flashed across me that it might prove that the White Queen, the ruler of this wonderful race, would turn out to be a woman after our own likeness. If it were so, by what extraordinary chain of events had she been led into these remote fastnesses? To what race or tribe did she belong? Was she old or young? Was she black or white? The latter, probably, judging from her title. All these thoughts flashed rapidly through my brain as we walked forward. She must surely be a wonderful personage to have thus obtained control of this savage race, which showed their appreciation of a superior intellect by appointing her their ruler.

We had now reached the low, square door,

before which a curtain, curiously contrived of matted fibers, was waving gently to and fro in the breeze that came up the passage. Bidding us remain where we were for a few moments, the old chief gently rolled through the opening, and though I seized the opportunity to glance into the interior of the apartment, my designs were immediately frustrated by the curtain falling back again into its original position.

While my curiosity now became excited to the utmost degree, still there was no help for it but to wait until the return of the old chief. Soon, however, I heard his voice, apparently announcing our arrival to some person inside the apartment.

I listened breathlessly, and heard a sweet voice, evidently of one not greatly advanced in years, musical in its utterance, the words being enunciated with remarkable distinctness. Involuntarily I glanced over my shoulder to where the startled gaze of the black met my own.

Almost at the same moment, the words sprang to our lips:

“It is a young woman!”

The next instant the curtain was pushed gently on one side, and we entered the presence of the Great White Queen.

CHAPTER XV.

AZUELA, QUEEN OF THE ANONOS.

IT was some few minutes after our entrance into the large apartment which constituted the throne-room of the Queen of the Anonos, before our eyes became sufficiently accustomed to the subdued light to enable us to comprehend what was going on before us. After a little time, however, I made out at the further end of the apartment a female figure reclining not ungracefully upon a dais, raised three or four feet from the ground, and accessible by a flight of low, broad steps, which, roughly hewn and strangely carven as they were, were partially covered by mats woven of the same curious fiber with which the curtain or portière, which gave entrance to the apartment, was constructed.

Surrounding this extraordinary being, who, isolated, as it were, from her own race by the

hand of fate, now queened it, in half-civilized, half-barbaric fashion over the inhabitants of Anono, were grouped in various attitudes several of the nondescripts, who, from their more serious air and the gravity of their demeanor, I rightly judged to be those who acted in the capacity of counselors to the Queen.

Acting under a hint from the old chief Ohoho, I approached to the lower step of the dais, and looking up just as the White Queen raised her eyes to mine, a thrill of sympathy seemed to pass between us.

My eyes having become accustomed to the subdued light, I looked curiously upon her and saw a woman of not over twenty years of age, as well as I could judge from her reclining position, of tall stature and bearing about her, notwithstanding the rude method and arrangement of her apparel, the unmistakable signs of natural refinement and womanliness, which I can define better, perhaps, by saying that she appeared to be inherently well bred.

Her long, dark hair was carefully arranged in thick and glossy braids upon her well-

formed head, and her skin, of a pure whiteness, betokened the utmost care and attention to personal cleanliness.

When she spoke, which she presently did, to one evidently in attendance behind her, her voice was low and tuneful, and yet carried with it, as in all her presence and bearing, the majesty of one born to rule.

During all this time I had remained standing, a mute spectator of a scene as strange as it was interesting, knowing how the destinies of a numerous race were swayed by the superior intellect of one woman, evidently of Caucasian origin, as in obedience to her mandates messengers now entered, now passed from the audience chamber with general directions in regard to military and civic affairs.

Soon, however, the business of the day appeared to be concluded. Then she clapped her hands twice, at which signal the council and those in attendance upon her slowly dispersed, rolling out one by one through the little portal by which we had gained entrance to the chamber upon our arrival, and leaving Jacky-

Jacky, Ohoho and myself, alone in the presence.

Hardly had the chamber been cleared, before Azuela, for such was the Queen's name, raised herself on one arm, where she sat on her throne, and beckoning me to ascend the dais, invited me to a seat beside her. Then putting forth her hand as if to assure herself that one in her own likeness was at last before her, she spoke to me in the native tongue of the Anonos, the barbaric accents falling strangely from lips whence one would have expected to have heard issue the familiar sounds of one's native language.

"O, strange being, and yet fashioned so like unto myself, what brings you here?"

And without waiting for my reply, the White Queen proceeded to inform me how she had heard of my presence in her country, and dispatched her soldiers in pursuit of me.

And now, did I endeavor to explain to this woman how it was that I had come to be in her country, which I at first anticipated would be a task of no great difficulty; but found subsequently that she was totally ignorant of all

the impulses of adventure which would make a man leave home to explore strange countries. In fact, I soon discovered that she was without knowledge of any country, save that over which she now ruled.

With an almost childish delight, therefore, she heard my improbable narrative from end to end, and for an hour or more we sat thus, totally oblivious of the fact that Jacky-Jacky was standing in a respectful attitude at the foot of the dais all this while.

I told her, in the course of this first interview, of many things which I thought likely to be of interest to a woman, who, whatever might have been her isolation from her kind, must still possess those ineradicable instincts which are peculiarly the sex's. I told her how, in the great country from which I came, there were no creatures like the Anonos, clad in fur, and dwelling in a half-savage manner, but that people were called men and women, the men being like myself, and the women fashioned after her own likeness.

I told her, and with wonderful natural intel-

ligence she seemed to grasp the meaning of my words, that these people were ruled by laws moral and divine, and governed by peaceable measures, framed through the wisdom of ages, for their guidance.

For the first time she learned of the existence of the domestic animals trained for the use of man, and subjugated by his superior intellect, to do him service.

But it was, when carried away by the pathos of this lonely woman's situation, that I attempted to explain to her how she had all along been under the guidance and direction of a Divine Being, that she seemed to be the most moved.

"O Paul," she said, for such was the name I had instructed her to call me by, "I have felt at times the truth of what you now tell. Often, in the silence of the night, I have stolen from my chamber to the summit of the fortifications and looked out upon the placid lake. I have seen in my mind's eye the Great Spirit you speak of walking on the surface of the water, and have felt that I was under his protection."

Inexpressibly touched, I endeavored to unfold to this untutored woman the principles of Christianity. As I related, in simple language, how the great Creator, in his infinite love for all his creatures, had sacrificed his best Beloved for their salvation, I could see that the story in its simple beauty worked greatly upon her mind. Slowly the unbidden tears coursed down from her dark eyes, while her bosom heaved with tumultuous sobbings. Upon the fresh soil of her heart, untainted by contact with the world, it had been my privilege to sow the seed of truth.

“Leave me now, O Paul!” at length said Azuela, rising from her couch, for I would fain be alone to think of all the things that have this day been told me. Our good Ohoho shall minister to the wants of thee and thy black friend yonder, with whom I will converse later; but my heart is too full now to speak. I go to communicate with the Great Spirit of whom thou hast taught me, and to bless the day when thou wast brought within the territory of Azuela.”

So saying, the White Queen raised herself to her full height, and glancing upon me a look in which deep respect was mingled with an almost sisterly affection, she threw aside a second portière which had hitherto escaped my notice, and with a graceful inclination of the head passed through the opening thus afforded, and vanished from my sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE TAKE UP OUR RESIDENCE IN ANONO.

I NOW found that the partial restraint imposed on me on the evening of our arrival, was, by the orders of Ohoho, entirely removed. I was free to wander at will about the great city, to climb its fortifications, and to penetrate the dwellings of this remarkable race whenever I might be invited, which was frequently.

In company with Jacky-Jacky, I was assigned to a building close to the old chief, who saw that we were plentifully supplied with food. The interior of this house, while it consisted, like the others, of but one apartment, was neat and comfortable, having at one end the invariable raised dais, and at the other the heap of mats, which answered the purpose of a bed. The heat of this climate, of course, rendered unnecessary any further covering, and, indeed, after the hardships through which we

had lately passed, it was luxury itself to lie curled up on the soft grass and indulge in unlimited repose.

I passed the remainder of this, my first day in the city of Anono, partly in sleep and partly in a survey of the country from the battlements, from which a fine view was to be had. Oftentimes in the course of the day I would ascend the low tower by the principal entrance and cast an anxious eye over the surrounding vista, for, notwithstanding the length of time which had elapsed since Captain Frisbee's party had set out on their perilous journey from the camp by the Great Rock, I still was not without hope that through some chance they might reach the shores of that immense lake, which, stretching away for miles in either direction, seemed as though it must embrace the termination of any route which might be struck by an exploring party. Jacky-Jacky, however, who, though of a hopeful disposition, was keenly alive to the difficulties through which we had ourselves passed, assured me, again and again, of the futility of such an expectation.

"They have all perished long ago," he said. "It is impossible for white men to have lived so long without water, and I know they found none, or they would have returned before this."

"But," I said, "what shall we do? Are we to stay here during the rest of our natural lives, until we degenerate into Anonos? A nice figure you would cut, rolling around on your stomach, with your legs cut off and no head nor neck to speak of!"

Jacky-Jacky grinned and said he didn't think it would matter much. That we had become half Anonos, anyhow. That we now ate roots and the flesh of strange animals without cooking it, very much as the Anonos did, and he had felt his stomach increasing in size within the last few days—which, considering his feats as a trencherman on the provisions given us by Ohcho, was not to be wondered at.

As for myself, I had a fruitful theme for thought in this last strange incident, the finding of a woman of my own race, set up as a ruler over these creatures, and ignorant alike of her origin or country.

That afternoon, we were sitting in the doorway of our house, which having been built to admit of the largest size of Anono, just comfortably contained Jacky-Jacky and myself, when I perceived Ohoho slowly rolling down the street toward us. Somehow, I had come to take quite a fancy to this old fellow, who evinced in the strongest way in which his half-animal nature was capable of, a kindred feeling for myself. With Jacky-Jacky, however, he had been unable to get on very friendly terms, the black being unable to bring himself to associate with something he described as a little better than a ground-hog. I have noticed this pride of race frequently in the aborigines, though they have not very much to be proud of, and where a white man of good birth will not feel himself demeaned by association with his inferiors, the haughty aborigine will in no wise bend from the lofty position assigned him by nature.

“Well, friend Ohoho,” I said, “what is the news now? Do you bring us more provisions,

or has another war broken out with your friends, the kangaroos, that you honor us with a visit, when you ought to be taking your nap in the shade at your time of life and not be running after strangers?"

Ohoho laughed, for he was not devoid of a sense of humor, and showed his white teeth as he sat up to reply:

"No, O Paul, but I come as the bearer of a message from the Queen. To-morrow, when the sun has arisen, she will again give you audience. She wishes me to say that she was unable at the first interview to give expression to all which she wished to communicate, and would now see you again. She has also commissioned me to tell you what I have before heard, a certain tale in regard to her origin, and which you would not have learned without me, as it is death for any of our people to speak of the affairs of the White Queen without permission. But the breeze is blowing up a little chilly from the lake. Come into my house, where I have something prepared to eat.

While thus pleasantly engaged, I will recount
to you

THE HISTORY
OF
THE FINDING
OF THE
GREAT WHITE QUEEN.

CHAPTER XVII.

OHOHO TELLS A STRANGE STORY.

“MANY, many moons ago,” began the old chief, “our country was overrun by the leaping animals, which you, O Paul, have termed kangaroos. They destroyed our fruits, ate our crops and cut off stragglers of our nation and beat them to death with their terrible forepaws.

“The city of Anono, in those days, was not what you see it now. We had not advanced in the arts of building as we have done under the reign of the present Queen. My father, one of the most powerful of our race, controlled the affairs of the nation, and though he was wise so far as an Anono can understand, yet he was not the equal in strategy or cunning of our present ruler.

“The former site of this city was not upon this island, but over there on the shore of the

lake. Thus, although we were protected on one side, on the other sides we still remained open to the attacks of our enemies.

“Seeing that we were liable to be overcome and finally destroyed by these creatures, my father cast about for other peoples, of the existence of which rumors had reached him from time to time, with whom a defensive alliance of some kind might be made. It was while this condition of things existed in the city of Anono, that a party which had gone out to explore the surrounding country, and had journeyed many miles toward the setting sun, returned one day to the city, informing the king, my father, that they had met with traces on the sand of the desert which were new to them in their peculiar formation. From the description given, the tracks were not so long as the Vishootos or leaping kangaroos, but they were wider and left no print of hind paws, like unto the Vishootos, owing evidently to the habit in vogue among them of covering up their feet.

“It was soon determined that an expedition should be formed for the purpose of finding

this new race. A quantity of roots and dried meats having been collected, and the other simple preparations which an Anono requires being completed, the expedition set out one day four hundred strong. I was appointed its leader, and with me I took as guide two of the first exploring party. On the second day's journey we came into the desert through which you, O Paul, say you came, until we reached a large rock or mountain, standing up in the middle of the plain, and this, from all accounts, must be the place where you and your friends were last together.

"Under the shade of this rock we found abundant traces of the presence of a strange people, and in a small cave in the face of the rock, we came across the people themselves. They were of your race. They were white, but all were dead save the little Azuela, who was lying on the bosom of her mother, the only female of the party.

"It was evident that this was not the strange race we were in search of, but simply an outlying expedition like our own; we would

have pursued our journey further, therefore, but that the scarcity of water and the diminution of our food made such a step out of the question.

“Fortunately, we had with us two females, one who had been with child lately, and from her breast was little Azuela fed during the return journey. Thinking it might be of interest to her in after moons to learn her history, I carefully preserved every article that we found in the cave, and though their uses are unknown to us, yet are they cunningly contrived and wrought and will no doubt be known to you, O Paul, whose intelligence I already perceive is superior even to that of our Queen, great and learned as she is.

“These things have I guarded, and they are now in the Queen’s inner apartment, where they have been kept carefully for the better part of her reign. It is she who has requested me to impart this to you, and to say that to-morrow she will lay these treasures bare for your inspection, and to hear what thou hast to say in regard to them. I am growing old now, and

long hath it been a matter of anxiety to me, that a fit counselor and adviser should be found for Azuela, whom I have loved and cherished as a daughter from her infant years until now. Since my father's death have I been her chief counselor and officer, and fain would I, O Paul, that thou wouldst take the office which my increasing years will soon compel me to lay aside, feeling as I do that thou art more learned than I."

As old Ohoho thus brought to a conclusion his extraordinary narrative, which, though told, of course, in the tongue of the Anonos, was yet so distinctly and impressively given that its full meaning could not fail to be comprehended by me, I was enabled for the first time to account for the presence of Azuela amidst these strange creatures. Undoubtedly, the sole survivor of some expedition no less unfortunate than the one organized by Captain Frisbee, she had been found in the desert on the bosom of her dead mother, as Ohoho had so touchingly related. It spoke well, I thought, for the half-human sympathy of

these remarkable creatures, that they had thus succored and brought her to their own city, where her superior instincts, with the passing years, had demonstrated to them, doubtless, her fitness to occupy the throne of the deceased father of Ohoho. Himself unambitious for office, Ohoho had seen with feelings which did him credit, a being of a higher order thus placed over him; and, conscious of her superior mental abilities, had gracefully yielded where many a stubborn and less far-seeing person might have undermined the strength of the nation with internecine strife.

After I had departed from the house of Ohoho, I betook myself to my favorite position on the tower, near the entrance of the city, and fell to ruminating.

Who could the White Queen be? Would I be able to solve the mystery on the morrow, when the scant remnants of the effects of the expedition saved by the exploring band of Anonos should be spread before my wondering gaze?

Slowly the sun sank to rest behind the

boundary of the horizon, and as I sat on my lofty eyrie and watched his dying rays gilding the lines of the fortifications. involuntarily, something of the old fancy which had possessed my soul when I had sat a few days before on the shores of that same lake, came back to me. Here was a remarkable people, somewhat human, and capable, perhaps, of the highest degree of civilization. What might not education, the great truths of religion and the unfolding of the moral laws not accomplish amongst them. How I blessed the unsettled life which had led me to acquire, in at least a rudimentary manner, the elements of many industries. How I blessed the craving for knowledge which had made it impossible for me to witness the manufacture of anything without inquiring into the why and wherefore. Was it to be reserved for me, first to enlighten Azuela as to these things, and to bring the blessings of religion and civilization, through her, as my powerful instrument, to the minds of this singular race?

CHAPTER XVIII.

JACKY-JACKY "SURPRISES THE NATIVES."

I HAD remained thus seated for some time, looking out through the growing darkness upon the vast expanse of water, and ruminating on the coming audience with the Queen in the morning, when my reveries were brought to a sudden termination by the unexpected appearance of Ohoho, who had gained the summit of the tower by the circular inclined plane, which these strange creatures use in lieu of staircases, and up which they can roll with astonishing velocity.

"What is the matter, Ohoho?" I inquired, seeing that he evidently had some news of importance to communicate.

"The fire-god, the fire-god!" exclaimed the old chief. "He is angry and will burn us all up."

I was at a loss at first to understand the old

fellow, who, out of breath with having ascended the spiral plane at the top of his speed, and evidently laboring under feelings of great excitement, now gave vent to incoherent utterances, in which, from the frequent occurrence of the words "fire-god" and "black-man" I conjectured that Jacky-Jacky, unable longer to withstand his lately-achieved but inordinate desire for cooked meats, had lit a fire to enable him to procure a hot supper.

Even at that moment, the creature who had before been badly burned, was confined to his nest from the effects of his wounds, and, unknown to us, the most exaggerated reports of the power of the black and white fire-gods had spread through the city.

Just at this moment, in the direction of our dwelling, a tall flame shot up against the blackness of the sky, and the shouts of terror with which its appearance was greeted by the multitude would have been ludicrous if it had not been so alarming. At any moment, overcoming the awe inspired by the sight, they might rush upon my poor servant and in their then infuriated mood tear him to pieces.

Again the fierce flames shot forth.

"Save us, O great white person!" moaned Ohoho. "Save us from the powerful black fire-god."

If he had possessed knees, I am sure he would have fallen on them. As it was, he rolled to and fro on his capacious stomach, and groveled as well as he could in his precarious position on the battlements with the intent to show his humiliation of spirit, and propitiate my supposed wrath.

Ridiculous as it was, it occurred to me that herein lay a powerful hold for me on the minds of this simple people. I had learned, only that day, to my great disgust, that in times of scarcity they were in the habit of slaughtering and devouring certain of their kind who had not yet attained full growth, but were yet exceedingly useful members of society, and who, on account of their physical weakness, were compelled to submit patiently to many wrongs at the hands of their more powerful brethren.

That the Queen had long been greatly opposed to this barbarous custom, it had pleased

me much to learn; although so deep-rooted were the prejudices of the Anonos in its favor, that against its continuance oftentimes even her mandates failed of effect. I now determined that I would on the start strike a blow for these helpless creatures. Therefore, I turned, for the nonce, a deaf ear to old Ohoho's lamentations.

"What can you expect?" I said at last. "The black fire-god is powerful; the black fire-god is angry. Do not the innocent prisoners still await the day of sacrifice in the dungeons beneath the fortifications?"

Here old Ohoho, himself very fond of the flesh of a plump Anono, looked very sheepish. He tried to meet my eye, and muttered something about a long established custom; but he failed singularly to appear at ease, and rolled uneasily on his stomach for some moments.

When he became quieter, I took occasion to deliver a spirited and pointed lecture on the enormity of cannibalism, and such is the effect of a good cause, coupled with sincerity, that I soon had old Ohoho not only repentant of

his former misdeeds in that direction, but ready to do anything in his power to help uproot a system which, while it might be pleasant and soothing to a few epicures, was far from exercising a beneficial influence upon the nation at large.

Finding that my threatened displeasure had produced the desired effect, I then volunteered to intercede for them with the black fire-god.

Feeling my way cautiously, I followed the old chief down the spiral plane, and proceeded to the scene of Jacky-Jacky's incantations, Ohoho opening a path for me through the dense multitude, which had collected in the street where our dwelling stood, by rolling his mighty body against the mass of creatures and thus quickly conducting me to the scene of action.

The sight which now met my eye would at any other time have moved me to immoderate laughter, but realizing the extreme gravity with which the Anonos viewed what appeared to be to them hellish incantations, I suppressed all desire for mirth and

passed rapidly into the circle of the fire-light.

Hovering over his fire, the poor black, unconscious of the stir he was making, was toasting his supper (a fish he had caught that afternoon) in the glowing embers, singing merrily an old camp song in his broken English. Around the fire in different attitudes of supplication, despair and fierce invective, some hundreds of the lower classes of Anonos seemed about to contemplate a united rush upon the singer; and it seemed that only the supernatural fears that they entertained prevented them from attacking him. Still, in the extremity of their rage, there was no telling to what lengths they might go. I had evidently arrived not a moment too soon.

"Jacky-Jacky," I said in a low tone, so as to be unheard by even the nearest Anono, "keep still; your life depends upon it. Just keep on singing quietly in English, and don't stop until I tell you."

The black started sensibly, as the full force of my sentence broke upon him, but the plucky fellow went on singing, apparently as uncon-

cerned as ever, though in the firelight I could see the beads of perspiration starting out on his forehead. He well knew that the danger must be indeed imminent, for me to speak thus.

"Now," I said, beckoning to the old chief to draw near me, within the circle, "listen to the words of Ohoho, O people of Anono, he that talketh wisdom and wishes to do right; he of the white hair and round stomach. Listen, I say, for through his mouth I will speak unto you."

And with Jacky-Jacky sitting singing over the fire, his eyes rolling in the lurid light, did I, Paul Gifford, through the mouth of the old chief, then and there commence my attack upon the atrocious custom of cannibalism.

My arguments must have been convincing, for though there was a smothered murmur of disapprobation in that vast throng, and many a white set of teeth gleamed in hungry disappointment, still the balance of popular opinion was undoubtedly on my side. I followed up my advantage by immediately exclaiming in a loud voice:

“Release the prisoners, O people of Anono, and I will intercede for you with the black fire-god, lest he burn you with his terrible fire and reduce your city to ashes.”

Then arose from the vast crowd a young Anono, whom Ohoho whispered to me was a great cannibal, and cried scornfully:

“Who is it comes to us and pretends to be a fire-god? A black thing only partially covered with fur, who turns night into day by his incantations, and only wants us to deliver up our prisoners that he may reserve them for his own eating!”

At this, Jacky-Jacky, whose voice had sunk to a low croon, turned around, and gazed long and fixedly at the stalwart Anono, for he felt the time had come to measure strength with him.

Knowing he could take good care of himself, I let him have his way.

“Thou liest, thou false braggart!” cried the brave aborigine; and springing forward he confronted his opponent.

“Come hither!” he continued. “Thou

callest me a pretended fire-god! Come hither, and I will eat thee, as thou falsely proclaimest that I eat thy neighbors."

This challenge, uttered in a bold voice by Jacky-Jacky, in the aboriginal tongue, being perfectly intelligible to his auditors, was received with loud shouts of applause, for these creatures are by nature brave and daring, and dearly love games of single combat wherein strength and courage are demanded.

But the young Anono hesitated, when he saw the determined front which the black presented.

"Thou cans't not refuse the challenge," said the old chief, and for very shame the Anono drew near and prepared himself to do battle.

As I contemplated the aspect of the creature, and marked the muscular development of its body, I feared the result of the seemingly unequal combat.

The moon, which had hitherto been obscured by passing clouds, now broke forth in silvery splendor, and cast her rays upon the weird and fantastic scene.

Taking my stand not far from Jacky-Jacky, I coached him as well as was possible under the circumstances.

"Look out for him when he rushes," I said in a low tone, mindful of what my own experiences had been a few days previous.

"All right," replied the black, and he set his teeth as one who determines to do his best.

The circle which had formed around the fire now pressed back somewhat, so as to afford the combatants more room. Ohoho and I alone remained within its precincts. The two combatants only awaited the signal from the old chief before commencing hostilities.

This he presently gave by stepping back to the edge of the circle; and uttering the single word "*Ahanhu*" ("Begin.")

Describing two or three revolutions which brought him close to his foe, the young Anono, uttering a fierce yell, hurled his massive body full at the aborigine, and had he struck him, it would undoubtedly have gone hard with him. But the agile black, watchful of every movement on the part of his adversary, sprang

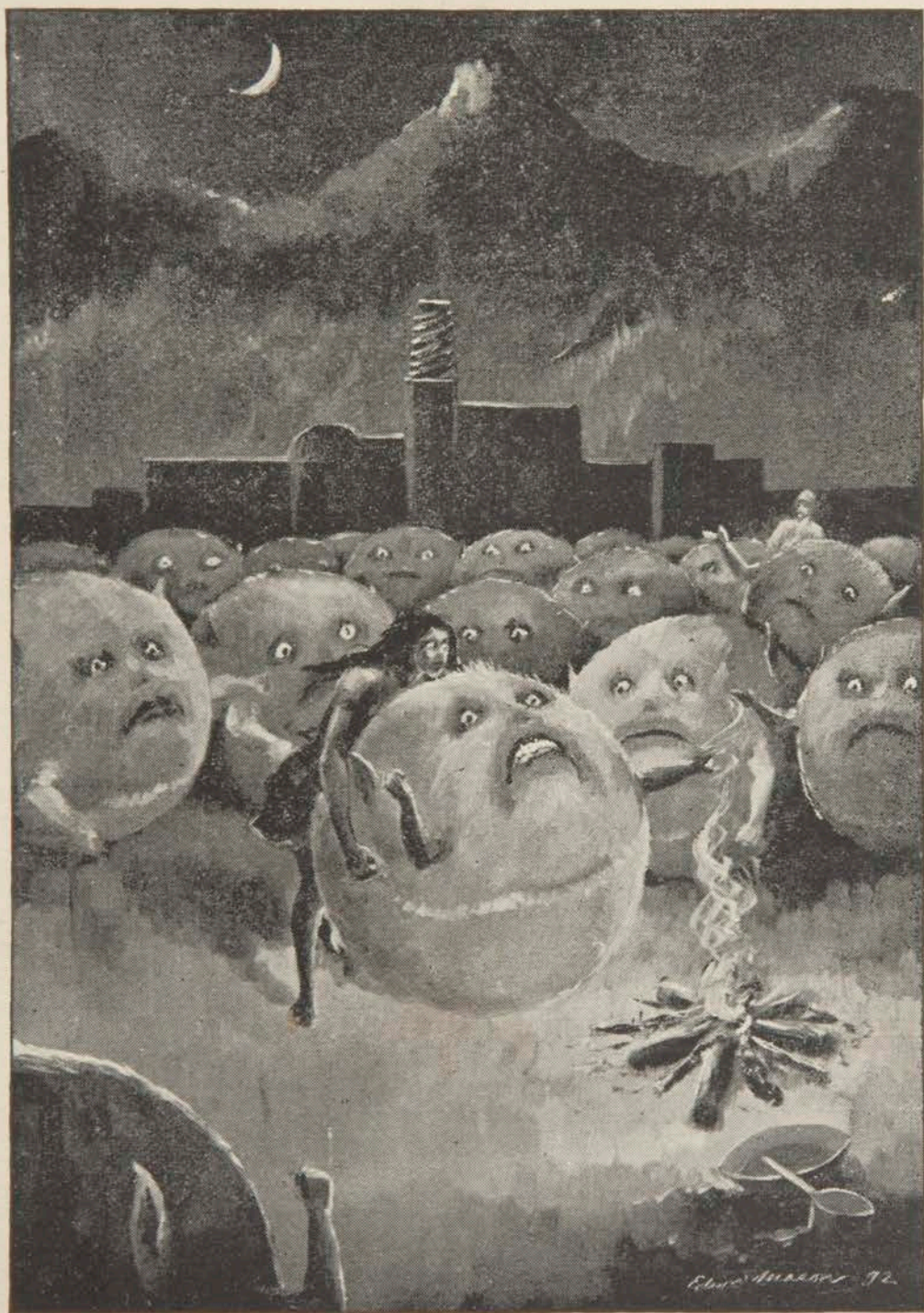
nimbly to the right, and a roar of pain announced that the self-constructed missile had passed clean across the circle and inflicted a painful injury upon some harmless spectator on the other side. Before it could recover from the shock, Jacky-Jacky, with one bound, had thrown himself upon his foe. Seizing it by the long hair on its back, he hung desperately to the creature, whose contortions in its endeavors to rid itself of the grasp of the black were wonderful to witness. Again and again did it gyrate and hurl itself several feet, dragging with it in its course my brave companion, whose iron grasp would not be shaken off. I could see the aborigine gradually working the animal over to the fire, and notwithstanding the desperate exertions it put forth, the distance between the dried and dusty fur of the creature and the red-hot embers was becoming less and less, as, straining every nerve, Jacky-Jacky dragged it, heavy as it was, over the intervening space.

I would have willingly saved it from the dreadful fate now in store for it, but to have

interfered at this juncture, when the passions of the mob were inflamed to the highest point, would have cost both of us our lives.

The black had now dragged the wretched Anono within two or three feet of the fire, and its struggles to relieve itself from the grasp of its opponent became pitiful. With squeals of alarm, it bit savagely with its white and shining teeth at the legs of the aborigine, who, adept wrestler as he was, had some difficulty in avoiding those capacious and terrible jaws.

Suddenly, with a strength for which I had not given it credit, the Anono threw itself completely over, carrying Jacky-Jacky along with it. They fell together, the animal on top, and with a sudden rush it freed itself from the grasp of one hand. In an instant it had turned and thrown itself savagely upon the black. I saw Jacky-Jacky draw back his left hand and heard a crashing blow as he delivered it from the shoulder full in the face of the Anono. Half stunned it rolled over on its back, beating its breast helplessly with its wiry paws.



JACKY-JACKY ASSERTS HIMSELF.

With a yell of triumph, the aborigine, reckless of consequences, and half mad with rage, flung himself upon his prostrate foe. His huge muscular back strained under the weight as he raised the Anono above his head, and the next instant he had whirled the unfortunate creature straight into the fire, exclaiming:

“Thus the fire-god punishes the unbelievers!”

Then there arose a squeal so wild, so unearthly, that my very blood froze in my veins as I heard it, as with every hair a blaze of living and lurid flame, the wretched Anono dashed madly from the fiery furnace, and passing out, rolled wildly on toward the lake, where, plunging into the cool waters, it writhed convulsively in agony; while scattering like chaff before the awful aspect of the black fire-god, who, apparently unharmed by the terrible element, waved aloft a huge, burning brand, the vast host of frightened creatures, with piteful grunts of terror, rolled rapidly away in all directions.

The black fire-god had triumphed! The

day of cannibalism among the Anonos had passed away forever.

That night the old chief released some two hundred wretched creatures from beneath the fortifications.

When they heard to whom they were indebted for their deliverance, they, with their families, crowded around the black fire-god, and for a while, at least, those of our enemies who had viewed our entry into the city with such feelings of intense jealousy and race hatred, deemed it advisable to conceal their real sentiments.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SECRET OF AZUELA'S BIRTH.

THE next morning, leaving Jacky-Jacky to recover from the fatigues of his encounter of the previous evening, in company with the old chief, I again sought the presence of Azuela.

On my way to the citadel, old Ohoho remarked that it would be just as well not to say anything about the fight between Jacky-Jacky and the young Anono, and I took occasion to extort a renewed promise from the chief that henceforth he would lend me his aid in stamping out the practice of cannibalism. He also sought to beguile the way by entering a little more into the details of the discovery of the White Queen in her infancy, and long before I arrived at the citadel had succeeded in working up my curiosity regarding this wonderful woman to

the highest pitch. Indeed, her romantic history, her strange isolation among a race half human and half animal, her youth, her apparent natural intelligence, conjoined with her extraordinary beauty, all exerted a most powerful influence upon me, and it was with a feeling of intense sympathy that I now suffered myself to be conducted for the second time to her apartment.

It was early dawn. A delicious coolness was in the breeze, which, coming from the lake, swept through the apertures in the walls, by means of which the outer chamber was lighted. But it was to the inner room to which this extraordinary female, curtly dismissing Ohoho, without a particle of natural embarrassment, now conducted me. The furnishings here were of the same scanty kind which characterized the fittings of the outer apartment—a raised dais, a couch of skins in a further corner, and a few simple articles of dress comprising it all.

In the spotless cleanliness which I saw everywhere around me, from the neatly swept

earthen floor to the exquisitely arranged parterre of flowers which adorned the embrasure of a large and low opening, which, facing the south, served as a window, I recognized those undying instincts of refined womanhood, which, cropping out, even here, in the untutored mind of a savage princess, spoke of the possession, at once, of inherited good taste, and the love of home so deeply rooted in the breast of woman wherever she may be.

It was to this embrasure that the White Queen led me. Leaning back against the cold stone wall, she looked at me long and earnestly.

"I have been thinking, O Paul," she said at last, "of the strange things that thou hast told me since first thou didst come to my city. I was minded to be hostile to thee, on the advice of my chief men, who, I shall not conceal from thee, regarded thy coming with feelings of jealousy. And more especially the favor which thou hast found in my eyes has angered them. But something here," and she placed her white hand above her heart, "tells

me thou art sent for a good end. Thou sayest thy mission is one of peace also."

I assured her that it was, using as well as I could the uncouth Anono language, which, however, seemed to drop musically enough from her lips, and she resumed:

"Know also, that I have a mind to profit by thy superior knowledge. Nay, blush not, my eyes tell me that I am of thy race; such beautiful things as that were not made save by a people wise and cunning." And she put out her hand, and taking within her fingers the sleeve of the tattered shirt I wore, examined the texture carefully, but as one who had seen such things before, and recognizes it when met with again.

"Thou sayest truth, O Queen," I made her answer. "The knowledge of my race is wonderful, and I know that thou art of that race. Thy grace and refinement so do assure me."

Novel to her as the language of flattery undoubtedly was, a pleased look passed into her face, confirming my theory of inherited traits in her disposition, which even years of life

among a semi-bestial race could not altogether keep in abeyance.

"Now thou speakest as sweetly as Ohoho," she said, smiling, "when he needs fresh meat for his soldiers," and she looked at me so closely, that I, being a modest man, though a doctor, felt some embarrassment.

"You have some knowledge of these things," I said, willing to change the conversation, and taking up the subject of the shirt again. "Ohoho has recounted to me the strange history of your life, and how you have relics of the party lost in the desert place. Will you not show them to me?"

"It was for that object I sent for you, O Paul, but first I wanted to see what manner of being thou wast. The secrets of the White Queen are not to be rashly given away. All here, save Ohoho, think I am something more than mortal. They invest me with something of the attributes of that Great Being thou didst speak of on our first interview. Were the secrets of my birth known generally among the people, my power over them would be gone."

I marveled at her innate astuteness, but said nothing, and she continued:

"Yet, know I well, that I am no Anono. They do grovel on the ground and have no aspirations beyond getting a sufficiency of meat and drink, while I feel I have higher attributes. In the long moonlit nights, when the gentle breeze comes sighing from the lake, and I sit under the starlit sky, I feel then as if the brighter part of me must live when this poor body is old and useless. Many Anonos have I seen die, but none have I seen feel this way. I understand in such moments, the difference between us."

Tears stood in her dark eyes, and a mournful expression came across her fair face, turned toward me in the bright sunlight.

"It is thy soul, O Queen," I said. "It can never die. Thou art of my race, and thou hast a soul, a living spirit within thee which is immortal."

"I know that I am of thy race. Have I not seen the different races? The bandicoot does not produce the leapers; nor does the Anono

produce other than its own likeness. Thou art the male of our race, and I the female."

I felt that I was on delicate ground talking with a lady, but the truth of her statement being so apparent, I of course assented.

"And now, O Queen, show me the relics of which Ohoho spoke. I have a burning curiosity to see them."

"Yes, I will now let thee behold them. Very precious are they. Curious garments which can not be produced by my people, and other things which I have cared for for many years. They are wrapped in mats to protect them from the damp of the rainy seasons. Come, O Paul, and help me, for I am not of the sturdy race of Anonos, but am a—what?"

"A woman."

"A woman, yes. That is it, a woman. I like the sound of that word. Is it a good word?"

"A very good word indeed," I replied emphatically.

"And old?"

"Old as the hills—old as the human race. But let us get out the relics."

Bending down, she removed a mat which covered a depression in one corner of the apartment, and disclosed two packages, one square and quite heavy, the other long and not of so great weight, and which emitted a metallic sound as I accidentally allowed one end to fall on the hard earthen floor.

"This one," said Azuela, "did the good Ohoho cause to be conveyed hither with much trouble." And she tapped the long package with her pretty bare foot. "The conveyance of the other was an easier matter, though it is much the heavier, as two stout soldiers got behind it and rolled it over and over, mile after mile, until it arrived here."

"How did he get them on to the island?"

"I believe he floated them over on a log, which several soldiers, swimming in the water, kept upright."

I was by this time busily engaged in stripping the mats from the precious packages. It was an exciting moment. Upon what strange mementos of the past was I about to intrude? I had bent my energies to uncovering the

square package, and now only one mat concealed its contents from my impatient eyes.

"I have not looked upon these things for a long time," said Azuela. "At first, as I grew up, they afforded me much food for reflection; but as they contained for me no solution of my real identity or parentage, I gradually lost all interest in them. You, O Paul, who art of my race, and wise, may now perhaps learn from these wonderful articles something concerning me and mine."

The last mat fell to the ground and exposed a wooden chest or box of nearly cubic proportions, and contrived originally, as I saw by the semi-circular pieces of wood which acted as battens, to be attached to the back of a horse or some such beast of burden. There was a keyhole, but the key which had once fitted it was now lost. The box was not locked, however, and it readily yielded to my efforts to open it.

The better to examine it, exerting my full strength, I lifted it from the floor and carried it over to the embrasure, where I suffered a

full flood of sunlight to stream in upon its contents. On the other side of the box, Azuela sat, watching my motions with an air of abstraction. She was evidently disappointed that no expressions of surprise had fallen from me, as I handled the articles which it contained.

I took therefrom, first, a woman's plain wrap or cloak, of a long by-gone pattern and faded and thin with much wear, made of some dark cloth, which had been originally, no doubt, a tasty garment, and might, for aught I knew, have flashed in its day gayly down Collins Street, or fluttered from the shoulders of its fair owner as she stepped into her carriage on her way to some grand social entertainment.

"Poor, faded piece of cloth," I thought, "if you could only speak, what tales you could tell, what mysteries you could unravel."

I lingered so long over this cloak, the first feminine garment I had seen in months, bringing back, as it did, sad but yet pleasant memories of Melbourne, that I naturally started violently, when, looking up, I saw Azuela holding in close proximity to my face a revolver of the Colt pat-

tern, rusty enough to be harmless, but yet not an agreeable thing to be confronted with in the hands of a woman totally ignorant of its uses.

"What is that, O Paul?"

"That's called a revolver," I said, instinctively dodging away from the muzzle of the weapon, "and a very awkward thing for a lady to handle. Let me see if it is loaded."

I took it from her and examined it carefully. It was a six-chambered affair, and loaded with ball cartridge of large caliber.

"Have you played with this thing often?"

"Yes, often when I was small—not lately."

I shuddered as I contemplated the risks she must have run.

"Azuela," said I, "do you know you must have been near death on several occasions through this thing of which you are ignorant?"

She turned pale, as what woman would not?

"Look here, I will show you." And I turned toward the open space which surrounded the citadel, and which on that side was fenced in and served as a kind of pleasure garden. A large bird of the pigeon species was cooing

upon the branch of a tree about thirty paces distant.

"Do you see that bird, Azuela?" I asked.

"Yes, it is a marinoonoo. They are in great plenty all over the country around here."

I now explained to her that I would explode the powder in the cartridge, which I had extracted, and which, being well greased, I had no doubt remained good during all these years, and that I would kill the bird with the ball it contained. In the bush one soon gets expert at shooting small game with the pistol, and the pigeon being a fair target, I had no doubt of my ability to hit it. Still, it was risking a good deal to stake the truth of my word thereon, as, if I deceived her in this, Azuela might not believe me in what was to follow. As it was, knowing nothing whatever of manners, she laughed incredulously.

"How canst thou kill the bird so far off, and not strike it?"

"I will show thee, O White Queen, that thou mayst be convinced that Paul doth speak the truth."

Raising the pistol and balancing the barrel against the side of the embrasure, I took a long and careful aim. The sharp report of the explosion as the hammer descended upon the cap of the cartridge, reverberated loudly through the apartment, and as the smoke cleared away, the bird was seen fluttering faintly on the ground.

Leaping through the embrasure, I ran and picked up the pigeon and brought it to Azuela. My aim had been true. A small round spot in the breast denoted where the bullet had sought its life.

Having overcome her fright at the noise of the explosion, Azuela took the dead bird from me and examined it closely.

"Where didst thou strike it, O thou long arm?" she asked.

I indicated the ragged hole in the back where the missile had found an exit.

"Wonderful indeed, O Paul," and she put out her hand to seize the pistol, but I put it gently away from her.

"Not yet. When I have taught you more,

then I will show you its uses," and putting the pistol carefully on one side, I turned to the other contents of the box.

The articles remaining were few in number, but of what priceless value to one who like me had in his head a hundred half-formed plans for the betterment of the condition of this strange people.

They were as follows: A small hand saw; two sharpened axe-heads; a chronometer, by Dixon, of London; a flat box of drawing instruments; a cold chisel and a heavy hammer; a sextant and a theodolite. In one corner of the chest I also found three boxes of Bryant & May's safety matches, a small file, a package of cartridges of the same caliber as those in the pistol, a set of ivory chess-men and a board, and as I unfolded the last fragment of mat in which these articles were carefully enwrapped there fell at my feet two books, each bound in canvas covers, thumbled and worn with usage, but in a fair state of preservation. I picked them up. The first proved to be Chambers' Universal Encyclopedia of Knowledge — a

treasure indeed, as it contained all the useful information contributed by many master minds.

The second book, on being brought to light, proved to be a small Bible.

As I contemplated the sacred volume lying in my hand, a wave of intense emotion swept over me. On whatever brief inscription the title page might contain, the identity of the woman who was now the White Queen of the Anonos, but who was none the less the offspring of the dead owners of the book, would depend.

So poignant were my feelings, that it was some moments before I could bring myself, with trembling fingers, to turn to the title page. What if it should contain no record, after all. I was already in Genesis, my eyes scanning rapidly the familiar print, a copy of which had never deserted me in my wanderings. Another page and the suspense would be over. I turned it, and read within in a man's firm, bold hand, the following words on the fly leaf:

George W. Graham,

Born at Melbourne, February 10, 1836.

Laura Clowes,

Born at New York City, U. S. A., September 22, 1841.

United in the bonds of holy wedlock,

July 4, 1860.

Had issue:

Henry Graham,

Born April 10, 1862, at Melbourne.

Died April 30, 1862, “ “

Then followed in an entirely different ink, a faded red, which no doubt was blood, judging under what circumstances this last entry was made, the additional inscription:

Laura Clowes Graham,

Born December 4 or 5, 1876, at Great

Rock Camp, with Kimball's Expedition.

And underneath, evidently written in a feebler hand:

“May God help us. No water and no provisions. Child and mother must perish in the desert.”

The mystery was solved. Azuela, the White Queen of the Anonos, was none other than the daughter of that famous traveler, George W. Graham, whose expedition had started from Melbourne some eighteen years before, and tidings of the fate of which had never reached the world. Undoubtedly the Anonos had ar-

rived in time to rescue the child to which the intrepid wife of the explorer had given birth in the desert; and having by an exercise of intelligence on their part, as commendable as it was extraordinary, preserved the relics of the expedition, by this priceless book now before me, the identity of the White Queen with that of Laura Clowes Graham was established beyond a shadow of a doubt.

An examination of the other and larger package showed that its contents consisted of a rifle bearing the imprint of Remington & Co., Ilion, N. Y., U. S. A., and two shot-guns, both by E. M. Reily & Co., of New Oxford street, London, of the old pin-fire pattern. With these, a small ammunition case, containing about three hundred cartridges of ordinary manufacture, and a small quantity of Ely wire cartridges for long-range use, were also found. Also, to my inexpressible joy, I discovered, though moldy with age, about twenty pounds of plug tobacco, a veritable godsend to one who, though a great user of the weed, had been altogether deprived of it for some time past.

I shall pass rapidly over the events of the next few days. They were chiefly occupied in endeavoring to impart to Azuela some knowledge of the great outside world from which the extraordinary incidents attending her birth had excluded her. I found this remarkable girl possessed of great aptitude, and her mind having lain dormant for so long readily grasped the ideas and pictures of civilized life which I unfolded before her. At the same time she imparted to me the system upon which the people who inhabited the city of Anono, and who constituted her subjects, were governed and controlled. While she herself was the supreme authority in the state, she had placed in power and surrounded herself with the wisest of her subjects; and through this council, twelve in number, her wishes, being modified to the special requirements of the people, were carried out. I was much struck with the analogy of this system of government, inaugurated by a woman from inherited abstract principles, with those of modern civilized nations, and which had entirely displaced the

original despotic rule of Ohoho's father, under whose tyrannic sway but little real progress had been made in material prosperity.

Here was the usual central power of the ancient monarchy, surrounded by a more or less aristocratic, hereditary nobility, with its functions held in check by representatives of the people, whose tenure of office was not, however, dependent upon the voice of electors, but the White Queen herself, who summoned them from time to time from the ranks of her subjects to take their places in the councils of the nation. That her rule had been a singularly beneficial one, compared with that of her predecessor, I did not doubt. I learned that under the old system of an untrammelled despotism, the life of no Anono had been safe. A gigantic civil war, which had resulted in the victory of the party whose cause she, then a mere girl of fifteen, had espoused, had resulted in her being called upon to take the reins of government into her own hands. She had at once set to work with wonderful diligence. Under her inherited military genius the present

immense fortifications were raised to protect the new nation. The huts and holes which had constituted the abiding places of the common people gradually gave way to a better order of buildings, and the whole, surrounded by those lofty ramparts, formed a city impregnable to the attacks of the immense herds of kangaroos which annually descended upon their root crops.

I was indeed struck with admiration for the wonderful natural talent she had displayed in the organization of her army, and the manner in which she had portioned out to each member of the community his or her task in the procuring of food, the repairing of buildings, or the raising of such additional structures as the increase of the population from time to time demanded. With an inherited taste for morality and a knowledge of the penalties which a violation of its laws entailed, she had also created the institution of marriage among her people, and though the possession of many females by the more powerful of her followers had long been re-

garded as a right, by her teachings she had brought about an undoubted reform and established the ceremony of marriage on a tolerably firm foundation among the younger generation of Anonos. She had established a code of civil laws for the government of these strange, half-human creatures, remarkable for the justness of the spirit which animated it. She had appointed judges to carry out these laws, and to punish their violation, and had established a system of military police patrol, which, rolling silently along the streets at night and pouncing down on criminal parties, did much to maintain order among all classes of society.

I say "all classes," for, strange as it may seem, even here the various differences which must ever exist, mentally, morally and physically among all living beings, when gathered together in any appreciable numbers, had led to four distinct divisions of society. The first, or Aboosoos, were the nobility or head men, whose prerogatives were hereditary, and who were distinguished from their less fortunate brethren by a natural belt of white fur which

completely girdled their bodies at the point of greatest diameter below the pouch. These were exempt from manual labor. They were about 10,000 in number, and were an aristocracy to themselves. Their fur was fine and delicate, even in the males, and attained a wonderful degree of brilliancy and luster in the females, who lolled in the entrances of their houses all day and did not work, occupying the morning hours in idle gossip and the evening in flirtations and intrigues with young coxcombs of the opposite sex.

The next class, the Trenolos, the class from which the great bulk of the army was drawn, were an arrogant set of fellows, swift and pugnacious, despising alike the haughty airs of the Aboosoos and the more vulgar attributes of the common people. Their fur was short, black and bristly, and stood straight upright when they were angry. A wonderfully procreative section of the nation, they threatened to become more formidable in numbers as the years rolled by, and even at the time of my arrival they constituted nearly one-third of the nation.

The next class, the Mandatos, was the class corresponding in civilized countries to the laboring people, but brutalized beyond measure, having but stray, scabby patches of hair on their bodies, and being but a degree removed from the Wawanoos, or slaves, whose speech was to me a totally unintelligible jargon, and whose tough hides, from the perpetual labor they were called upon to perform, were divested of all hirsute covering. These poor people, by whose labors the gigantic fortifications of Anono had been principally raised, were kept in a condition of the most degrading servitude, which I found, on inquiry, had been their lot from time immemorial. Forced to work from sunrise to sunset, either in the root-fields outside the ramparts or in the dreadful labor of pushing stones up inclined planes for the construction of buildings, or plastering the soft mud from the lake shore between their interstices, their fare was of the plainest, and the slightest attempt at insubordination was visited by the most terrible punishment. I have seen a heavy, overseer Anono, protected by his thick fur, whirl himself

through the air with tremendous velocity and knock a defenceless slave fifty feet from him, rendering him senseless, for a merely trivial offense.

It was not long before I cast about for some plan by which I could remedy these evils. I had little hope of ever being able to cross the desert and regaining civilization. Therefore I determined to create a new civilization where my lot had been so strangely cast.

CHAPTER XX.

I PROPOUND MY PLANS TO AZUELA.

DURING the next two or three days I took occasion to have frequent interviews with Azuela, who, indeed, if I did not promptly make my appearance every morning, would dispatch her special attendant, a soft and beautifully furred female Anono, having the white stripe indicative of her high order, to summon me to her presence.

So impatient had this remarkable girl become for the acquisition of fresh knowledge, that the early mornings frequently found us seated in the embrasure, our favorite place, in which uninterrupted retreat I poured forth for her enlightenment all that store of varied information which the vicissitudes of my wandering life had enabled me to gather in almost every clime. She heard first, with incredulity, and later with unbounded astonishment, of her

own great race, and all they had accomplished in the cause of human progress.

Having thus excited in her lofty mind an intense interest in the outside world, and a longing to behold it, I thus addressed her:

“And now, O Azuela, if thou wouldst behold these things whereof I speak, as we are isolated from the world, thou must reproduce them here. I have the knowledge to utilize the vast strength of thy people and to teach them better things. They are rudely fashioned, it is true, from our standpoint, but their bodily strength is great and their intelligence, naturally, of no mean order. They have, also, hands to work with. The earth can be made to render up her treasures. The present primitive method of root-raising can be superseded by one far superior. Your native maize, when cultivated, can be made to form the staple of the people's food. I see it already grows wild, in abundance. Iron can be mined and smelted, and weapons such as these firearms placed in the hands of thy people against their enemies. Say, O Azuela, wilt thou join hands

with me and aid me in this great enterprise, the regeneration of thy people?"

Azuela came over near to me and putting one slender hand in my rough and tanned one, as I had taught her was the custom of our people, said, looking into my eyes with her own beautiful orbs:

"Truly, O Paul, what thou sayest is good. I will be a help unto thee in so far as I am able. What I know not thou must teach me."

"The first thing then, O Queen," I replied, "that thou must do is to learn to read, so thou mayest understand the great book and the encyclopædia. In that volume which we do call the Bible is contained all the wisdom of the ages. It teacheth more or less of every art and science when read understandingly and with faith."

And so I set to work to teach Azuela to read. So apt a pupil did she prove that in three days she had mastered the alphabet. In a week's further time she had mastered a majority of the nouns and other important parts of speech, and at the expiration of a month

could trace in the sand of the lake shore, whither we frequently wandered, words of one syllable.

While this was going forward I set myself to work seriously to ascertain the range and quality of the natural resources of the country, and accompanied by Jacky-Jacky and a numerous body guard of Anonos, made frequent excursions with this object in view into the surrounding woods and plains. Metals of any kind were the main objects of this long and laborious search, and for them I explored every likely and unlikely spot for miles around without meeting with much success. Traces of various metals did I discover, but nothing in any workable quantity. I had abandoned the search in despair, and was about returning home from the last of these expeditions, when an Anono, more intelligent than the rest, who had been apprised of the object of the expedition, brought into camp one day and dropped at my feet what at first I took to be merely a big piece of brown dirt. On examination, however, it proved to be what set me almost

wild with joy. Gold I had come across in plenty, lying in the streams and waiting only the cradle of the placer-miner to yield a rich return; but of the more useful metals, from which the thousand and one articles in use in civilized communities are cast and forged, I had failed up to this moment to discern the remotest sign. In a moment I had picked up the strange, dark lump, streaked here and there with traces of brown. Taking one of my lancets from its case, I scraped away the dirt on the surface. A scarlet streak proclaimed that the Anono had brought to my feet a lump of red hematite iron ore. Telling him to lead the way to the place where he had picked it up, I impatiently followed. He led me to the banks of the stream. Pushing aside the bushes, I ran down the sloping bank and gazed long and earnestly upon the sight which met my eyes. Washed bare by a recent freshet, the earth had crumbled away high up on the banks of the stream, and now there was revealed to my astonished gaze a seam of the precious ore extending along the river as far

as I could see in an unbroken thickness of nearly seven feet.

I estimated the distance of this remarkable mine from the Island of Anono at not less than twenty miles; but the ore being on the bank of a stream, navigable to flat-bottomed craft, this did not materially matter. I returned that night, rejoicing, to Anono, and in the morning immediately set about the construction of a boat.

Having no planks, I was compelled to fall back on the ancient method of construction by means of willows, and with the aid of Jacky-Jacky had soon contrived the skeleton of a canoe thirty-six feet in length, seven feet in the beam and with a hold depth of four feet in the waist, and decreasing toward the bow and stern. This skeleton I covered over with kangaroo skins, of which there were a great plenty, sewing them firmly to the skeleton and to each other with strips of green hide, and filling the holes bored in them with gum extracted from the eucalyptus tree. A week's labor enabled me to thus form a very serviceable craft, which I

not only furnished with paddles, but with a leg-of-mutton sail made of skins. I also fitted it with a rudder, and lined the inside with thick mats made of kangaroo hair. Having little or no keel, in order to make her lay near to the wind, I contrived a weather-board of the pieces of the small chest.

It was dark on the evening of the seventh day when she was completed.

Amid indescribable excitement, in the presence of thousands of Anonos, the next morning, Jacky-Jacky and I succeeded in launching this rude craft into the lake. To my great satisfaction I found she floated nearly upright in the water, and rode the slight swell setting in from the south with perfect ease. A roar of astonishment and delight arose from the beach, as, hoisting the sail, the canoe skimmed rapidly seaward and tacked and headed again for the land. As she approached the beach, unable to contain themselves, hundreds rolled out upon the water to meet us, and so thickly did they crowd around the canoe, that her progress toward the shore was sensibly impeded.

I now fully unfolded my plans to Azuela. Summoning the council, she placed my ideas before them, and they pledged themselves to assist me.

All was now activity. To one chief, I entrusted the gathering of willows, to another the preparation of kangaroo skins, while a third was thoroughly instructed in the art of canoe building. With the imitateness of the negro and the Chinaman, these apparently uncouth creatures soon became expert in weaving willows and constructing the framework of canoes, and they quickly imparted the knowledge to a number of their subordinates.

In a few days' time, twenty vessels, larger than the first, and similarly equipped, danced over the blue waters of the lake, each guided in its course by the hand of an Anono. These creatures, though not highly endowed, being singularly fearless on the water, made excellent sailors.

I then dispatched the canoes by water to the mine, and sent overland a strong force of laborers. The command of this land expedi-

tion I entrusted to Jacky-Jacky, as I had more important work at home, in the erection of a furnace for smelting the ore.

In the manufacture of the bricks to be used in this furnace, I selected a peculiar blue clay from the north shore of the island, having many of the properties of fire-clay, and soon an army of laborers was conveying this in their pouches to the brick fields, where I had caused immense heaps of dried leaves and underbrush to be gathered. In a short time the smoke of several large brick kilns curled toward the sky, and though several breaks occurred with the new bricks, after a day or two, others of a finer and more lasting quality began to be produced.

It was now a scene of marvelous activity. As if by magic, under my instructions a gigantic smelting furnace arose upon the level plateau before the fortifications. Meanwhile, huge masses of limestone were carried from the cliffs, and piled near by.

In the forest gangs of laborers felled the trees with their sharp teeth, and biting and

breaking the boughs into short lengths, proceeded to pile them into heaps for the manufacture of charcoal.

In the midst of my labors a messenger arrived from Jacky-Jacky, reporting that the canoes had left the mine laden with ore, and bearing in his pouch samples of unexceptional quality.

The day at last came when the smelting furnace was completed, and standing by I witnessed the curious sight of hundreds of Anonos rolling up the inclined planes bearing within their pouches small quantities of the materials with which to produce that first great requisite of modern civilization—iron. Never shall I forget my feelings, as, standing near the place of honor I had caused to be erected for Azuela, I saw that all was ready. Ascending to her side I sat down, feeling that I had done my work.

She then spoke shortly to the people:

“Be not afraid, O people of Anono, the great White Traveler is about to work wonders for our nation. By a wave of his hand he will

summon the lightning from the skies and set on fire his great building. But be thou not afraid, and let him work his will, for Azuela, your Queen, has so commanded."

Whereupon, followed closely by Azuela, and with a great crowd pressing about me, I drew near to the furnace. Taking from the pocket of my trousers a box of matches, I struck one and in an instant the dry heap of leaves at the entrance of the furnace was ablaze.

A great murmur of astonishment and fear then arose from the multitude, which would have fled in terror had not Azuela in a loud voice assured them that there was no danger.

An immense volume of thick smoke now poured from the top of the furnace, which, gradually dying away, was succeeded by an intense heat as the charcoal began to unite and play upon the flux and iron ore. Of course, I had no blast or any scientific contrivance to increase the temperature, and trusted to the efficacy of the limestone as a flux, and the intense heat of the charcoal to smelt the ore. I was ignorant of the length of time it would take,

under these circumstances, to accomplish this.

Long hours wore anxiously away, and the promised stream of molten metal which should revolutionize the fortunes of this people showed no signs of issuing from the brick spout of the furnace. Below this spout I had contrived a series of inlets in the sandy formation of the shore of the lake, along which the iron could flow, and from these again a series of smaller molds, some nearly the shape of the ordinary pig, and others again longer and thinner, so that from them I could at once obtain rude instruments for immediate use, such as puddling bars.

Hour after hour passed and though the heat continued intense, yet no sign of the molten metal appeared. As the sun went down I began to fear that some inherent defect in the furnace had spoiled the result. Anxiously I ascended by the great inclined plane and looked over into the seething mass. I thought I could detect a settling of the immense weight of ore in the furnace.

From my lofty situation I glanced over the vast multitude assembled below. If I did not

redeem my promise to produce the metal after all the hardships I had subjected my workmen to, my life would be in danger. I knew that there were influential men in the nation vehemently opposed to me and my new measures. These, though not daring to challenge me openly, I felt sure had been arduously spreading the seed of discontent, not only throughout the lower orders but among the more aristocratic and powerful of the chiefs. First among these was Teele-too, the father of the young Anono who had met with defeat at the hands of Jacky-Jacky, and who I well knew cherished toward us feelings of undying hatred.

Darkness now fell upon the land and all the watery plain, and the glare of the immense furnace alone threw an uncertain light upon the crowd of impatient and restless creatures, from whom angry murmurs now arose, as under cover of the night my enemies rolled silently from rank to rank disseminating rebellion and deriding the efforts of the white fire-god to "turn stone into water."

Notwithstanding the angry murmurs of discontent, however, I was pleased to note that the Queen herself, as well as a majority of the chiefs and warriors who formed her body-guard, was still favorably disposed toward me. To the former I now voluntarily explained that by some miscalculation in the heating capacity of the furnace, it was possible that a longer period would be required before flowing metal would result.

"But it will come if you give it time," I said.

Meanwhile, as she might be exposed to danger, I urged that Azuela retire into the citadel and remain there until the morning. Assenting to this, she then issued orders for her body-guard to clear the way, and taking my hand in hers as if to secure me her protection, we passed on our way and entered the citadel. A trusty Anono was left near the furnace, with orders to at once report any signs of the metal flowing from the spout which he might observe.

As we went along, however, I felt reasonably certain that there was trouble brewing. It was,

so to speak, in the air. Jacky-Jacky, in particular, was subjected to certain insults along the line of march. Objurgatory exclamations and everything else of an offensive kind were thick about us, and he felt, no doubt, as much relief as I did, when the gate was passed and the body-guard, rolling by their united strength an immense stone against the entrance, assured us at least present safety.

Leaving Jacky-Jacky to the care of the attendants in the ante-chamber, I passed at once with Azuela into the inner apartment, and flinging myself on a mat, tried to think. On the result of the great experiment with the furnace all the grand improvements I had planned, no doubt, hung, for the people's suspicions being aroused at the first by such a failure, I should be denounced as a public imposter, and then, not even perhaps the power of the White Queen could save me from an ignominious death.

As for Azuela herself, while she spoke but little, her eyes seemed to carry reproach in their dark depths, as if to say:

"Why have you not told the truth, O Paul?"

I felt very miserable. With her limited practical knowledge, it was useless to attempt to explain that no doubt the crude construction of the furnace was to blame for the failure, and indeed she was too proud to question me further.

Worn out, and feeling very drowsy, I had half fallen into a doze, when I was awakened by a light touch on my arm, and found Azuela bending over me, some food in her hand.

"Eat," she said; "Eat, O Paul, thou mayest have need of all thy strength before daybreak. Loud are the murmurs of discontent among my people, and what can one poor woman do to allay their fury?"

I took the food and water she offered, and ate and drank in a forced, mechanical way.

"But thou believest in me, dost thou not, thou of mine own race?" I asked, tremblingly, for I had come to love this woman so that I feared far more that she should despise me as an impostor, than I cared for the threats of the mob. "Say, O Azuela, dost thou not believe in me?"

She looked at me for a moment with an expression that lived for weeks in my memory, and in a voice of unutterable sweetness, replied:

“Yes, I do, O Paul, with all my soul.”

I know not how it came about, but my arm was encircling her slim waist, and my cheek grew close to her own, whereon the first faint flush of womanly consciousness crept, as the moon rising above the heaving waters of the lake shed her silvery light through the embrasure, and illumined the interior of the apartment. Her breath, sweet as the odors of the East, was in my nostrils, and filled me with a delirious longing to clasp her to my heart, and tell her that I loved her. But I forbore. Trusting, I would not betray her. Assuming a coldness I did not feel, and seating her at some little distance from me, in the embrasure, I said:

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ATTACK ON THE CITADEL.

"THOU speakest of danger, O Azuela. What meanest thou?" These people would not surely attack their Queen."

"Canst thou not see, O Paul, that since thy arrival, coming as thou dost in mine own shape, they no longer regard me as a superior being? The people have labored, too, long and hardly in thy mine and in the building of thy brick tower. They murmur with great discontent, and even I may not be able to protect thee. It would not surprise me if this very night they should assemble and demand thy life."

"Well, I'll give them some trouble to get it," I answered somewhat angrily, for I was sick of the stupidity of these creatures who thus sought to requite unworthily my labors for their advancement. "Do thou rest here, Azuela, whilst I make preparations to receive

them. But first, canst thou rely upon thy body-guard, thy faithful one hundred, and hast thou a store of provisions within the citadel to withstand a siege?"

She assured me, first of the entire faithfulness of the body-guard, who were all devoted to her, and answered the last question in a satisfactory manner by leading me to a small storeroom where a plentiful supply of provisions of all kinds, such as these creatures use, was already garnered.

Having satisfied myself on these points, my next care was the firearms. I took from their coverings of mats the rifle and the shot-gun, and having thoroughly cleansed them, loaded the two barrels of the first with ball, and put Ely wire cartridges in the shot-gun. I also saw that the revolver was in working order, and so disposed the ammunition that it would be ready in case of an emergency. This done, my next task was to fortify the embrasure as well as possible, as should any mob venture to attack us from the garden, it would be, undoubtedly, our weakest point.

The body-guard might be depended upon to hold the main entrance against almost any odds, strengthened as it was with its immense door of stone, and thus rendered almost impregnable to assault.

The embrasure, however, caused me much uneasiness, and it was not until I had strongly braced it with some heavy logs which I had caused to be conveyed into the interior of the citadel for props to a portion of the roof which had shown signs of weakness some days previously, that I felt able to take any rest.

At last, however, when every precaution had been taken that could suggest itself, thoroughly wearied, I threw myself down upon a heap of skins, and worn out by fatigue and excitement, was soon lost in a profound slumber.

I could not have slept over an hour, when Azuela's light touch awakened me to full consciousness. Nevertheless, short as had been the time thus given to repose, I arose from my couch of skins much refreshed, my body renewed with physical strength, and my brain clear and active.

Azuela spoke not a word for some moments until she saw that I was quite myself. Then, in a quiet tone, she gave utterance to these words, full of a terrible significance:

“The citadel is surrounded. What I feared has come to pass. The people demand that you be thrown to them.”

For a moment my heart stood still, but the next instant all the pugnacious instincts of the Anglo-Saxon race were aroused within me.

I turned to Azuela and said:

“If it is thy will that I surrender (which I had not the remotest intention of doing, but so said just to try her) and if thereby I can save thee, O Azu—”

But I got no further in this cruel speech. Wounded to the quick, she drew herself up to her full height in the moonlight, and I thought I had never seen her look so lovely, as her eyes flashed a perfect fire of reproachful glances upon me.

“Canst thou esteem me fallen so low?”

“Forgive me,” I said, for I was touched by the evident pain in her voice. “I did but say it to try thee.”

"It was a poor jest, O Paul." And then smiling once more upon me, as she led the way to the outer chamber, she added:

"Let us see that the entrance is well fortified, and that my body-guard are doing their duty. Go thou, O Paul, and summon Ohoho and thy black companion, that we may hold council of war."

I passed out accordingly to the outer apartment, where I found Ohoho busily marshaling his forces, and momentarily expecting an attack. Finding that I could be of little assistance, I called Jacky-Jacky to me, and placing my weapons in readiness, instructed him how to reload and hand them to me.

While these preparations for defense were going on inside the citadel, the mob outside was not idle. While a majority of the population was evidently neutral, being disinclined to any deed of violence, still a number of the most powerful warriors were enrolled among the insurgents.

Peeping through a high embrasure of the outer wall, I could see that a mighty host was

assembled beneath, from which arose, from time to time, a hoarse, anxious cry that told of passions aroused to the fullest extent. Beyond them, from my lofty outlook, I could see the low houses of the city surrounding the square on three sides, outlined against the vast bulk of the fortifications, their deep shadows being brought into full relief in the bright moonlight. Beyond, the great lake rose and fell placidly under the spangled vault, toward which, on the extreme left, the smoke of the furnace wound lazily upward—that unlucky furnace which had brought upon us all this trouble.

Immediately below me I could make out the unwieldy forms of the Anono insurgents, as they were being hastily massed together by their leaders in array of battle.

In almost utter silence they formed themselves in a dense and unbroken line ten abreast, and stretching in a long column for over three hundred yards across the square and down the principal street. They lay close to one another, and seemed to be graduated in accordance to size, as I noticed the larger ones were in the

front rank. This front rank now rested solidly against the stone door of the citadel.

While I looked at them, wondering what this strange formation might mean, an old gray-haired Anono, who seemed to be leader of the insurgents, gave vent to a shrill cry, and immediately the vast column was agitated by a slow, swaying movement, the terrible effects of which I could at once perceive, as keeping perfect time, ten thousand of these creatures pressed with gigantic and ever increasing force against the defenses.

"*Heuoho! Heuoho!! Heuoho!!!*" would the leader shout, and at every exclamation, each Anono would roll over on his side, gently at first, but soon with an irresistible compression, so that at last, yielding to this combined movement, the huge stone against which their efforts were directed showed signs of yielding.

I saw at once that unless this column was in some way broken up, the defences must inevitably be carried under the enormous pressure thus exerted. Stepping down from the loophole, I ran quickly to the inner chamber,

and bidding Jacky-Jacky bring the fowling-piece, I seized the Remington and hastened back to my perch.

Even at this moment I hated to kill these misguided creatures, but one thought of the danger to which another minute's pressure of the column on the stone would expose us, compelled me to instant action.

From my position at the loop-hole, I could not fire on the head of the column; but if I could disable it lower down, I could relieve the pressure.

Glancing along the sights of the Remington, I covered a particularly active animal and pulled the trigger. The cartridge was all right. There was a yelp of pain, a loud cry of astonishment from the old chief, and presently the animal, rolling out from the column, lay still and ceased to move. My bullet had gone well home, and sought its life. Its little wiry paws unclasped themselves, the eyes dilated, and the first Anono lay dead under a white man's bullet.

I had little time for moralizing, however. A

second bullet sped on its way, the result in that densely massed body of creatures being equally fatal. Another and another, and soon the dead and wounded so cumbered the ground that the old chief, seeing that the movement of his column was being seriously interfered with, thought he would investigate the matter.

This was what I wanted. I had not, up to this time, been able to draw a bead on this old rascal, who had been one of the first to seek cover on hearing the crack of the rifle, which though it was a strange noise to him, yet frightened him sufficiently so that he took to shelter.

But his curiosity and rage now overcoming his prudence, he at this juncture incautiously exposed himself. I was about to put a bullet through him when Ohoho, who had been watching the progress of this one-sided fight through a crevice in the stones, cried out in a loud voice:

"Don't shoot him, O Paul, he is my brother."

"Can't help it, Ohoho," I replied, laconically.

"If he is your brother, he ought to be inside here, helping us; not with our enemies."

"Oh poor Opoodoo," groaned the unhappy chief. "He is always with the wrong party. But he is a great politician. If you kill him, you kill the smartest Anono in the city, except myself." And the old fellow rolled around the chamber as he uttered this boast, with a swagger so absolutely human that I was like to have fallen from my post with laughing, if the situation had not been so serious.

"Give me the shot-gun, Jacky-Jacky," I said. "I will have to teach the old fellow a lesson anyhow."

Taking careful aim at the outer periphery of old Opoodoo, I gave him about an ounce of bird-shot in that portion of his anatomy which the human race utilizes as a chair cushion. So deadly had been the effects of the rifle balls upon the other Anonos, that they had died comparatively quietly, but this charge of bird-shot, dexterously applied where it would do most good, produced the most disquieting

effect on the old chief. Uttering a terrific yell, he spun round and round like a top in full motion, twisting and writhing with pain, and utterly forgetful of the fact that some hundreds of his followers were nearly convulsed with laughter at his antics.

Taking advantage of this, I howled through the embrasure in the Anono language:

“You take care, O Opoodoo, or the white fire-god will kill you.” Hearing which, and another discharge of the terrible gun, with which I liberally peppered the now disordered column, this brave politician gave vent to an unearthly scream of terror and fled incontinently from the scene.

We now had a little breathing spell, while the insurgents were devising another plan of attack. With my arms I could have killed many more no doubt, but my object was to frighten and subdue, and not to annihilate.

Azuela had, all this time, been seated at a loophole beside me. As we descended, she approached me timidly, and would have fallen at my feet in token of her acknowledgment of

my superior wisdom, but I raised her up, and making light of it, said:

“It is nothing; in my country, propelled by vapor only, we do fly over the surface of the earth as swiftly as a bird. Knowledge is conveyed from one part of the land to the remotest points in the flashing of an eye; and many wondrous things are done, which are but the outcome of man’s wisdom. But come, here is a more serious affair. I see they threaten the citadel from the garden. We must be prepared to defend the embrasure.”

It was so. Their courage somewhat restored by the cessation in the firing, the insurgents were preparing to force our position from the garden, knowing of the open embrasure. Why they had not sought this point before, I was at a loss to conjecture.

In the garden they now assembled in vast numbers, and finding the embrasure barred with logs, and that by reason of its height, about four feet from the ground, they could not bring the pressure of a column to bear upon it, they here adopted entirely different

tactics. Marshaling their forces to the right and left of the embrasure, they made a long, open lane, extending from the foot of the wall to the extreme end of the garden, about two hundred feet in length.

I was first aware of their intentions, when down the whole length of the lane thus formed, I beheld an immense Anono, whose short, bristly fur proclaimed him to be of the soldier class, dashing toward the embrasure at immense speed. He came whirling along until within about thirty feet of us, and then rising, as if by a mere effort of will, he dashed himself with such great violence against the logs that they trembled with the shock of his heavy body. He had hardly struck this log, before his carcass rebounded from the object of impact like a rubber ball, and another creature immediately took his place.

And thus, in quick succession, did over twenty of these creatures hurl themselves against our defences; and if the utmost care had not been exercised in its construction, the barricade must have given way under the re-

peated assaults. As it was, it trembled and shook beneath the fierce blows thus given it, and I saw that unless immediate measures were taken to stop the onslaught, the defence must eventually break down.

Fortunately, it was bright moonlight. Very carefully I trained the barrel of the Remington through the embrasure, for ammunition was precious and I must shoot to kill. It is one thing, however, as all riflemen know, to hit a stationary object, and to plant a bullet squarely in something flying toward you at a high rate of speed. Just as I pulled the trigger for the first time, the warrior at whom my aim was directed rose with a quick bound, and passing upward fell heavily against the barricade. I had missed him. The bullet, ricochetting against the hard ground, passed harmlessly over the heads of the others. I instantly saw that I must change my tactics. I now noticed particularly, where the next two took off, as it were, for the final leap. Sighting carefully, I caught the next fellow just on the rise. The bullet struck him fairly and he

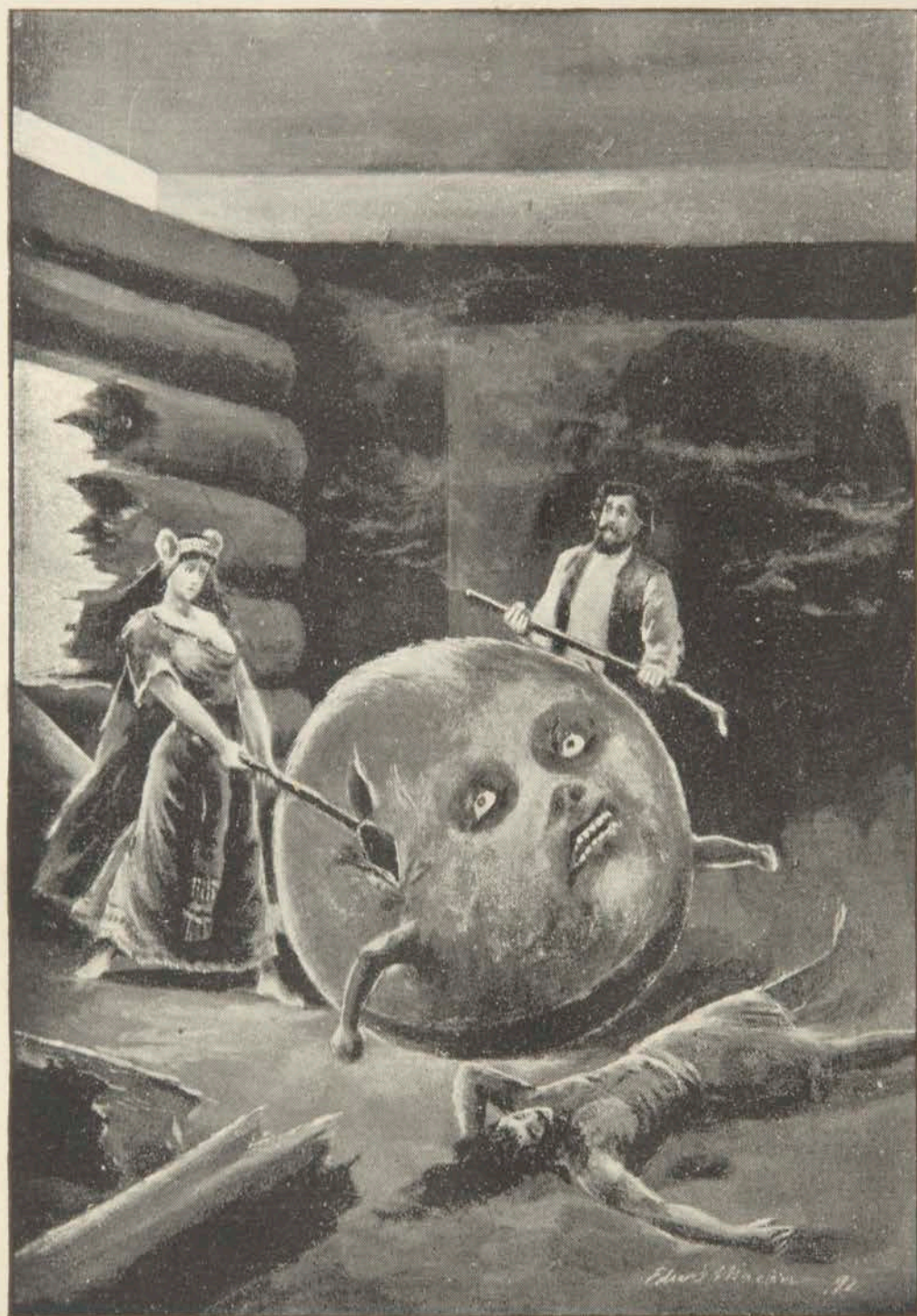
dropped at the foot of the embrasure stone dead. A second and a third met the same fate. A fourth, desperately wounded, dropped immediately below the embrasure and crawled away to die, grunting piteously.

It now became something like glass-ball shooting, only that the balls were fierce, living and desperate creatures, half human in their intelligence, and all-bestial in the awful passion they exhibited, as thoroughly aroused by the slaughter of their comrades, they fearlessly dashed forward, one after the other, to the assault.

It had been quite a difficult matter to reload with sufficient rapidity to keep them in check; and so heated had the rifle become, that I was compelled to lay it aside for a space, and depend upon the shot-gun.

A huge warrior, his bristles standing stiff with rage, hurled down upon us. I saw him coming, and let him have both barrels, but he minded the small shot no more than so much dust. On he flew. With a loud crash he struck the logs, already weakened by re-





AZUELA TO THE RESCUE.

peated assaults, and bursting through the breach, in another moment the infuriated creature was in our midst.

With a scream of triumph, the huge Anono turned and faced us, and it would have fared hardly with us, if Azuela had not proved herself a heroine equal to the occasion. Jacky-Jacky had been thrown violently to the floor by the sudden entrance of the infuriated Anono, and lay half stunned upon the hard earth. Both my rifle and shot-gun were empty, and my pistol lay beyond my reach. It looked as if in another second I should be overwhelmed by the fierce onslaught of the infuriated creature, when Azuela, snatching up the heavy axe which she had seen me use, attacked the huge animal with the courage of an Amazon. Again and again did the desperate girl bury the keen and heavy weapon in the quivering body of her unwieldy foe, dodging its fierce rushes with remarkable agility, and swinging the axe around her head in a manner which made it very unsafe for anyone to approach her. At last I got a

cartridge into the Remington, and the Anono being driven into a corner, I put a bullet into him in short order.

Luckily the log through which this intruder had burst his way had partially sprung back again into position, and none had dared to follow him, or it might have gone hard with us.

Just at this moment, when they were about to renew their leaping tactics, a loud cry was heard, and parting the throng in the garden like water, a score of chiefs rolled violently upon the scene. They were evidently high in authority, for the profoundest silence fell upon the mob, as one of them, an Anono of majestic aspect, lifted up his voice and spoke;

“O ye, rash and ignorant. What are ye about to do? Would ye attack the wise and great, and desecrate the abiding place of your Queen and her sacred guest, who has been sent to teach you wisdom? Behold! it is as he said, ye unbelievers. Go to the great furnace, and convince yourselves. Lo, from its mouth there poureth the white metal, flaming hot, even as the fire-god hath spoken. Provoke him no

more. Already he hath slain your best warriors. Provoke him no more, lest he annihilate (*abangahu*) you and yours."

He had hardly finished this extraordinary speech, when others, rolling rapidly to the scene, spoke up also, and loudly affirmed the truth of his statements.

Thank heaven, I had only miscalculated the time of the smelting of the ore. Frantically I rushed to the loophole which commanded a view of the furnace, and gazed anxiously toward the spot where the great round tower loomed black against the starlit sky.

Yes, my experiment had succeeded. From the huge brick mouth of the furnace there poured, white with the intense heat, a molten stream of metal, spluttering and hissing as it fell upon the sand, moist with the night dew, and ran in rivulets of fire into the molds prepared for it, while the shouts of joyful thousands, ascending skyward, assured me of my ascendancy over mine enemies and that the insurrection was quelled.

So great was the revulsion of feeling which

I experienced, as, from standing face to face with a horrible death, I now heard my name exalted to the skies with honor, that, overcome by the intense feeling of the moment, I staggered forward and should have fallen to the ground, but Azuela's arm was thrown around me. With her face close to mine, wearing an expression of deep concern, and her beautiful lips uttering words of pity, my eyes closed upon the scene, and sinking upon the soft bed of skins to which she guided my exhausted frame, I relapsed into unconsciousness.

CHAPTER XXII.

REIGN OF KING IRON, AND OF PROGRESS.

WHEN I came to my senses it was broad daylight. From the swoon into which I had fallen I had drifted gradually into a deep and healthful sleep. As I gazed about me, the broken logs of the embrasure and the weapons and ammunition still lying scattered about the apartment alone remained to recall the scenes of the previous night. All was profoundly still within the citadel.

Thoroughly refreshed, I at once arose, intent on finding some one from whom I could procure breakfast. The various chambers, however, appeared to be entirely deserted, and as I went from room to room, calling, alternately, on Jacky-Jacky and Azuela, no sound but the echo of my own voice broke the profound silence.

“What can it all mean?” I asked myself,

wonderingly. "Can I, like Rip, have slept twenty years, and the race have died out meantime?" Involuntarily I passed my hand over my face and down to my chin, half dreading that it might reveal, as I stepped out into the bright sunlight, the traditional long white beard of the victims of such freaks of nature; for so many strange things had happened lately that I was in a mood to be surprised at nothing.

No, my chin was in its normal condition, and my step as elastic with the vigor of twenty-eight years as on the day before. Still, it was queer. I stepped out on to the great square and gazed around with amazement. It was deserted. No sign of life was anywhere apparent in the streets. I was at a loss to account for this condition of things, when presently I espied old Ohoho coming around the corner of the square, at the top of his speed. Spent with his exertions, the old fellow no sooner saw me than he halted.

"Where are all the people, Ohoho?" I inquired.

"The people, why, where should they be, but down at your big furnace? You are all right now. They think you a magician of a high order. The White Queen bade me fetch you, as they are all impatient for a speech."

But I was in no mood for speechifying. Telling Ohoho to lead the way, I proceeded to the furnace from which the metal had all run out, but around which the entire population, in wonder and amazement, were still congregated, feeling of the new material with their paws and ascending the inclined planes to look into the mouth of the blast. Profiting by their being assembled in such vast numbers, however, I took occasion, after all, to say a few words to them, in which I assured them that if they would do my bidding I would raise them to a high pinnacle of prosperity. With the exception of the chiefs and aristocracy, I then dismissed them to their several avocations. These latter I requested to remain. By the next day, with their assistance, I had melted some of the pigs in the puddling furnace, and with great labor produced at last

something that I could take to the forge. I selected one hundred of the most intelligent to witness the operation of forging, and having previously erected a forge and furnished it with charcoal, I proceeded to improvise a pair of bellows out of the capacious cheeks of a huge slave, who, unmindful of the heat, and being relieved in turn by a companion, sent from his ample lungs a powerful and steady gust of wind, and acting as a living blowpipe, thus produced an intense heat. Finding, however, that this became unendurable, I finally erected a screen, made of brick, through a hole in which I passed the barrel of the fowling-piece, and then my blowpipe was complete. Though I subsequently superseded this rude contrivance with a pair of bellows made of kangaroo skins, it served its purpose sufficiently for a day or two, if care was taken to select an Anono sufficiently robust to stand the strain.

Close alongside this forge, I had placed a wooden block, and on this I put one of my iron pigs, thus making a very tolerable anvil. Taking the only hammer I possessed

in my hand, I picked up one of the long pieces of roughly puddled iron, thrust it into the fire, and started the slave blowing. At every puff of his huge lungs the fire burned up brisker, until the metal had attained to a white heat. Here at last was a material only awaiting the blows of a hammer to be fashioned into anything I had skill to make. About camp, every man is more or less of a smith. What should I manufacture first? A rough knife blade was about as useful a thing as I could think of, and I made it.

Looking back five years later, with this knife blade in my hand, I could hardly realize that in so short a time so great a revolution had taken place in the material prosperity of the nation. Under my guidance and care the mechanical arts had risen to a high degree of attainment. Placing the highly finished product of the time alongside that early effort of mine, I could hardly believe that the one was the outcome of a skilled Anono workman, the other the crude product of an unskilled white man. Having lain dormant for generations,

there was no department of industry in which these wonderful creatures did not far exceed my expectations, when once I had shown them the way. Of course, the article which they produced would have excited the ridicule of trained artisans, but they were infinitely better than nothing at all. In those five years their entire system of agriculture had undergone a change. They no longer dug the earth tediously with sharpened sticks or shells, but two stout Anonos, pushing from behind, propelled a very tolerably shaped iron plow through the rich and yielding soil. They no longer depended upon roots for food, or the capture of stray game in the forest, for the wild maize, carefully cultivated, furnished them with an abundance of corn meal, ground in the two large mills which spread their ample wings to the lake breeze.

Within the fortifications too, the habitations of the people evinced a decided improvement. With material advancement, and freedom from incessant search after food with which to sustain life, the desire for a more elaborate method

of existence sprang into being. Under my instructions trees were felled, a large saw-mill was erected up the river, just above the iron mine, which gave a yield of lumber adequate to the wants of the community. The machinery of this mill was very simply contrived. There was a good-sized undershot wheel, which ran a circular saw, which, though doubtless a clumsy enough affair, did excellent work in dressing down the huge logs to proper proportions.

My first step, after the erection of this mill, was the building of a suitable residence for Azuela, who being twenty-three years of age, was in the glory of her womanhood. During the five years that had last passed, I had made her education my special care, and it was my earnest wish to surround this remarkable being, whom it had been my lot to thus rescue from a life of savagery, with such of the comforts of modern civilization as I could command. While I retained, therefore, the old citadel, I had erected in the garden adjoining it a villa of elegant proportions. As many of the houses

of the chiefs and more prominent of these creatures were modeled after it, I will briefly describe it.

With the exception of the house I built for myself, where Jacky-Jacky also lived, it was the only one in the city containing a pair of stairs, the Anonos, on account of their peculiar rotund shape, being compelled to use inclined planes to convey themselves to the upper stories.

This house of Azuela's was in length about two hundred feet, and in breadth one hundred and fifty feet, and was two stories in height. It was firmly set on a stone foundation, four feet above the ground, and surrounded on all sides with a lofty and deep veranda, up the posts of which were trained the banksia, or native honeysuckle. The interior was arranged somewhat after the fashion of the modern wooden villas to be met with everywhere on the North American continent, except that the center of the lower floor was occupied by a large room which served the double purpose of banqueting hall and council chamber.

The rear portion of this residence was fitted up in modern European style in kitchens and servants' offices, the front rooms being reserved for reception and dwelling apartments. The upper portion of the residence was partitioned off for the special accommodation of Azuela and her attendant female Anonos. It was reached from the front of the house by a broad and handsome stairway, and from the back by a circular inclined plane, so as to afford the native attendants means of ascension and descension.

On the summit of this villa a lofty tower, rising, not ungracefully, fully thirty feet from the roof, was contrived to hold the first bell cast in the city of Anono, with which, by a rope leading through the roof, the Queen could summon her council at pleasure, at any time of the day and night, when urgent affairs of state might render their presence necessary. The interior of this residence, though furnished in a style which, no doubt, would have been thought rude and barbarous in Sydney or Melbourne, was here considered the acme of luxury. Chairs and lounges there were in plenty,

products of the trained native artisans, who, having served a term of years in the shops I had caused to be established, had acquired considerable manual dexterity. These frames, being rubbed, smoothed and varnished and oiled to a degree which made them quite resplendent, were upholstered in the coarse but pretty fabrics of the native looms, which, being dyed in various colors, not unskillfully blended, gave to the different apartments of the villa an air of taste and refinement.

The floor of the banqueting hall was tiled with red tiling throughout, and mats of felt formed of kangaroo hair were strewn about its surface, thus relieving the bareness. I had succeeded, after many failures, in producing a common kind of glass, in the manufacture of which I had made use of sand and limestone. These materials, however, had been too impure to produce a transparent article, the most tireless labor failing to free the limestone of the traces of iron with which it abounded. Nor was I more successful when I substituted wood ashes. The carbon, which I could not get rid

of, invariably tinged and impaired the beauty of the glass.

I was more successful, however, in producing by the blow-pipe and annealing process a number of circular pieces, about four inches in diameter, known generally in the trade as bulls-eyes, and which may be seen even now in use in ornamental windows. These I easily colored in different shades by the use of oxide of copper, which imparted to the disk a beautiful blue shade, protoxide of copper giving a red hue, and so on, availing myself of what superficial knowledge I possessed.

The day at length arrived when this edifice could be said to be fairly finished. Surrounded by its green, smooth lawns and tastefully disposed ornamental shrubbery, it formed a strange contrast to the grim pile of the old citadel. The use for this latter building had practically vanished with the increased enlightenment of the people, who, well armed with sharp steel weapons, had no longer any fear of their old enemies the kangaroos.

It was worth to me all the labor which had

been expended upon it, to see the pleasure with which Azuela contemplated her new residence. Forgetful for the time of all her queenly dignity, she ran with girlish delight from room to room, pattering up the steps of the broad stair-case with her little feet, no longer bare, but clothed comfortably in sandals of tanned leather of a russet color. I thought she would never get tired of pulling the bell rope and listening to the musical chime of the first bell ever heard in Anono. The slightest and simplest thing afforded her the most unbounded delight. The rudely contrived windows, sliding by counterweights of cast iron in not too well-fitting grooves, she pronounced marvels of artistic production. She went into ecstasies over the cooking arrangements, and the brick oven, in particular, in which one of her household was baking maize cakes, was a special object of wonder and delight. And as nothing like the appreciation of a pretty woman is so apt to turn a man's head, I was myself quite intoxicated with the pleasure of that hour spent in showing Azuela her new house, my especial gift.

"O Paul, my dearest brother, you are good to me."

Even as she uttered the words of affection, they seemed to strike a cold chill to my heart, for I had long loved this beautiful woman with her half barbaric graces, and her chivalrous, tender disposition, her quickness to acquire and profit by the knowledge that I had imparted to her.

"Yes, I am thy brother, and naught else to thee, O Azuela."

"What wouldst thou, O Paul?" and the dark intelligent eyes were turned toward me in eloquent language of their own, as when a woman who knows perfectly well that she is addressed in the language of love, feigns innocence thereof.

"If thy heart doth not tell thee, nor shall my lips," I answered, and I turned away, feeling as if all my efforts and labors were as nought if my life could not be linked with hers. "But peace," I said to myself, "O my soul, bide thy time, and woo her of thy whole steadfastness; mayhap she will come to thy

shelter yet. When trouble and care shall be her portion, womanlike she will seek some refuge from her world, which though she even govern will contain enough of trial, for is it not written in the history of her race that man, and why not woman, is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward, and who is there that escapeth?"

And as I would not spoil the pleasure of the woman I loved by my black looks, I choked down my feelings and went to her and took her hand and said:

"The time will come, O Azuela, when thou wilt feel the need of other affection than that of a brother; when thy nature will crave other consolations."

She looked at me so archly, lying back in a strange and unaccustomed fashion on her new divan, luxuriously nestling after the manner of womankind among the cushions with which it was provided, so tempting me from my good resolution, that I know not but what I must have told her all my heart then and there, forgetful of the fact that a thousand eager eyes,

just without the military cordon with which I had caused the villa to be surrounded, were fixed upon us as we sat near the open window; but Azuela must have divined my intention by the expression of my face, for she quickly arose, and leading me all trembling at the light touch of her hand, I who had conquered such obstacles as starvation and the fiery desert, to a remote part of the room, and fixing her gaze reproachfully upon me, said, in a voice in the fluctuations of which methought I could detect an extraordinary emotion:

“Not now, not now, O brother Paul, shalt thou speak of what thou termest love, and chains that bind. Let me be free yet. Besides thou didst say once, when thou didst inform me of the custom of marriage amongst thy people, and which seemeth to me a natural law, (for had I not ordained it here before thou camest?) that one Bacon, a wise man amongst you, hath said ‘He that is married hath given hostages to fortune.’ Life, as thou truly sayest, is short, and the hours are fleeting. A great work yet remaineth for thee to accom-

plish, though much thou hast done, and then, when the people's minds are prepared to receive the truths of that great religion which thy Bible teaches, it will be the most supreme task of all to secure their moral enlightenment. 'Till then no more of love."

Thus did this remarkable woman, who never during all these years had lost sight of the main objects of our alliance, the amelioration of this race and its ultimate conversion to the religion of our own people, gradually wean me from thoughts of herself and myself, and awaken within me anew the enthusiasm with which we had at first embarked upon the gigantic task before us; and so resolutely steeling my heart against all her charms, did I again address myself to the common welfare.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION.

FROM the completion of this villa may perhaps be dated the commencement of the most remarkable period of progress in the history of the Anonos.

Involving, as it did, in its construction, individual essays not only on my part, but on the part of a host of half-skilled artisans, it laid the foundation for a dozen or more new branches of industry. Thus, my rude experiments in glassmaking did not terminate with the completion of the building, but my assistants in that art, stimulated to increased exertion by the partial success which had rewarded my efforts, threw their whole energies into the business. The nailmakers and carpenters, the weavers of fabrics, the producers of lumber and the many different people who had been employed in its construction, had learned several

valuable lessons during its building, for simple as the rearing of such an edifice would have been and such as a few modern mechanics would have made easy work of, to this rude people, upon whom the light of civilization was but slowly breaking, it had been an almost incredible labor, one tasking all their ingenuity, and bringing latent talents to the surface with which one would hardly have credited them.

Previous to this undertaking I had established a mint and circulated a system of money throughout the nation. As the government, in the present condition of society, was the only customer of the artisan or laborer, I established a standard of value by placing back of every gold piece issued ten bushels of grain.

These pieces were about the size of a half-sovereign, being cast in the likeness of Azuela, and bearing upon their reverse, the words "Progress and Liberty." For every one I issued in payment, as I say, it was redeemable in ten bushels of grain, which remained stored to meet it in the royal granary. This granary I had had constructed shortly after the employ-

ment of new implements in agriculture, to hold the surplus of grain in fertile years, in case of future failure of crops. I also issued a currency of copper pieces, from a somewhat larger mold (silver not having been found) of which one hundred were declared the equivalent of the gold piece. This coinage was subsequently improved, so as to meet the increasing wants of the people, from time to time, in the coming years.

But now there sprang up other wants than that of food. The gold pieces assumed a much higher value, for they were freely circulated amongst the different artisans who were employed by the aristocratic class to build villas after the style of Azuela's. This hereditary nobility, while possessing but little personal property, was rich in realty. All the outlying dominions for miles around were owned by them under a common tenure, and the task devolved upon me to divide it equally among them, as they became, with the increased demand for property, to appreciate its true value.

I determined that when I put each one

into possession of his own, I would establish a system of taxation with which to carry on the government and push forward public improvements. I, therefore, had Azuela declare a summons by herald of a chief man from each of the different quarters of the nation, to pass, in general assembly, upon the new laws formed for the guidance of the people.

On the appointed day, two hundred Anonos, skilled and intelligent, were sent by their fellows to the meeting in the great council chamber. They continued in meeting or session for three days, during which time the several bills introduced were commented on, amended by vote, an institution the fairness of which they readily perceived, and finally passed and declared law, receiving, upon being reduced to writing, the final assent of Azuela.

Among other laws enacted by this remarkable assembly, whose attention to business before the house would have put to shame any gathering of modern parliamentarians, were the following:

First. To set apart certain moneys for free

public education, and the compulsory attendance of children.

Second. For the erection of hospitals for the sick and infirm.

Third. To provide for the building of a mercantile marine, and the regular maintenance of a standing army.

Fourth. To establish a system of pecuniary rewards for discoveries and improvements in the useful arts.

Fifth. To promote and encourage a national literature.

And last of all, a bill was introduced which, much to my surprise, endowed me, in consideration of services rendered to the nation, with a strip of real estate on the main land, which, in view of the fact that these creatures were already developing a remarkable knowledge of values, I had no hesitation in accepting, for I hold it no sin for a man to look out for himself a little. I had long acted as first counselor, and was confirmed in that position under the title of prime minister.

Among other acts also passed, was one pro-

viding liberally for the privy purse of Azuela, endowing her, and any issue she might have, in perpetuity. In the latter part of this enactment, I thought I recognized the hand of that old rascal Ohoho, who was as shrewd and humorous an Anono as I have met, and ever took time by the forelock.

Nor was Jacky-Jacky, to whose faithful custody I had entrusted the large and varied mining operations in which the government was engaged, forgotten. He was confirmed in his office as superintendent of mines, and suitable emoluments set apart for him. There were times when he would no doubt have gladly swopped title and all for a pint of whisky, but on the whole he was well satisfied.

The population had so increased under the better conditions of existence which had been in vogue during the past few years, that the city had long ago outstripped the boundaries originally established by the old fortifications. Extensive suburbs had sprung up on the main land, and communication between them and the older part of the city, consisting

but of a couple of flat boats, I caused a bill to be passed for the building of a bridge.

The distance from shore to shore being about two hundred yards, piles were driven in at intervals of fifty feet, the water being comparatively shallow, and in a little time a substantial bridge connected these outlying suburbs with the main portion of the city.

In the meantime, the construction of the first vessel, which I intended to use for exploration purposes, was rapidly proceeded with. The tempestuous character of the great lake rendered it almost impossible to make more than short coasting voyages in the frail canoes. I was, therefore, anxious to build and equip a vessel of size and stability sufficient to enable us to explore this great body of water, on the opposite shores of which perhaps, tribes, in a partial state of civilization, might be discovered, or some way found by which communication might be eventually opened with the outer world.

I therefore set to work with energy, occupying my days in superintending the con-

struction of a suitable shipyard, an indispensable preliminary step.

While the yard was being built, I constructed a small wooden model for a vessel, of about sixty tons burden, on a scale of a quarter of an inch to the foot, and thus ascertained the shape in which her timbers would have to be cut. I then prepared my shipway by raising a number of strong blocks of timber a short distance apart on which to rest the keel, inclining the whole at such an angle that when the moment arrived to knock away the shores, the heavy fabric might glide easily into the water.

For the keel I selected a gigantic eucalyptus, several fine specimens of which grew upon the island, and put a number of artisans at work shaping it down. To this, I united, by the strongest kind of scarph joint, a stem and stern post of equally stout proportions. The ribs, beams, knees and carlings were of selected scrub oak, an exceedingly tough and hard wood, and admirably suited for the purpose. After the main skeleton was thus completed,

all parts being carefully dovetailed and bolted together, the skin of the vessel was proceeded with. This was made of wooden planking from the lumber mill up the river, fastened on to the ribs, the lowest layer pressing into the rabbet of the keel and the highest resting on the topmost bulwark. These I fastened with wooden trenails, of the tough scrub oak. She was then caulked from stem to stern with strips of kangaroo felt and we payed her with a resinous pitch, obtained by boiling the woob pulp of a native fir tree, which hardened as it cooled to a thick, consistent mass. She was then lined and decked, her mast holes, fore and main, marked out and cut, and being fitted with pumps, she was ready for launching.

This great event I determined to inaugurate with some degree of pomp, and proposed to Azuela that a general holiday should be proclaimed, so that all could witness the unusual sight.

Busy as this task had kept me, it had not in any way interfered with a pet project of my

own, and in which Azuela was my chief co-adjutor, viz., the casting of types, for with the general diffusion of knowledge had come a lively desire to read, upon the part of a large number of the population. I had had established for some time a small hand-mill, for the production of paper, the increased handiness of the workers in metal, rendering the drawing of copper wire through iron plates and the subsequent construction of suitable screens on which to dry the pulp when lifted from the vat a matter of no great difficulty. But hitherto the only news disseminated among the people had been by word of mouth, or by means of written placards on the corners of the streets. Even the books and texts required in the public schools had to be written. Therefore I decided to have types, if possible, no matter how crude. I had explained to Auzela the immense influence that this great art had had upon the destinies of mankind; and how both the Bible and the encyclopedia, and a vast multitude of other books had been produced in copies almost outnumbering the fish of the lake, by its magic agency.

Azuela had entered from the first into all my plans, and she bent all her energy and intelligence to the accomplishment of this object. I had no metal with which to cast types save an amalgam of gold and copper, which, though soft, I concluded would be hard enough to be worked in a hand press, the only one I could hope for in the then rough condition of the mechanic arts.

In the evenings, by the light of our oil lamps, which burned well enough with their wicks of native flax, the wild species of which I was reducing to a state of cultivation, I worked at cutting the steel punches from which to make the necessary dies for casting. I was able to bring to this branch of manufacture rather more practical knowledge than in other arts, in which success had only been attained after repeated experiments and failures, as I had seen the whole process gone through frequently, and knew how to proceed. First, having cut the punches, I reduced them to a perfectly smooth and equal surface on a hard stone and then tempered them to the

requisite hardness. I then struck them into a piece of copper and thus procured a matrix. This was a work of considerable labor, as, although in making the Anono written language, I had placed it upon a purely phonetic basis, and reduced the alphabet to twenty-four letters, omitting the "w" and "z," the sounds of which are not used, yet the work required such exactitude in execution that I was unable to delegate it to any one else, save Azuela, in whose neatness of handicraft the superior aptitude of the white race was perceptibly apparent. However, by dint of perseverance, we did eventually finish them off, and fitted a mold in a casting box, so that these dies could be attached interchangeably. As these types which we made were half pure gold and half copper, I suppose they must have been the most expensive ones ever cast, but they answered their purpose admirably. I cast several fonts of each letter, along with such punctuation marks as were absolutely necessary. These first types were all big, upper case letters, but without attempt at justification, they having

the same thickness of body for an "l" as for an "m." The ink I had prepared for use by boiling vegetable oil, adding resin to give it body and coloring with lamp black; and the resulting fluid, thick and viscous, was not a bad substitute in lieu of a properly manufactured article.

When all was ready, having had many a turn at the case myself, I manufactured one, and distributed my type therein. Azuela stood by and saw me fill and justify my first stick. So affected was I by this resuming as an outcast from civilization a long abandoned occupation, bringing back as it did the memory of dear friends and relatives it might be my fate never to behold again, that the first type ever set in Anono came near being pied, and would have been if I had not steadfastly addressed myself to the business I had in hand.

Soon I had about three sticks of matter set. It was a general announcement in the Anono language, of the launch of the schooner "Azuela," for so I had determined to name the new craft.

With a cloth dauber, for I had nothing better, I daubed the types with the ink, covered them with the paper, and took a pull. The feat was accomplished. The era of printing had dawned upon the people of Anono.

Beyon

CHAPTER XXIV.

GALA DAY—THE LAUNCHING OF THE "AZUELA."

THE following morning broke bright and fair. It was a general holiday throughout the nation. From early dawn the inhabitants of the outlying suburbs had been pouring over the bridge into the city in one steady stream. By the time the sun had climbed above the roofs of the houses the streets were alive with sightseers, and the whole city had put on a gay appearance. The national flag, a kangaroo and an aborigine clasping hands above an Anono, as indicating the common origin, and bearing the legend, "While Rolls the World, So Roll I," waved from a thousand points of vantage in the delightful breeze. Skilled artisans, their fur nicely combed, rolled hither and thither, escorting their wives and sweethearts. Staid merchants, their stores closed for the day, mingled with the haughty

aristocrats whose houses lined the principal square, or stopped for a moment to purchase some succulent root or native sweetmeat from one of the numerous peripatetic venders who perambulated the crowded streets with well-filled pouches, offering their wares to the public.

The announcement, which had been set up on the previous evening, and of which I had struck off one thousand copies before retiring for the night, had been conspicuously posted at the corners of the principal streets. The fact that thousands stopped before them to read, attested to the widespread education of these people, in whose minds their representatives had fostered the belief that to be ignorant was to be wicked, and occasionally some laborer, unable to make out the characters himself, might be seen patiently sitting, while his son, an enforced attendant at the public schools, squatted upon his father's shoulders, spelled out the meaning of the announcement.

It was in the neighborhood of the shipyard, however, that the throng was thickest. Al-

though the launch of the "Azuela" would not take place until the sun was in the zenith, long before the appointed time every position from which a favorable view of the ceremony could be obtained was crowded to its utmost extent. Along the dock front Anonos of all classes sat in orderly array three deep, their children well in front, so as to afford a view over their heads to those in the rear rows. The flat roofs of the adjacent houses were also thronged with people, and when, marshaling my workmen, I arrived upon the scene, I found public expectation wrought up to the highest pitch.

There was much curiosity, I found, even among the intelligent mechanics by whom I was surrounded, as to how so immense a body could be moved into the water, and odds were freely offered by several of the sporting aristocracy that she would not budge at all. Jacky-Jacky, moving quietly among the crowd, was covering all such wagers in short order, which I observed much to my amusement while awaiting the arrival of Queen Azuela and her body-guard.

Upon Ohoho had devolved the honor of escorting his royal mistress to the dockyard, and the old rascal appeared at the head of the procession commanding the mob to roll on one side in his most pompous tones. Determined, for the fun of the thing, to give him a little fright, I approached him and informed him that as a mark of special honor I had reserved for him the best seat on board the schooner, right in the bow, where, as the veriest tyro in nautical matters will recollect, the wave caused by the sudden impact of the body of the launch with the resisting water generally curls up, making it a situation more damp than pleasant. I communicated this little plan for Ohoho's benefit to some of the other gentlemen and ladies, and as they were all well aware that as the old fellow got along in years he evinced a decided tendency to shun the daily ablutions which were now generally observed throughout the nation, they readily fell in with the scheme. Azuela also had a seat, not on the vessel, but on the combing of the shipyard, where I had caused a small marquee

to be erected, in which, seated comfortably and sheltered from the rays of the sun, she could name the ship, breaking over the bows a bottle of native wine, and observe the whole ceremony with fitting dignity and comfort.

All being in readiness, the ways being thoroughly greased with kangaroo fat, the shores were knocked away, and obedient to the laws of gravity, the huge bulk began to slide slowly toward the water. Just as it started I gave the signal to the Queen, who dashed against the broad bow the bottle of wine I had furnished, and exclaimed in a voice, which, clear and distinct, penetrated to the remotest confines of the multitude:

“I name this vessel the ‘Azuela,’ the pioneer of the navy of the Anonos.”

A loud grunt of applause, starting from those in the immediate vicinity (for the Anglo-Saxon cheer is not suited to the vocal organs of this people) deepened into a dull and heavy roar, as it was caught up and echoed from mouth to mouth throughout the vast assemblage. Gliding along the well greased ways, the

schooner moved rapidly toward the water, her momentum increasing every moment, until, dashing the spray far over her bow, as she plunged almost beneath the element in her downward course, she gained the lake, where, checked gradually by the shore lines as they were payed out in the paws of 500 stout Anonos, she gradually lost her momentum, and finally, like a spirited horse, mastered after a hard contest, came to a standstill a short distance from the land.

Even while I was admiring her lines, and the ease with which she rode the slight swell setting in on the beach, I was convulsed by the sight of the rotund figure of old Ohoho, that adventurous mariner, who had been the sole passenger of the schooner during her launch. Dripping all over, he now appeared on the taffrail of the "Azuela" waving his wiry little black paws at me, and uttering threats of implacable vengeance. Thinking the joke had gone far enough, I dispatched several of my servants in a canoe with cloths, with orders to rub the old fellow down, and

to bring him back in time for the state dinner, which was to follow the launching, to which the cabinet officers, with other men prominent in the affairs of the nation, with their wives and daughters, were invited.

Leaving instructions with the foreman of the yard for the proper mooring of the "Azuela" alongside the derrick which had been constructed to ship her lofty spars, in the best of spirits I then gave myself over to the enjoyment of the day.

Dismissing her body-guard, and placing herself under my protection, Azuela strolled for over an hour through the principal streets of the city, while I pointed out more specifically some of the most important public improvements which had been lately effected.

And seven years only having elapsed since first the scheme of the physical improvement of this people had been unfolded to them, it was indeed to be seen that remarkable progress had been made.

There, on the site of the old citadel, which had ever been a tumbled-down, badly

constructed building, a massive edifice of stone reared its imposing façade, within which the representatives of the nation could meet and frame its laws. Opposite, a little to the right, was the building containing the different courts of justice, while side by side, the Christian church and the Temple of Nature attested to the perfect immunity from schismatic differences which the votaries of the two principal religions enjoyed under the protection of an enlightened government. There, too, arose the walls of a colossal theater, within which eight thousand Anonos could be comfortably seated, and where the dramatic talent of the nation had received its first genuine impulse. And where, but seven short years before, I had crept for shelter into a miserable mud hut, there now stood a magnificent hotel replete with many of the conveniences of modern life, and deriving a large patronage from distant but wealthy suburbanites who sought in the busier city life frequent relief from the *ennui* of a country existence.

And thus the sun went down on this auspicious day in the history of Anono, and saw a people reclaimed from barbarism and brutality basking in the sunshine of prosperity, and partaking of the blessings of civilization, still lingering in the well-paved and well-lighted streets, to enjoy the general air of pleasure which permeated all ranks of society, and bade fair to prolong the carnival of the day far into the night.

As moving silently apart, for Azuela had retired to the quiet of her villa, fatigued with all this bustle and excitement, I contemplated the vista of the principal street, Anono avenue, and wandered along its majestic length, brilliant with its numerous restaurants and wine-shops and places of public amusement, I seemed as one who in a dream beholds the unreal things of his sleeping moments. And thus, as I mused, amid the sounds of revelry going on far into the night, I still planned new improvements. On that vacant space I saw already rising a public library, its shelves heavy with the literature of a new people; there,

where a few miserable huts still remained as tokens of the former degraded condition of the inhabitants, I would place a lying-in-hospital for the poorer females; there, a new school for manual training, for the present quarters were overcrowded; and on this spot, as soon as my type foundry was well under way and my compositors sufficiently trained, would I establish a newspaper, whose editions should teem with the advertisements of the enterprising and whose editorials should prove a potent factor in the spread of general intelligence.

Already a number of the more educated Anonos were in daily attendance at my pet institution, the Anono School of Journalism and Literature, fitting themselves to take paying positions on Anono newspapers.

It was curious to note how in Azuela, by the bye, the hereditary literary itch of the white race cropped out when she heard that I was going to establish a newspaper, and a still more curious fact that this trait found expression in verse, as it does with all young writers.

She had a pull with the editor and he was compelled to publish the following poem which is given here in a literal translation from the Anono language:

THE CREATION OF WOMAN.

By Jordan's sacred river,
I lay me down to rest;
The feathered palms which fringed its banks
Were mirrored on its breast,
And the sun, one golden ball of fire,
Sunk slowly in the west.

A deep sleep fell upon me
With the closing of the day,
And strength was given my spirit
To leap from its fetters of clay;
Back to the gates of forgotten Time
It hovered and soared away.

Through the ancient garden of Eden
The swift Euphrates ran;
And, all disconsolate, I saw,
With features pale and wan,
The great forerunner of our race,
Primeval, lonely man.

"O, mighty and wise Creator,
Do as Thou deemest best;
But long and weary my days are,
And lonely my hours of rest.
Even the bird in the date tree flies
To its mate to be caressed.

"The tigress that wanders nightly,
The waters swift beside,

Lovingly follows her lord to drink
Where the river sparkles wide;
And the lion, that stalks on the moonlit plain,
Roars to his tawny bride."

"Thy prayer is heard, O, mortal,
Sleep on thy grassy bed;
Sleep, till through dawn's bright portal
The first faint rays be shed;
Thy race shall spread o'er all the Earth,
What I have said, is said."

In the hush of an awed creation,
He paused where the sleeper lay;
And molded the form of Woman
Out of the senseless clay;
The potent work of a Master Hand,
To breathe with the dawn of day.

Her graceful form he rounded;
He lengthened her radiant hair;
The tint of the sweet carnation
He placed on her cheek so rare;
And the budding petals of roses
On each bosom, so white and fair.

He shapened her slender fingers;
He shortened her height a span;
Ordaining a law that woman
Should ever look up to man
For strength, and love and protection;
As made on a bolder plan.

Her wayward and wilful fancy
He caught from the evening breeze;
Her voice from the night-bird warbling
Divinely among the trees.
Of pearls and coral He formed her mouth,
From the depths of His tropic seas.

The fierce and stormy passions
He left in the sleeper's breast;
And placed in the bosom of Woman
A longing for home and rest;
Endowed her with Faith and Charity,
And sympathy with the oppressed.
From the vast and vaulted heavens,
From the region of starry light,
He gathered a diadem-priceless,
A treasure of splendor bright;
And gave her the jewel of Chastity
To guard by day and by night.
He made her the shining emblem
Of Music, and Verse and Art,
And through the endless ages,
Assigned her a noble part.
The sacred names of Mother and Wife
He breathed in her tender heart.
From the trackless paths of Chaos,
To view the work of His hand,
He summoned His waiting Angels—
And over the sea and land,
With a whirl and rush of countless wings,
They answered their Lord's command.

* * *

The first faint light of morning
Broke in on that garden fair;
The sweet perfume of new born flowers
Lay thick on the balmy air.
The mighty Host had vanished away,
And Woman lay sleeping there.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CAPTURE OF THE WHITE QUEEN.

I SHALL touch but lightly upon the events of the next few months, during which time most of the improvements contemplated on the night of the carnival had been practically realized, and come to a period in the history of this people, which, as it involved my deepest personal interests, and brought me close to the verge of madness and utter despair, I can not contemplate, even at this distance of time, without a shudder.

Matters happened in this wise: I had long had it in contemplation to explore the lake, but owing to the pressure of public affairs, notwithstanding that the navy numbered four good-sized vessels, I had hitherto not found time to do so.

I had had indeed, some difficulty in the rigging and furnishing of these vessels, and had

found that extensive alterations were necessary, owing to the peculiar anatomical construction of the sailors with which they were to be manned. Of course an Anono, having no legs, could not be expected to go aloft, so everything had to be contrived to be worked from the deck. The ultimate rig decided upon consisted of a large jib forward, with an outhaul, halliards and downhaul, and a large foresail and mainsail, rigged on the ordinary boom and gaff, all of which sails could be easily worked from the deck.

As the "Azuela" however did not lay close to the wind under this rig, I fitted her with a jigger-mast and lug-sail over the stern, and thus easily brought her up another point.

But all these matters were settled, and the various undertakings I had in hand being on a fair road to a successful completion and under the capable management of skillful superintendents, I determined to put my long contemplated project of exploring the coast line and further shores of the lake into execution. With this object in view, I manned,

equipped and furnished the "Azuela," and one other vessel of somewhat smaller proportions, the "Island City," and putting Jacky-Jacky, who had become a very expert sailor, in command of the latter vessel, I embarked with Azuela upon the other.

In addition, however, to the ordinary crew of six, who, with a sailing master and one mate, usually constituted the full complement, I took with me on each vessel as many soldiers as could be well accommodated between decks—the whole expedition, with this addition, numbering in all about eighty-five persons. The vessel was amply provisioned for a voyage of three months, as was also her consort, the "Island City."

In a very short time many of the men became quite expert sailors, and they entered into the spirit of this voyage with a zest quite indescribable. I taught them how to lighten the heavier work of the vessels by pulling and hauling in unison, as is the way with the seamen of other nations. On some moonless night when the increasing breezes made it a matter

of precaution to reef topsails, it was not infrequent to hear, rolling out over the waste of waters, the full, sonorous grunts of some lusty Anono sailor in a tune like this:

O, as I was rolling down the street,
Heigho, blow the man down,
A pretty Anono I chanced to meet,
O give me some time to blow the man down.

Says she, "Young fellow will you stand treat?"
Heigho, blow the man down,
"O yes, my dear, when next we meet,"
O give me some time to blow the man down.

O, up aloft that topsail goes,
Heigho, blow the man down,
Heave her up ye An-o-nos,
O give us some time to blow the man down.

O, whisky made me pawn my clothes,
Heigho, blow the man down,
Hoist that sail and away she goes,
For that is the stuff to knock a man down.

The first two or three days were uneventful, the vessels coasting slowly along the shore in a southeasterly direction, during which time little of moment occurred, and save the occasional discovery of some small stream or inlet, there was nothing worth recording.

On the fourth day, however, at dawn, the lookout sighted a huge mountain, the sides of

which were clothed with heavy timber, but whose summit had been denuded of its growth by some forest fire, which had left that portion of the mountain black and somber and presenting a marked contrast to the green belt below.

While it was, of course, possible that this extensive conflagration had originated in some stroke of lightning, yet it was more than probable that the carelessness of some one starting a fire as a signal on the summit, a practice common in the Australian ranges, had been its origin.

Be that as it may, I at once determined to land here, and explore the country, and to that end brought the "Azuela" and her consort, the "Island City," to anchor in a little bay, and along toward noon disembarked my forces.

Delighted to be once more on shore, the Anono soldiers rolled up and down the smooth beach, shaking themselves, and dusting out their furs on the yellow sand. Others were engaged in erecting a small tent for Azuela's use, and I myself, totally unsuspecting the presence of man, was gazing placidly upon the beautiful verdure of the forest, when a flight

of arrows was suddenly discharged from the bush, and hurtling past me struck and wounded two of our party.

Once again did I stand face to face with human beings, and this time, no doubt, from the appearance of the few who showed themselves between the trees, it was by some fierce and hostile tribe we were attacked, whose territory we had unknowingly invaded.

As to whom they might be was speedily solved by Jacky-Jacky, who, plucking one of their arrows out of the ground where it had stuck quivering, examined it carefully, and then pronounced in an emphatic manner, which carried conviction with it that he was not mistaken, that the arrows were such as were used by the Galla-Gallas, a fierce and warlike tribe, whom the encroachments of the white race had been for years driving further and further into the interior. These were, he informed me, a race of warriors, killing all of their female children save the first-born, and indulging in the practice of polyandry, each woman of the tribe having no less than seven husbands. While their

weapons were of the most primitive kind, they were unsurpassed in tracking and running down their prey; but their intellect, directed almost exclusively to the means of procuring food, operated almost wholly within the range of the rudest bodily senses. They had no fixed habitations. At best a screen of twigs and bushes, or a rude tent of skins, served them for shelter. Cannibalism obtained among them and in times of dearth they did not scruple to eat their wives and children. He described them as being very numerous.

I hastily gathered these details from Jacky-Jacky while I was forming the men in line, it being my intention to at once proceed into the interior. Little did I suspect the result of this last move on my part. I found the interior swarming with savages, and was forced, after hard fighting, to return, my column half cut to pieces. My dismay at this unexpected repulse at the hands of these fierce and intractable people was soon destined to be augmented by the news of a more dreadful calamity which had occurred in my absence, when, on seeking

Azuela within her tent, I found her not. Horrified, I learned from the solitary survivor of that dreadful massacre, who crept timidly from the bushes, of the sudden sortie and its attendant indiscriminate slaughter. They had spared her life, for they were short of women, but Azuela, the White Queen of the Anonos, was a prisoner in the hands of the Galla-Gallas.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BATTLE WITH THE GALLA-GALLAS.

HORRIFIED beyond measure at this dreadful news, I would have plunged alone into the bush to Azuela's rescue, armed only with my rifle and the few remaining rounds of ammunition, but fortunately the remnant of my devoted band forcibly rolled in and interfered between me and the useless sacrifice. Cooler counsels and the assurance of Jacky-Jacky that among the women of the tribe Azuela would undoubtedly be safe from immediate molestation, at length prevailed upon me to reconsider my rash resolve to attempt her immediate rescue.

Surrounded as we were by unknown dangers, and our numbers greatly reduced by the unequal conflict of the morning, I resolved to sail at once for Anono for reinforcements. Sailing against the comparatively light head winds which we had encountered on our way

up the lake, the city could not be far distant. The fair strong breeze then setting from the south would undoubtedly enable us to make the north end of the island in forty-eight hours, from which point a messenger could be dispatched to Ohoho with orders to prepare a strong force for immediate action.

Two days later, having touched on the island and dispatched the messenger, we arrived and cast anchor in the familiar roadstead. The city was wrapped in mourning for the loss of a queen so universally beloved and respected; but the warlike spirit which animated all classes told me that her subjects were not likely to waste much time in useless lamentation. In addition to the standing army of ten thousand hardy and well-drilled soldiers, a call for volunteers at once put an overwhelming force at my immediate disposal. Business was practically suspended. Merchants who had attained to high prominence in the community, failing to obtain the command of companies, enlisted as common soldiers in the ranks. Skilled artisans flung aside their tools and took

up the short knife of the private without a murmur. The heads of great houses among the aristocracy spent money like water to arm and equip regiments. In three days' time from the arrival of the flotilla before the fortifications of Anono, the advance guard of an army forty thousand strong had passed over the bridge to the mainland, their objective point the country of the Galla-Gallas, bent on the rescue of their Queen.

I reckoned that even taking into consideration the windings of the shore, the distance to the bay where we had formerly landed could not exceed two hundred miles. This immense army, to whom fifteen miles an hour when on the march was not an extraordinary speed, would be able to reach this point almost as soon as the four vessels of the Anono navy, traveling by the shorter water-way, would get there. These, deeply laden with provisions and equipments of all kinds, set sail for the little bay just as the last of the land forces crossed the bridge. In three days' time the first of this fleet dropped anchor, and I then anxiously awaited the arrival of the army.

On attempting to go ashore, we found ourselves confronted by a host of howling savages, who, from the summit of the mountain had espied the ships afar off, and had hurried to the beach, whence they discharged showers of arrows in the direction of the vessels.

The night was passed in intense anxiety. Would Ohoho never come?

In the meantime, that sturdy warrior was forcing his way through the almost impenetrable thickets of mallee scrub, regardless of the fact that the hardships of the march and the rough character of the ground to be traveled over was producing sad havoc in his ranks. Cut and lacerated by the dreadful spinefex or porcupine grass, these brave troops yet put forth the most incredible exertions. Confronted by a deeply indented bay of some miles in extent, their gallant leader plunged boldly into the water (a deed of true heroism on the part of old Ohoho, considering his aversion to the element) and the whole force following his example, rolled safely across; then with dripping furs and benumbed bodies it continued its weary march.

It was at day-break on the morning of the fourth day that from my position at the cross-trees of the "Azuela," I first caught sight of the advance guard of Ohoho's forces, wearily rolling along the wide strip of sandy beach which encircled the bay wherein the vessels rode at anchor. Confounded and alarmed at the unlooked-for appearance of this vast array of strange creatures, the Galla-Gallas, uttering loud shouts of defiance and dismay, retreated into the interior. Jumping into a boat, I hastened to the land, and was soon among my old friends.

In their joy at meeting the vessels containing that provision of which they stood so sorely in need, all was now light and hope, where but a few hours previously had been darkness and despair.

One by one, the different regiments rolled up on the broad beach, wheeling in fine style and saluting, as they passed the spot where I stood. Camp was pitched, videttes posted, and a chance then given for the stragglers to come in. On the muster roll being called, however,

at evening, it was found that many were missing, having doubtless fallen by the way of excessive fatigue. Several had perished of cold contracted during their prolonged swim across the bay and subsequent marching in wet furs.

I decided, therefore, to issue double rations, and rest the whole force until morning.

Late into the night did Ohoho and I go the rounds of the camp, passing from watch-fire to watch-fire, and cheering and encouraging the men for the conflict of the morrow.

Toward morning, the videttes being driven in by the enemy, anticipating an attack in force, I gave orders for formation of the regiments, which now being drawn up on the beach, the men being thoroughly rested and fed, and in fine spirits, presented an imposing appearance.

At the head of each regiment was its officer, distinguished from the privates by a strip of red cloth around his middle. His sergeants and orderlies marched on the flanks and rear. Each regiment contained 1,000 Anonos.

Leaving two regiments to guard the camp

and prevent a repetition of the surprise which had resulted in the capture of poor Azuela, this immense force then moved steadily into the interior, each soldier carrying two days' rations in his pouch.

Though harassed from the start by the sharpshooters of the enemy while marching through the bush, the head of the column presently drove back these stragglers, as it debouched into a fair and fertile plain, which afforded the enemy little or no shelter.

The fact of their thus retreating convinced me that while most likely the Galla-Gallas were ignorant of the race of the Anonos, yet the conduct of our apparently unwieldy soldiers in the skirmish of a few days before had taught the enemy that they were not to be despised.

The head of the first part of the column had about reached the middle of this plain when several hundred aborigines rushed from the adjacent woods, armed with spears, boomerangs and bows and arrows, and engaged our men, deploying in skirmish line along our front.

Then old Ohoho showed his generalship. To the great astonishment of the enemy there suddenly shot out from the flanks of the first regiment a long line of Anonos, who, rolling rapidly over the surface of the plain, threatened them in the rear. In vain they endeavored to retreat. Hemmed in on all sides, they were overpowered by superior weight and numbers and speedily hacked in pieces by the heavy, short knives of their opponents. One alone of this skirmishing party, throwing down his weapons as a token of surrender, was taken prisoner. I immediately gave orders for this man to be brought to me. His astonishment when confronted with a white man acting as leader of such a vast multitude of strange, half-human creatures, was unbounded. On interrogating him I learned of the whereabouts of poor Azuela. According to his report she was alive and well and at present occupying a tent in common with some other women, and, being white, she had been treated with some consideration. The black villain also added that she was to be reserved for the

chief of the tribe, Walla-Walla, who had long wished to possess a white woman for a wife.

Having also ascertained that he knew the exact spot where Azuela was lodged, I took care to keep this fellow in close custody until the time came for utilizing his knowledge. I was compelled to desist from further questioning, as at that moment a messenger arrived from Ohoho, urging me to bring forward fresh troops to the front, where he was hotly engaged with the enemy.

Swinging five picked regiments into line, I wheeled them upon the foe, adopting the usual tactics of the Anonos when charging in battle, and which is as effective in its way as a rush with bayonets. Imagine five thousand bodies armed with heavy, short knives, flying through the air in mighty bounds and hurling themselves right through the body of the enemy, stabbing right and left, and forming quickly on the other side to charge again. Imagine these, in their turn, being struck down, speared and cut to pieces by the infuriated aborigines,



THE HEAVIES ENGAGE THE ENEMY.

sometimes defeated, sometimes victorious, until, all mixed up together, their blood mingled in one common stream upon the plain, and you can form some idea of the terrible sight presented to my gaze. And each regiment, as fast as it came up, found fresh reinforcements of the enemy ready to meet it, who, having emptied their quivers of arrows and slung their boomerangs until they almost darkened the sky, flung down their bows and grasping their spears and clubs rushed to the onslaught with hideous cries.

Amid the din of battle the grunts of old Ohoho, as he hurled his immense form upon the foe, leading his men wherever danger was thickest and help most needed, could be plainly heard.

Jacky-Jacky, begrimed and bloody, fought at the head of his regiment in a manner which excited the admiration of his enemies and rendered him a hero in the eyes of the whole army. Armed with a gigantic club, which few white men could have wielded long, he literally mowed down his opponents, who, while com-

paratively brave and active, were compelled to give way before his desperate rushes.

Standing as I then did upon a small knoll, I was able to note the tide of battle as it ebbed and flowed, sometimes to our own and sometimes to the enemy's advantage. Reinforced, however, as the latter repeatedly was, by fresh troops, and armed with superior weapons, I saw that our position in the middle of the valley was in great danger of being forced. If the enemy could but pierce our center and thus disorganize our formation, the day would be his, for, forced from the plain into the thick scrub, the Anonos would become an easy prey to the arrows of the enemy.

And this was exactly what Walla-Walla, the wily chief of the Galla-Gallas, was endeavoring to do. I saw that this move must be prevented at all hazards, and called up the last ten regiments—all picked men, fresh and impatient to be at the enemy. And not a moment too soon. The gallant Ohoho, forced back upon our center, fought desperately to retrieve the day. His regiment, the Heavies, in which not a

man weighed less than 300 pounds, had been irresistible in the early part of the fight; but they lacked the wind to enable them to keep up the contest. Nearly one-half of these gallant fellows lay disabled on the field, or had retired panting for breath.

Another regiment, known as the Royal Whites, composed exclusively of members of the aristocracy, who had thus suddenly been called upon to exchange the pleasures of drill in camp for active service, had acquitted themselves nobly throughout the day; but torn and decimated by the flights of arrows which had been poured upon them, they were compelled to retreat. Their fiercest rushes on the foe had been received against the sharp points of the barbed spears, transfixing them completely, so that many expired in great agony.

The left wing of the army, led by young In-nudu, as gallant a soldier as there was in Anono, had performed prodigies of valor. Twice had it attacked the enemy and broken clear through from front to rear, stabbing

many on the way, and breaking the limbs of others in its impetuous charges. But it too, as fresh reinforcements continued to arrive, fell back discouraged, as it contemplated with dismay so many of its number either killed or wounded, or prisoners in the hands of the enemy, a fate worse than death, for they were reserved to be eaten.

O, how, at that moment, I longed for only two white men with rifles, for just one mitrailleuse, for anything to turn the tide of battle. I inwardly vowed, that if I was once permitted to get back safe to Anono, I would immediately fall to work on the manufacture of gunpowder and the construction of firearms, delayed, I feared, too long. But it was no time for vain regrets. Not only did the liberty of our beloved Queen hang in the balance, but the integrity of the nation itself was at stake; for none but the women, the young and the very old and infirm, remained within the fortifications at Anono. The flower of the nation was there, there upon that bloody field. As I thought of all that had been done to bring

these creatures out from the depths of barbarism to the light of civilization, and that they were meeting with disastrous defeat, and that they would meet, perhaps, with annihilation, I became fired, as with the strength of a giant, and with a desperate resolve to retrieve the waning fortunes of the day. Dashing forward among the broken regiments, I instructed them to fall on one side, and through the opening thus made, I poured the ten new regiments, each a thousand strong, which had been fretting for hours to come face to face with the enemy. I held these regiments in reserve because they constituted the very pick of the nation, being the regular standing army, undergoing daily drills, and skilled in the execution of complicated military evolutions. It was with a great pang that I sent these gallant fellows to the front, but once the order given I could not have stopped them if I would.

With a rush that made the solid earth tremble, with a roar of hoarse voices mingling in one deep and awe-inspiring grunt, they swept across the plain in perfect order at a speed in-

credible to behold; there was a fearful crash as they struck the enemy, and I saw his front ranks go down like the grass. Onward and onward yet, until the whole ten regiments were spread thick side by side, rank after rank, in the very midst of the foe. Then a sudden sharp order from their leader, and stopping their rolling motion each Anono sprang forward with a beautifully timed movement, and buried his heavy knife in the heart of a foe. I had seen this same maneuver executed many times by these regiments at home on the parade ground, and had been rather inclined to doubt its efficacy. I now saw my mistake. Ten thousand regulars, executing such a movement, were worth more than thirty thousand volunteers fighting promiscuously and at random. Brave though the latter may be, discipline and training are worth more to a soldier than mere physical courage, though joined to wild enthusiasm and backed by numbers.

Before such tactics as these, the soldiers of Walla Walla fell like ripened grain from the

stalk. Unable to withstand the dreadful onslaught of these trained soldiers, they made one desperate attempt to rally, turned and fled.

Then ensued a scene of such frightful slaughter as I trust I may never again behold. Maddened by the sight of so many of their companions weltering on the plain, the infuriated Anonos rushed pell-mell upon the retreating foe. A few, more fortunate than the rest, managed to escape in the general confusion; but the great majority were cut to pieces, no quarter whatever being given.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE RESCUE OF AZUELA, AND THE DEATH OF
WALLA-WALLA.

SEEING that our victory was complete, I now turned to the solitary prisoner, who, from the first, had been closely guarded, and under pain of immediate death, I instantly commanded him to guide me to the tent of Walla-Walla, where Azuela, with other women, was imprisoned. Seeing that I meant business, the fellow plunged without hesitation into the woods, and presently we came to a small clearing. In this clearing a circle of tents was placed, and in front of the largest stood Walla-Walla, a knife in his hand, a fiendish smile upon his face as he pointed within.

He threw back the flap of the tent as we approached, and pointed triumphantly to where Azuela could be seen, alone—no other woman with her, for they had escaped on the first signal of defeat.

"Spare me," said the savage, as he flashed his knife in dangerous proximity to the throat of the brave girl, who, scorning to show fear, maintained an heroic posture before us all.

"Spare me, and she goes free. Seek my life, and——"

Here he made a motion with his horrible knife which made my blood run cold. I longed to be at him, but did not dare to move on account of the girl.

"You villain," I shouted. "Step out here and fight me. Don't take the life of a helpless woman."

He understood what I said, and to my amazement stepped forward a pace or two from the tent.

"You want to fight?" he asked scornfully. "Walla-Walla is very strong."

"Walla-Walla is a great boaster. Come forth and I will give you battle," I replied longingly, for there went forth from my heart a deadly hatred against this man who, made in my own image and likeness, had yet brought this awful trouble upon us.

"Yes, I will, and I will eat thee, thou white fool," said Walla-Walla, "but give me thy word and the word of thy people, that if I win, I may go free and take this woman with me."

But while we were thus arranging the terms of the conflict, I noticed not that Ohoho, who is the most cunning of the race of Anonos that I ever knew, and fertile of expedients, had slowly rolled up to within ten yards behind Walla-Walla. I saw him slowly wink his eye at me, fold his paws on his breast, and knew that in another moment he would be heard from. Like a huge ball, shot from a gigantic catapult, he cleared the space which intervened between himself and Walla-Walla and struck him in the small of the back with the full force of his heavy body.

There was a dull, crashing sound, as though the ribs gave way before the tremendous blow, the ferocious chief, giving forth his last yell, was hurled fifty feet in the air, and the next moment landed beside me a corpse, for his back was broken.

“O my stomach, my poor stomach!” was the next thing I heard. “I struck him with my poor stomach!” And looking over I saw Ohoho as nearly doubled up as a person of his configuration could be, moaning pitifully, and rubbing his paws on that portion of his anatomy.

Convinced that the old rascal was only shamming in order to enhance the value of the service he had rendered me, I did not waste much time on his case, but dashing forward, threw open the flap of the tent. A moment later, Azuela, pale but uninjured, lay half fainting in my arms.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THINGS OCCUR, WHICH LEAD TO IMPORTANT
RESULTS.

NOT mine to dwell at length upon the horrors of that awful battle field, nor the digging of the two huge graves in which, during the next twelve hours, were interred the fallen on either side. Of the enemy there were practically none left, so complete had been the slaughter wrought by the Anonos. Of our own forces, so many were pierced with the arrows and wounded by the spear-thrusts of the Galla-Gallas, that, as the homeward-bound vessels would not contain them all, and they could not endure the fatigues of the return march, it was decided to leave these under the care of a sufficient guard, in as well fortified a camp as could be made, thus hastily, to shelter them.

Our total losses in the late conflict was upward of 8,000 killed, and in addition to this a

list of wounded approaching 17,000. Thus, out of the magnificent array, which, but a few days before, had swept proudly over the bridge on their way to the seat of war, 40,000 strong, but a shattered remnant of 12,000 took the homeward march, 3,000 of the 15,000 remaining on duty, being retained to guard the wounded in case of an attack from such few hundreds of the enemy who had escaped.

To this camp the necessary provisions were dispatched immediately on the arrival of the vessels at port Anono. As an inducement to many of the people to settle permanently there, the National Assembly subsequently passed a bill granting tracts of land to such as chose to take up their residence in the new colony. Carpenters were dispatched to build comfortable houses for these people, and a city of no mean proportions, surrounded with a high stockade, soon sprang up in the new locality.

Old Ohoho was much delighted when I proposed that this town be named after him, and the title of "Ohoho City" was unanimously conferred upon the new settlement.

The country surrounding this place being found exceedingly fertile, a good trade in native cereals, flax and fruits sprang up between the two places. This increasing trade compelled the building of additional and larger vessels, and it was an uneventful day when some schooner, loaded with various produce, did not either enter or leave the port of Anono.

I shall pass over the events of the next few months, and come down to an episode which exerted such a peculiar influence upon my future and the future of the nation that it should be recorded here in its fitting time and place.

There had long been among the attendants of the Queen a certain young female Anono named Alalah, who had developed traits so human and intelligent as to surprise even me, acquainted as I thought myself with the nature of these creatures. A constant companion of Azuela, she had been often near by, when, in whispered conferences, I had beguiled the hours in the society of this superb woman, who seemed, as the years rolled on, to acquire physically a maturer

dignity, without abating one jot the charms which had rendered her so fascinating as a girl, and whose mental accomplishments were so great and full of promise that there was not a branch of knowledge within the scope of our daily growing opportunities with which she was not fully and profoundly acquainted. Add to this the fact that she was the sole woman of my own race to whose society I could have access, that by the nature of our public relations and duties we were thrown daily, nay almost hourly, in each other's society, and will it be wondered at that all my natural affection, deprived for years of an object upon which to lavish itself, should at last become centered upon this half-barbarian enchantress?

And thus blinded by my own passion, of course I failed to perceive the jealous glances of Alalah, when availing myself of her preoccupation with some book or piece of fancy work, I lavished upon Azuela the tenderest expressions of my heart. I knew not that at such moments, the little fiery orbs of Alalah, though pretending to be fixed upon her work, were in

reality turned upon us with glances of jealous hatred; that all night long the poor creature tossed and rolled sleeplessly in her cosy, round nest, for love of one who could never be hers.

I had thought it a little strange, no doubt, that this young Anono had refused many advantageous offers of marriage, for her attendance upon the person of Azuela had made her the object of much attention from some of the highest in the land, and her personal attractions were such as to gain her many ardent admirers.

There was one particular Anono, named Waintoho, who by reason of his hereditary wealth and social position had gained quite a prominent place in the nation, who had long aspired to the hand of the charming Alalah. It was between these two that a conspiracy was formed for the assassination of Azuela and myself and the seizing of the reins of government by Waintoho. Between this latter personage and myself, there was no love lost. I knew him to be profligate, dissolute and idle. Outside of court circles it was freely

whispered that more than one young female Anono had reason to regret his attentions. A young dandy, he spent hours at a time lolling back in the shops of the barbers, and wore his fur cut short and smothered with perfumery. He chalked his white stripe regularly every morning, and allowed the nails of his paws to grow to an inordinate length. It was his boast that he could drink more wine than any two of his companions, and it was rumored that he had been nearly expelled from his club for cheating at baccarat, a pastime all the Anonos had come to be unusually fond of. While sturdy citizens of equal wealth and standing contented themselves with occupying a modest seat at the public theatrical performances which were nightly given in the large theater, this profligate fellow frequently hired an entire box, in which he did not hesitate to appear in a very mellow condition with his boon companions of either sex. Not satisfied with smoking the long pipe filled with native tobacco, which I had raised from the seeds of that weed found in the chest, and introduced

to the great comfort of these creatures, he must fain, in imitation of me, puff vile cigars of his own rolling, and I believe, if he had been possessed of legs, he would have adorned them with trousers turned up at the bottom. Large and burly in form, he carried a certain authority among his constituents.

Recognizing the advantage derived from the prestige of a seat in the House, he had not scrupled on the last annual election, to insure his return for East Anono, by the unscrupulous use of money, though he had contrived this so cunningly that he remained unchallenged. It was with this unscrupulous creature that Alalah, driven mad with jealousy, now connived. On a certain day, as I afterward ascertained, both Azuela and myself were to be seized within the villa, bound and thrown into the lake, and the reign of anarchy and lawless pleasure was to begin. This hideous doctrine was whispered here and there by Waintoho's satellites, to whom the restrictions of law and order had ever been irksome; and who hailed the coming opportunity for a return to the old

barbarian customs of the past with feelings of secret but untold satisfaction.

That both of us would undoubtedly have fallen a prey to this secret and awful conspiracy is more than probable, if it had not been for an oversight in the plans of the conspirators. They had not counted on Alalah herself weakening at the last moment.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE LOVE OF AN ANONO.

IT was toward the close of a remarkably sultry day, during which Azuela and her attendants, driven within the villa by the intense heat, had hardly stirred forth from their cool apartments.

The sun, which had hung above the city for hours like a ball of fire, was just dipping below the horizon of the lake. The cicada, in the trees beneath the window of the villa, sent forth its mournful chirp. The hour was languorous; the scents from the tropical verdure hanging duskily above the smooth lawns which surrounded the dwelling floated in at the windows, and filled the air with their heavy perfume.

Azuela herself, robed in a single wrap of soft white native cloth, beneath the folds of which her little feet, only partly enveloped in

their small sandals, peeped invitingly forth, lay upon a couch near the great window, which, being bay-shaped, faced the most beautiful vista of the gardens. At a respectful distance moved her attendants, conversing in low tones as the etiquette of the court required, or engaged in such feminine amusements as even Anono ladies delight in—fancy work, embroidery and the like, the results of the cultivation of which were plainly visible in the numerous articles of taste with which in the course of time, the apartments of the Queen had come to be richly decorated.

The closest of all these attendants on her royal mistress was the young and pretty Alalah. Ever on the alert to minister to her slightest wants, she was never far distant from the couch. It was her hand which brought the cooling drink, or agitated the punkah which swung from the ceiling of the apartment.

Night fell. The lovely stars shone out in the cloudless sky with tropical radiance and splendor, paling with their brilliancy the myriad lights of the great city, in whose crowded thor-

oughfares thousands jostled each other as they promenaded in the cool of the evening. Beyond the gigantic fortifications, the ceaseless swell of the lake rose and fell with a resonant soughing against the solid stone sea wall which encircled the island. Away, to the mainland, so clear was the atmosphere, I could distinctly trace where the axes of the construction party had lopped away a broad path through the bush for the beginning of the road to the new settlement. It was along this path that I proposed to construct a railroad to this thriving city, when the experiments which I was engaged on in the building of a locomotive and the necessary rolling stock should be crowned with success.

Half an hour must have elapsed as I thus sat and ruminated, planning for the future and looking out upon the city from a window opposite to that portion of the hall occupied by Azuela and her attendants. I was entirely alone, for all practical purposes. Lost in thought, I sat on the sill of the window, totally unconscious of what was passing within the villa.

I was in this mood when I was aroused from the deep reverie into which I had fallen by the sound of a female voice, and looking back into the room, found myself face to face with Alalah.

"Hello, Alalah, is that you?" I asked pleasantly, for the girl was a favorite of mine, on account of her refined manners, and the fact that she had displayed in her own person a remarkable example of what could be done with an Anono when taken young. "What can I do for you? Has your mistress tired of your company?"

The young Anono took another revolution forward, and stood so near me that her soft fur brushed against my hand. Her voice, clear and musical, as with the females of her race, sounded pathetically in the semi-darkness.

"O great white chief, you speak light words, but know not the sorrows of poor Alalah."

"Tell me, my child," I said. "Tell me thy sorrows. Perhaps I can lighten them. Thou knowest I am thy friend, and the friend of all thy race. Is it some love affair, in which thou

hast been over-confiding? If so, tell me the name of thy lover. The state is rich, and thou hast been faithful. He shall not want means to marry thee."

So paternal was the position which I occupied in Azuela's household, that I could thus speak without offense upon a subject even of such delicacy; and more especially as several flagrant breaches of the moral code in court circles had been lately brought to my notice, in which the names of some of the attendants of the Queen had been disagreeably conspicuous.

But Alalah, her eyes flashing with scorn, thus to my surprise, made reply:

"Do not judge Alalah by her companions. I am not what you deem me to be, O Paul. It is not to an Anono my heart would be given. Thou knowest, that though of that race, I have aspired beyond them. Through the long nights have I communed and studied. What branch of the arts and learning of thy race have I not attained proficiency in? Is it a knowledge of the stars? Have I not worked out by sines

and co-sines, by the artificial and natural horizon the geographical latitude and longitude of Anono, even when thou thyself through the error in thy sextant could not strike the angle of altitude? Who first suggested the use of spiral springs in the harness of the kangaroos, so that they could be utilized as beasts of burden, when they would have thrown out the occupants of thy new carriages by their sudden leaps, by which means thou wast the first to utilize a native Australian animal as a beast of burden? Have I not conquered thine own awkward language so as to read the great book which thou hast caused to be printed therein? Thinkest thou I would stoop to marriage with an Anono?"

Her eyes glittered, and she, coming still closer, her voice I noticed was strangely agitated and broken; her glance melted into a look of unspeakable tenderness as she stretched timidly forth her little black hand and placed it in my own.

"O Paul," she whispered, "thou hast forced me to an unmaidenly confession. It is thee and thee only whom I do love."

I should have laughed outright, despite the wave of horror which swept through me as this confession broke from the lips of Alalah, who seemed carried completely away by her infatuation, if this young Anono had not been so dead in earnest. I am a man who respects the feelings of the female heart, whether it palpitates softly beneath the gown of a woman of fashion, or rages tempestuously in a half-barbarian like one of the Anono race. What could I say to this poor, unhappy creature that would not wound her to the quick? and had I a right to do that, for after all, she loved me? It is something to be truly loved by even a faithful dog. The true instincts of a woman lurked within the breast of this poor creature. She had not spoken until she saw matters getting so thick between Azuela and myself that she no longer dared hesitate, and after all, in proposing as she had just done, she had but exercised the privilege of her rank just the same as any lady in high court circles was accustomed to do, for with the Anonos the females are of a higher order of intelligence than the males.

At first I so hated to hurt the poor thing's feelings, that I was inclined to temporize a little, but all my manhood, my training and race prejudice revolted against such a deception so emphatically, that I determined to at once speak out and let her know the truth. It was no place, however, for a scene such as I felt sure must follow my disavowal of a return of her affection. Already I could hear Azuela's voice, calling for her favorite attendant. We had been together too long already. Still the truth must be told, and as Alalah had only made a proposal, honorable enough according to her code, she was entitled to a reply, and a speedy one.

Smothering my feelings as best I could, I released my hand from her feverish grasp, and ere I joined Azuela, had whispered:

"Meet me by the big gum tree in the garden in half an hour."

CHAPTER XXX.

AZUELA GROWS JEALOUS.

IT was with a feeling of relief that I saw the form of Alalah roll quietly down the spiral plane staircase at the rear of the villa, casting backward upon me as she disappeared from view a glance full of tender meaning. Yet, in a short half hour, how was I to rob her heart of all its rest, and ruffle that smooth coat of downy fur which now so sleekly lay upon her delicate form, with feelings of outraged pride.

I sauntered slowly through the rooms, to where in the front apartment Azuela lay extended upon a couch in the great bay window, her white form glimmering temptingly in the starlight. I seated myself on a pile of wombat skins at her feet, feeling for the first time a certain sense of inferiority. I was angry with myself for not having at once dismissed Alalah. Why had I temporized with the girl?

And Azuela's thoughts must have run somewhat in the same channel, for she presently said:

"Where is Alalah? I thought I saw her with you a few moments ago?"

I stammered some excuse.

"Yes, I believe she has gone into the garden; but is not the night beautiful?"

"Yes, Paul, it is beautiful."

Neither of us spoke for some minutes; then she said suddenly:

"Tell me Paul, are the women of our race handsome?"

"Yes," I replied, warmly, "very handsome."

"And thou didst not marry?"

"And I did not marry."

"Why?"

"Because I liked science better than the ladies, and the scintillation of the stars more than the glitter of bright eyes," I replied.

"Yet thou carest for the eyes of Alalah!"

A serpent's sting would have been less painful; a thunderbolt from the serene sky above

us less startling. For a moment I was too shocked to speak. Then I said in a voice which I am afraid betrayed my emotion, and not without some show of temper:

"And thou dost not always care for the truth," for, humiliated as I was by my late interview with the young Anono, Azuela's taunt had stung me to the quick.

"You take advantage of your position, O Paul," she replied, her eyes flashing fire. "Take care, though I am a woman, I am still a Queen."

"Yes, thou sayest truly, thou art a woman, O Azuela; and thou art therefore jealous, and of what or whom?"

"You presume too far. A few more such words, and I shall forget the past."

"Yes," said I, driven mad with her taunts, "and all I have done for you."

It had all not taken a moment.

Leaping from her couch, with a wave of her hand she dismissed her attendants, and when we were alone she turned and faced me, pouring forth a torrent of reproaches, her fine eyes

sparkling with jealousy and passion, her breast heaving, her whole form dilating with the feelings she had hitherto suppressed.

“All you have done for me! What have you done for me? You found me a barbarian, and made me what you call a lady. You found me the despotic ruler of a barbaric people, and you have robbed me of my power which was mine all, and in which I did delight. You found me contented with the simple customs of my lot, and you taught me enough of the so-called blessings of civilization to make me discontented if I did not have them all. You have laid before me a picture of the glories of my race; you have found me a people and blood relatives, told me my name and dwelling-place, only to demonstrate the utter impossibility of my ever beholding them. And worse, you have aroused within me the passion of love, which I know now can never be requited.”

She stood a moment, her gaze fixed upon mine with an expression in which anger and unutterable sadness struggled for the mastery.

"Go, your time is up! Go to your appointment with your paramour!"

"What do you mean?" I gasped.

"O, I have some friends yet at court. Even if I have not the distinguished honor to count you among them. Go, meet her beneath the big gum tree, there in the garden."

And in another moment, she had swept from my presence, leaving me standing there, petrified with astonishment.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE WORKING OF THE CONSPIRACY.

As I stepped from the back entrance of the villa, the moon, rising with her wonted splendor above the fortifications, shone with brilliancy upon the green lawn, at the extreme edge of which a gigantic gum tree reared its umbrageous foliage toward the sky. It was the spot where, in a few minutes, I had appointed to meet the love-sick Alalah. To it I now proceeded with feelings which, after my stormy interview with Azuela, I will not attempt to describe.

I had hardly been leaning against the giant trunk for the space of a minute when the shrubbery which encircled the rear entrance of the house was strangely agitated and soon I perceived, rolling over the lawn in the bright moonlight, a form which I took to be that of Alalah, until it had approached somewhat

nearer, when I was enabled to discover my mistake.

The female Anono who stood before me, to my surprise, was not Alalah at all, but Wana-wana, her closest and most confidential companion.

"You here, Wana-wana; whom are you looking for?"

"For you; come here." And she drew me impatiently behind a clump of bushes. "Be quick; we have not a moment to lose; what I have to say is of the greatest importance and must be said quickly."

I obeyed her wonderingly.

"You are meeting Alalah here, for no good purpose," she began abruptly when we stood within the shelter of the bushes.

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"Because I have eyes and ears."

"Yes, very pretty ones, too," I said. And so she had, in her Anono way.

"O, hush; this is no time for flattery and soft sayings," replied Wana-wana, simpering at the compliment, however. "You men think

of nothing but good looks. Now, I have good sense."

"I know it, O Wana-wana," said I, wondering what was to come next. I thought, perhaps, that I was going to be honored by another proposal, and began to fight shy. I had had enough of that sort of thing for one day.

"Now, listen to me," said Wana-wana. "Alalah is in there bragging of her conquest. She says you and she are to be married, and she darkly hints that if you do not do as she wishes it will be the worse for you."

"The worse for me!"

"Yes; she says that Waintoho and she have the people at their back—"

"Waintoho! That numbskull!"

"Don't despise him. He is cunning and treacherous if he is a dandy," said Wana-wana.

"You can not tell what mischief is in the future. Good-bye; don't say that I said a word or they would kill me."

"But, tell me—"

"Not another moment; don't you see Alalah coming across the lawn; go to her and

pretend that you love her. Perhaps she may tell you all."

And, squeezing my hand in a fashion far from unfriendly, the young Wana-wana rolled quietly away through the shrubbery, leaving me to cogitate on her advice and to decide immediately to act on it, however distasteful the part I should have to play. Something in the way of a conspiracy was in the wind, beyond a doubt. I must pretend to be favorable to it, and so get at the plans of the conspirators.

Yes, I would go to Alalah and pretend that I loved her.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN WHICH THE CONSPIRACY IS REVEALED.

DISSEMBLING beneath a pleasant smile the repulsion and disgust with which I now beheld the softly-furred form of Alalah standing before me, I endeavored to throw as much of tender regard into my manner as was possible under the circumstances. Soon we were seated on the further side of the immense gum tree, where, protected from prying eyes, we could converse at leisure.

Thus seated, side by side, on the soft grass, our faces were nearly upon a level; and though we were enveloped in deep shade, I could not but perceive that the face of the young Anono was flushed and her lips parted, as with a deep sense of triumph in thus having, as she imagined, alienated my affections from her royal mistress.

Thus determined to simulate an affection

which of course I could not feel, I perhaps somewhat overdid it; but greedy for admiration, Alalah readily swallowed all the compliments and soft nothings which I showered upon her, for, though smart enough in most things, where her heart was concerned, like most women, she would listen to nothing but its promptings.

“Oh dearest Alalah,” I said at last, feeling very much like a villain as her little black hand lay confidingly in mine, “what happiness it is to be thus with you, where no eyes can see us, to love you, and to feel that you return my deep and sincere affection.”

I had read something like this somewhere in a novel in the old days, in Melbourne, and though I knew it was pretty stiff for a first dose, still I was glad to see that she swallowed it.

A low, soft, purring sound announced the pleasure with which she received this nonsense, and I went on, greatly encouraged, calling up some more portions of the old novel to my assistance.

"Oh, Aramint—I mean Alalah, how often have I longed for the present moment. It is true the haughty earl—I mean the jealous Queen would thwart me in the pursuit of her I love, but what of that. We are both young, and I am rich. In some pleasant country place, far removed from the care and turmoils of city life, we can escape their vengeance. The train starts to-night—"

"Poor fellow," I heard her mutter, "fear of the Queen has driven him crazy."

Her voice recalled me to myself, and I proceeded with my love-making more circumspectly, and drawing on the startling tale "The Romance of a Governess" only when compelled to by scarcity of material.

At last, feeling that the time had arrived, and that Alalah was in a condition to be tapped, I said:

"There is only one obstacle to our happiness."

"And what is that?" asked the young girl.

"The Queen. Being the only one of her race, she has reserved me for herself. I do

not think she would contemplate our union with equanimity. She has already become greatly angered."

"She has heard of it? Impossible!" exclaimed Alalah.

"Yes, she has heard of it, undoubtedly," I replied.

"And she has spoken to you? Do not deny it. I see that she has spoken to you. But you did not listen to her?"

"Well, I had to listen, you see, Alalah," I answered. Then I added: "Now, don't get excited. Let us think matters over calmly."

"Calmly!" retorted Alalah. "Can you be calm? You do not know her power nor her temper."

"Nevertheless, there is no use in losing one's head." But Alalah, having no head to lose, the expression was probably lost on her. For a few moments neither of us spoke, but at last she sighed deeply, and said:

"Alas! that we should have to proceed to such extremities!"

And then by judicious questioning, I drew

the whole of Waintoho's hideous plot from her. And before she was through telling it, I learned that if it had not been for her love for me I would also have been included as a victim of this awful conspiracy.

It appeared that this fellow, Waintoho, had been for months at work with a secret order, gradually undermining the present supporters of the government. He had pointed out the difference between the present era of impartial distribution of labor and wealth, and the past luxurious ease enjoyed when a vast horde of slaves contributed to the support of the idle and vicious. He appealed to the basest passions of the criminal classes, who had all felt more or less the sting of the whip of justice under an impartial administration, which punished alike the poor, ignorant offender, and the rich and powerful violator of its laws.

This plot was to culminate, as I found out from Alalah, at sunset on the following day, by a general rising of the discontented, who were to seize upon the person of the Queen (I was to be spared) and all the officers of the

household who were not included in the conspiracy. All these innocent persons were to be murdered. The entire treasure of the government, with all the grain in the public graneries, was to be distributed freely among the people, and general feasting to prevail, during which time the leaders were to seize the reins of government, secure possession of the army and navy, and thus, by a *coup d'etat*, completely instate themselves in office.

This abominable design also contemplated the overthrow of my especial pet branch of the government, the House of Representatives; the substitution of an irresponsible despotism after the pattern of Russia—though of course they had never heard of that country—and the abolition of all religion, medium of exchange, printing, art and science; the complete demolition of all fire or the means of ever again making any; a return to raw diet, and a plurality of wives.

It was with great difficulty, as I listened to these abominable machinations, as they were now poured into my ear by the confiding Allah, that I could restrain myself from at once

rushing to the citadel, and putting Ohoho on his guard, proclaim martial law and the general arrest of all the conspirators, in a list of which, as enumerated by Alalah, I found comprised names which were pseudonyms for all the public virtues. But reason coming to my aid in the nick of time, I further dissembled my real feelings, and pretended to enter very heartily into the plan, actually going so far as to ask Alalah to use her influence with the conspirators to obtain for me an office of emolument under the new government, praising that scoundrel Waintoho up to the skies, and saying that I had always regarded him as a person of exceptional ability—as I had, in the line of blackguardism.

It was nearly midnight, when, releasing myself from the farewell embrace that Alalah insisted on bestowing upon me, I crept stealthily from the shadow of the great gum tree, and entering my own dwelling sought my chamber. There, without undressing, I flung myself upon my couch, not to sleep, but to revolve within my mind the best means to meet and defeat the conspiracy.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE COUNTER CONSPIRACY.

IN a deep dungeon beneath the western wall of the fortifications, within a few hours of the events I have just described, three persons were seated.

The dim light of a small and feebly burning oil lantern but faintly illumined the interior of the huge and dreary apartment, within whose dusky depths full many an unfortunate victim of the former custom of cannibalism had been previously confined.

This light shed its uncertain glare upon the countenances of the three persons above alluded to, who were seated about a small table—Jacky-Jacky, Ohoho and myself, the first and last named of us being seated on chairs of rude manufacture, the old chief sitting on the rough earthen floor, and even then, such was his height, that his honest old face was raised

some eighteen inches above the table.

"And you have really succeeded in discovering this remarkable powder?" asked Ohoho.

"I have," I replied, "and there is at present concealed in this chamber enough to blow you all so high into the sky that you would never come down again."

"Is that so, then count me out of this consultation," cried Ohoho, in great trepidation. "After your experiments with the powder, in which you singed half the fur off my stomach, I don't have the fancy for these explosives that I used to;" and he started for the door, and would have got there if Jacky-Jacky had not thrown himself in front of him and dragged him back forcibly to the table.

"There is no danger, you old idiot," said the superintendent of mines, "I have been blasting with the stuff up there on the river for the last two weeks, and it can be handled without any fear of explosion."

Thus reassured, Ohoho resumed his place at the table, and I proceeded:

"Oftentimes did I despair of making the true mixture, on account of the poor quality of nitre at my disposal and the small quantity of carbonic oxide gas generated as a product of combustion. Since the establishment of the chemical works, however, in the bay, I have been able to overcome this difficulty, as Jacky-Jacky will tell you, and had it been necessary I could have manufactured many thousands of pounds of this material without anybody being acquainted with the fact.

"Then you have not got any powder, after all!" ejaculated Ohoho, with a feeling of relief.

"If I hadn't, we should all be murdered," I replied, for the army is honeycombed with conspirators, and among the hundreds of the servants of the government I know not whom to trust."

"Take it easy, old man," said Ohoho, quite cheerfully. "We are still alive. At the worst, we can take to the vessels."

"I'm not quite so sure about that," put in Jacky-Jacky. "If the army is in a bad state,

the condition of the navy is worse. A more mutinous set of dogs I never came across."

"Wait a bit, gentlemen," I said, "look at that;" and I drew forth from a drawer in the table a sample of my new *lithofracteur*, in the production of which I had spent many weary hours with the original intention of using it in the various government mining operations. As Jacky-Jacky truly said, it could be handled with perfect safety, though so powerful in its effects.

This explosive, I told Ohoho, was thirteen times as powerful as gunpowder. After considerable experimenting, I had found the following mixture to work best: Nitro-glycerine, 52 parts; silex, 30; coal dust or charcoal, 12, and sulphur 2 parts. It could be only exploded by detonation, but its effects were terrible in the extreme. As I had before unfolded all the particulars of the plot to these two faithful friends, I now laid bare the plan by which I hoped to be able to foil the conspirators, who were so numerous and whose movements were conducted with so much secrecy that it was al-

most impossible to say whom among them, in high or low places of trust, was not implicated.

I informed them that, as far as I could learn from Alalah, an attack was to be made on the villa at sunset, by way of the main entrance. I proposed to collect a few faithful followers, drive a mine under this approach, load it up with *lithofracteur*, and fire it at the critical moment; but to do this successfully the mine must be dug at once and secretly. There was no time to be lost.

Ohoho volunteered to go out and get together a few whom he could implicitly trust. Azuela had left the villa in a huff, and gone on a visit with a particular friend in another part of the city, but it was not necessary that she should be informed.

I rather rejoiced in this show of temper, for two reasons; it assured me that she still loved me, and it kept her out of harm's way.

While, therefore, Ohoho busied himself in getting some assistance, I deemed it prudent to waste no more precious time, but descending to the cellar of the villa in company with

Jacky-Jacky, I at once threw aside my coat and fell to work on the tunnel. Accustomed as we both were to hard labor of all kinds, by relieving each other at intervals, the progress we had made by noon was amazing. Ohoho returning at that hour, was surprised to find a ragged hole penetrating through the wall of the cellar, some sixteen feet, already, in length, which had been made during his absence.

Ohoho brought with him nearly all the editorial staff of the *Anono News*, personal friends of his, and though hard drinkers, real good fellows. The fighting editor was a great acquisition in this crisis. He was second only to Jacky-Jacky in the use of the pickaxe. At Ohoho's request they had clipped all the day's editorials from back numbers, filled her up with rejected poetry and dead ads, and rolled rapidly to our assistance.

With the aid of these friends, we soon had a tunnel running not less than two hundred feet from the villa, in the further end of which I placed a large quantity of my *lithofracteur*, this being so disposed and tamped as to produce the most deadly effects.

When the whole was completed, it lacked but about an hour of sundown, and we retired within the villa to the upper story, where the members of the household were assembled, evidently in ignorance of what had been going on below them.

There was still an hour to wait before we might expect an attack. This I occupied by silently posting my forces in the different parts of the villa, and enjoining them to keep a strict lookout for affected parties. I had given all these people the password of the conspirators, so that none of those who were in the plot thought other than that the staff of the *News* had really joined them. This was very necessary, to account for the presence of so many strangers in the villa.

It wanted but a few minutes of the hour when Alalah glided up to me and said:

"Be brave and firm. The people look to you for encouragement."

"They shall have it," I replied.

She squeezed my hand and rolled on, to whisper instructions to some disaffected member of the household.

Just then we heard sounds of great disturbance in the square. Looking out from one of the windows, I could perceive an immense mob gathering in the open space. The police, loyal to a man, were driven helplessly back before it. A solitary figure, forsaken by all, save a few of her attendants, came flying up the path toward the villa. It was Azuela, a refugee from the fury of her own subjects.

It was only at great personal risk that they saved her from serious injury at the hands of the mob.

Terror stricken, the poor girl rushed through the gates, and into the great hall.

"What does this mean?" she asked breathlessly.

Then, unable longer to restrain her triumph, Alalah, looking around on her fellow conspirators, exclaimed:

"It means that our hour is come, and thy downfall. Anono is free. Down with the tyrants. See where they come."

And the misguided creature, carried away by excitement, would have flung herself upon

Azuela, but the next moment my arm was extended to shelter her. Heedless of them all, I took her to my heart, and whispered:

“Fear nothing. Paul is with you.”

The sweet girl, looking up at me trustingly, murmured:

“I would sooner die with you than live without you.”

“Traitor!” yelled Alalah, her face perfectly livid with rage, as she saw Azuela nestling in my arms. “Was it for this you swore you loved me? Traitor! But you shall die!”

“O, no, I shall not die,” I replied tauntingly, “neither shall you. You shall live to marry Waintoho.”

“Villain and perjurer! Those will soon be here who will make you change your boasts to entreaties. But you shall die, and die the death of a bandicoot. You shall be torn to pieces. I am queen of Anono.”

“What does all this mean?” inquired Azuela, in tones of astonishment.

“It means that I have masked myself to unmask the foulest conspiracy the world ever

heard of," I replied. "That I have been compelled to simulate a love for that creature which I never felt, in order to get at the bottom of the plot; and that having unraveled it, we shall now defeat it. And then," and I turned fiercely upon the gaping crowd, in which many conspirators stood, "then beware, ye who have this day given me the countersign, for it implicates ye in this plot, and ye shall pay the penalty."

A murmur of apprehension went through the crowd, and they seemed about to dash upon us, when I gave the order:

"Ho, there, arrest these conspirators!"

And suddenly, beneath their feet, there yawned a pit as the floors cunningly contrived after the manner of a stage trap, slid rapidly back, and my private guard of soldiers, hitherto concealed in one of the rooms of the villa, rushed out and pushed all the crowd of conspirators into the cellar beneath, where, it being not large enough to contain them all, many of them died from the mere weight of those on top.

But from this dreadful fate did I save Alalah and the other ladies-in-waiting, and them did I cause to be confined in a small room and put securely under guard.

All this had taken but a few minutes in its accomplishment, and now, having cleared the villa of the disaffected, I turned to face the more serious attack momentarily expected from the immense crowd of insurgents, which, having ransacked in an incredibly short space of time all the public buildings, now threatened to advance upon the villa.

And even now the front line of this mob was commencing to roll up resistlessly toward the main entrance, rolling over and crushing the pretty shrubbery on the lawns and grunting as it came. Maddened with wine and excitement, it thundered on, the people being transformed for the nonce from decent citizens into howling demons, and bent on murder and destruction. Comprising within its ranks all the worst and most criminal of the nation, it was yet led by those who had held important positions of trust under the government.

It was with feelings of pain that I noted amongst this motley crew people whom I had counted upon as personal friends, but it was no time to hesitate. They had participated in deeds of lawless violence, and must suffer with the rest.

I had caused the main gates of the villa to be tightly closed and barricaded, and the fury of the mob, as they strove in vain to effect an entrance, was dreadful to witness.

They howled and swore around the house, against the sides of which every now and then some brawny ruffian would hurl his weight, making the frail building shake again.

Greatly terrified, Azuela clung to my arm and I had much difficulty to console her.

Soon it became apparent that the old column tactics were to be resorted to to force the gates. As on a prior occasion, the attack on the citadel, they commenced by forming in line, only this time they were at least thirty abreast across the open space of the lawn. The front row of this tremendous column was jammed tight against the gate and I observed to Ohoho, not without

inward feelings of satisfaction, that the rest of the column stretched nearly directly over the tunnel, in which at that very moment enormous charges of *lithofracteur* were placed.

I had arranged small trains of powder to each of these pockets, where the *lithofracteur*, perfectly tamped, lay ready to be exploded with most fearful force.

Jacky-Jacky, match in hand, stood below, awaiting only the signal to fire the train. Onward surged the huge column. Creak, creak, went the gates. Another such a rush and they must yield to the enormous pressure.

"Stand back!" I cried warningly to those within the villa.

I gave the signal to Jacky-Jacky—three stamps of the foot upon the floor—and taking hold of Azuela, I braced myself firmly for the shock which I knew must follow.

There was a dull roar, far down in the bowels of the earth. The villa swayed and rocked to its very foundation; a deafening detonation followed, as of a thousand monster cannon discharging their contents, a few wild

despairing screams that were lost in the general uproar, as, looking through one of the windows, the main body of the besieging forces was seen to leave the earth, to descend no more, save in scattered fragments of burning hair and flesh, or bones from which a few pieces of half consumed hide alone hung dependent, to attest that the unsightly fragment had been a breathing, living creature.

For a brief moment, after this awful explosion, all was still, and then from all quarters could be heard the moans and grunts of the wounded. Taking advantage of the dreadful effect of the discharge, I rushed rapidly to the gates. Throwing them back, I cried in a loud voice:

“Disperse, O people of Anono, or I will blow you all to atoms.”

They did not wait to be told to go, however. Thoroughly cowed, and hastily rolling their wounded before them, the terror-stricken creatures incontinently fled from the scene.

The great conspiracy had failed. The attempt to overthrow the government had sustained a crushing defeat.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AZUELA COMES TO HER SENSES.

As the besieging mob, or what was left of it, fled rapidly away, my attention was, for the first time, attracted to a solitary Anono, who, apparently half stunned, moved feebly around in a circle. His appearance seemed to be familiar. Hastening to his assistance, I discovered that it was the arch-conspirator Waintoho.

As if to visit his treachery with fitting punishment, this unhappy Anono had been struck blind by the explosion of the *lithofracteur*, and he now moved slowly over the ground, groping his way with one paw, the other being badly injured.

Summoning two of the guards, I bade them remove him to a place of safety.

"And now, Azuela," I said, in a somewhat sterner voice than it was my wont to use when speaking to her, "I am going to adopt measures which in the future will insure to

the nation peace and happiness and freedom from political intrigues, such as we have of late witnessed."

"What do you mean, Paul?" she inquired, timidly, for her proud spirit was somewhat broken by the events of the last twenty-four hours, and the dangers through which she had passed.

"I mean," I replied, as I led her on one side, "that the affairs of this country can be better managed by two heads than by one."

"Is it not managed by two now?" inquired Azuela, smiling archly. "What more would you have?"

"I would have a union of those two," I said softly, "so that there would not be any cross purposes. O Azuela, do not pretend to mistake my meaning. Will not your throne be securer when you have my arm to sustain you on it?"

There was something in the look I gave her which must have been a thousand times more eloquent than my language, for she blushed like a school-girl and turned away her head.

But I would have answer to my question,

and sought it very daringly by putting my lips close to hers and whispering:

"Azuela, thou lovest me not. Say so, and I will go hence to my own people. Speak but the word, and though it break my heart, I journey hence, and never again behold thee."

"O, no, no, not that," came in startled tones from the red lips, as she lifted her face to mine.

"O, no, go not; Anono needs thee."

"Not for Anono will I stay, but if you say it is for Azuela's sake, then I go not."

"Forever?"

"Forever!"

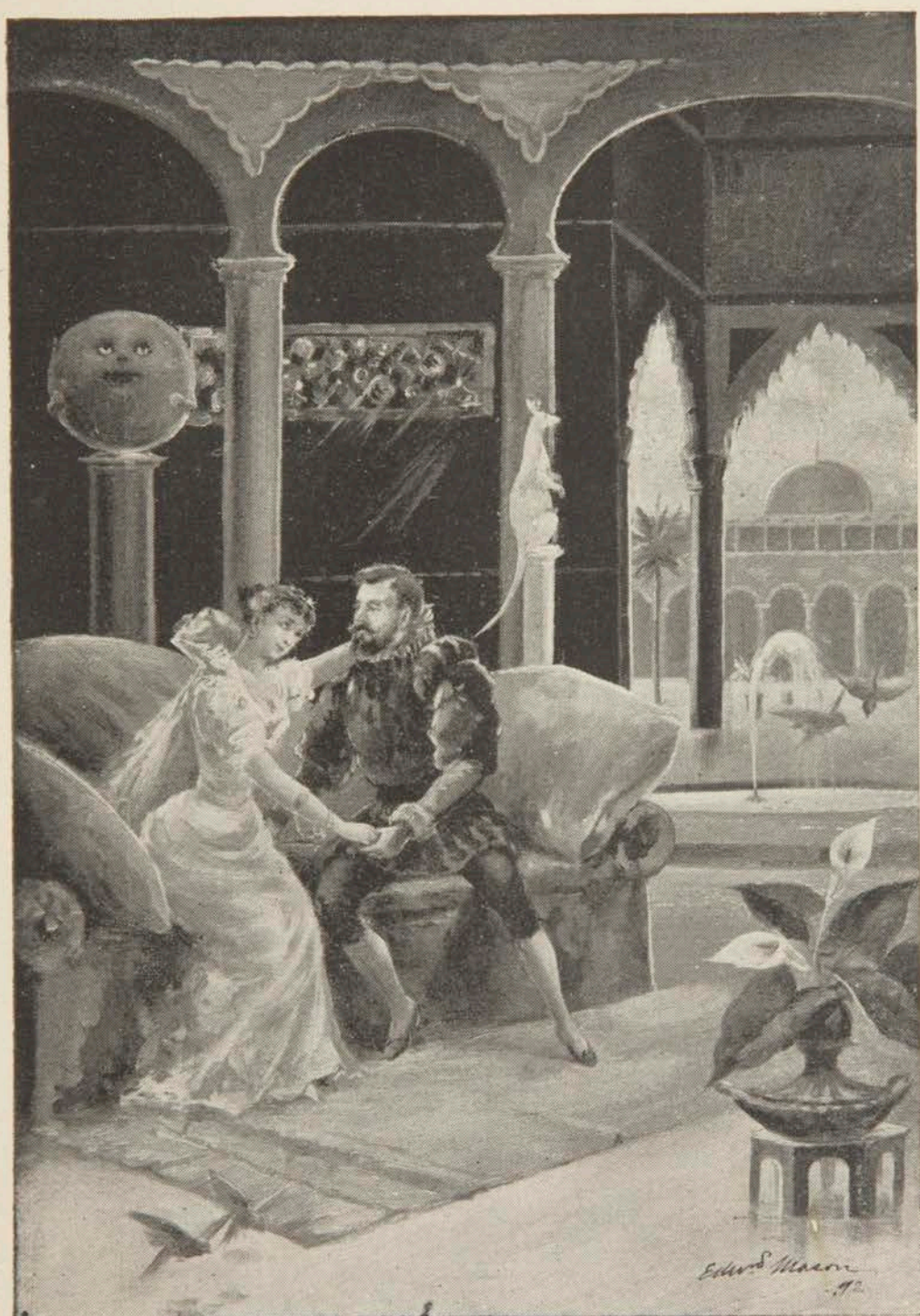
"O, Paul, stay and rule over them, and —"

Her voice faltered, and she held out her arms toward me.

I caught her to my heart, and murmured:

"And thee. Yes, dearest, but the rule shall be the rule of love."

"Thou shalt be king. Hark, the people outside already proclaim it. See where they mass themselves in thousands to do thee honor, thou who hast delivered the nation both from the enemy and the usurper, and raised her to a pinnacle of glory."



"THOU SHALT BE KING!"

"And thou shalt be my queen? Say, O dearest Azuela."

Her beautiful head sank unresistingly upon my shoulder, and I had barely time to seal our compact in the usual fashion—by a kiss—the first that man had ever impressed upon the lips of woman in Anono, when a rumbling sound in the rear of the apartment where we were seated apprised me that we were no longer alone. In another moment Ohoho stood before us, deferentially coughing behind his paw, the better to conceal a broad smile which I felt sure I detected lurking around the corners of his mouth.

I hate to be caught at that kind of thing, being a modest man. Had he seen my osculatory performances with Azuela?

The old fellow straightway announced that he had just come from the council which had been hastily assembled, and that they through him, wished to tender me an equal share in the government of the nation with the present Queen.

"What, you old scoundrel," I said, "without consulting your queen?"

"O, she had been consulted long ago," said the old fellow, bristling with delight at the confusion into which his revelation of her great secret had plunged my dear girl. "Ah, I see you have also consulted the lady."

"Confound you, you old villain," I blurted out, forgetful of Azuela's presence, and quite upset for the moment with their kindness; but I could not be angry with him, as I had taught him how to meet a plot with a counterplot. "Now, tell me, what is all this noise outside about?"

"The people wish to see their Queen and her new consort," replied Ohoho, bowing very low, and recovering his balance with difficulty, for he was very fat, and obeisances were not much in his line. "Will you be pleased to step out on the balcony with the Queen. They expect a speech."

"O, no, anything but that," I groaned. Of all things, however, that the Anonos love, it is a speech, and there was no help for it, as thousands below were clamoring for a sight of us, it having somehow spread like wildfire

through the city that Azuela and I had made a match of it. I shall always believe that Ohoho, like a sneak, had listened to my proposal through the door.

So taking Azuela's hand in mine, I threw aside the heavy matting before the great window, and stepped out onto the balcony, which ran along in front of the villa.

Azuela turned a rosy red, as she confronted the grunting thousands in the court below, who sent up grunt after grunt for us in the heartiest fashion.

Seeing I was in for it, I made them a short address, adverting in it to the condition in which I had found their nation, and trusting that we should continue the progressive policy which, once inaugurated among them, had, I believed, taken too strong a hold on the affections of the people for any retrogressive conspiracy, however powerful its promoter, to make much headway.

To further increase the popularity of Azuela and myself, I proclaimed a general amnesty to all conspirators who would publicly take the oath of allegiance, a piece of generos-

ity on my part which was received with such deafening grunts by the mob that I am inclined to think there must have been very many conspirators present. Azuela and I then retired amid the plaudits of the people.

The following day, Azuela and I were married, in the very church which, five years before, had been erected at the request of my bride, to commemorate one Christmas day—that day on which she also had embraced Christianity, and pledged herself to be a true soldier of the cross. Here, humbly kneeling in the Great Presence, did we two exchange our mutual vows, and promise never more to separate until death did us part.

In the afternoon of the same day, this simple ceremony was followed by one more gorgeous and impressive—the coronation of the new sovereigns.

In the presence of the chiefs of the nation, its representatives and head men, the ladies of the court and an imposing gathering of the best citizens, we took the united oath of office, and were duly declared to be King and Queen of Anono.

"I will run rapidly over the chief events of the next few years.

As time went on, my union with Azuela was blessed with three children. Our happiness has been great.

Many vast improvements followed the introduction of the steam engine, both in locomotive and stationary form, into the daily life of the nation. Flourishing towns sprang up in every part of the territory of the Anonos, the boundaries of which became greatly extended. My daydreams of years ago, when I sat solitary and ragged on the shores of the lake, have been practically realized.

Anono is now ready to seek intercourse with the outer world. For this purpose I have again braved the perils of the desert, and come far, through the midst of untold dangers. That world will find that while Anono has much to learn from the older communities, still, she has solved some remarkable social and political problems. From an almost savage condition, she has, in a few years, raised the masses of her people to a high average of intelligence.

Azuela and I have long ago abdicated the throne. There is no government now, to speak of. Police are unknown. The press and a highly enlightened code of moral laws are a sufficient guide to the people. Jails and lawyers have no existence. Divorce is unheard of. Collection of debts is abolished. An Anono's word is now his bond, and it is seldom broken.

I am here for the purpose of laying the history before the world, and of beholding once more my dear friends who have long mourned me as one dead. I also wish to find the grandparents or any other relatives of Azuela who may be still living.

It is not my intention to stay long in Melbourne, as Jacky-Jacky and Ohoho will be lonely without me, and Azuela and my children will fret until they behold my face once again.

THE END.







