

# KING DON:

A STORY OF MILITARY LIFE IN INDIA.

...BY MAJOR ALLAN...

## CHAPTER VIII.

"He is here to answer!"

As the Prince spoke those fateful words Lillie turned and would have flown to Don's side; but at sight of his face she stopped short, paralyzed with amazement or fear or anguish. Which was it? Had she followed the first impulse to fly to him and beg him to deny this vile slander, what might Don's answer not have been? But he saw her hesitation and that spasm of conflicting emotions which swept her face, and he strode forward, like a man who knows his doom pronounced and goes recklessly to meet it, realizing there is no escape.

"I have heard, and I will answer," came his deep, rich tones.

He spoke no other words of greeting to his untoward visitor. He looked neither at him nor his wife, but straight before him, as if he saw written there the self-denunciation he was fated to speak.

"It is true that I was with Captain Derwent at the time of death; that in a moment of passion I had pointed my revolver at his breast; but, as heaven is above us, I know it was not my shot, but a rebel bullet, which killed him."

"An accomplice, perhaps?" suggested the Prince, with a sneer.

Lillie had spoken no word. She stood as motionless as one turned to stone; and though he would not meet her eyes, Don felt them to be fixed upon him with an agony that was harder to bear than the fiercest words of accusation.

"Sir—Don wheeled round now upon his adversary, and his voice grew harder and stronger—"what I did I tell you was done in a moment of passion—a moment I shall regret to my last hour. I do not know by what means you have got your information; but to accuse me of taking his life in cold blood I will not suffer—and I defy you to prove his death was by my hand!"

"I have no desire to prove it further," was the contemptuous reply of the Prince, whose calm complaisance now was as intense as was Don's hot passion. "I have not the shadow of a doubt I could do so if I chose. My faithful sepoy, who followed you when you left Pindi for the camp, and shadowed every step you took whilst you were there, could testify to each word of your last converse with Captain Derwent. He could tell how you declared you would kill both myself and Captain Derwent sooner than allow this lady to become my wife."

He bowed to the motionless Lillie. "He could swear that, when Captain Derwent repeated his refusal to your own suit, you deliberately fired your revolver, and he fell at your feet, crying: 'For Lillie's sake, Gordon, have a care!' All that I could prove. Can you deny it?"

For an instant there was tense silence, then Don's voice came, strained and hard:

"If your sepoy could prove all this, why did he not come into camp and denounce me before the whole army? And for what purpose was he following me from Pindi, may I ask?"

"You may." And the Prince's smile was not a pleasant one to see. "You must know, Captain Gordon, where one of our royal house loves, it is not customary for another man to lift his eyes. My jealousy of you was roused, and my sepoy was sent to watch you and warn Captain Derwent of my displeasure. As for your first question, your movements were a secret with him alone until he had my sanction to divulge them. He will never receive that sanction, for now, with this unfortunate marriage, my interest in the subject has waned. You may rest assured you are free to pass as an honorable soldier for the rest of your natural life."

The supreme sarcasm of the Prince's words was lost upon the haggard man who faced him.

"Since you are so generous," said Don, with some calm scorn in his voice also, "I fail to see the object of such refined cruelty in bringing about this—this painful and untimely scene."

His tones broke a little in spite of himself. The sight of Lillie's immovable features was killing him.

"My object"—and now Prince Clement Sing laughed shortly and moved to the doorway—"my object was merely to bring home your guilt to you, and to humiliate yonder foolish creature, who might have been a princess, and has made herself the wife of a felon. I have the honor to bid you both adieu."

"Stay!" Don's voice shook with the frenzy of his passion. "I will allow no man, not even Prince Clement Sing, to call me by that name! Your sepoy shall be made to own it as a perjury!"

"Find him and prove that, by all means, if you can," was the sneering answer; "for who will believe that the shot to which you have confessed was not, as he says, the shot which caused Captain Derwent's death? I repeat, your ignoble secret is safe with me."

The Prince waited for no reply. For a long moment there was silence—a silence full of the bitterness of death.

Lillie still stood there motionless, it seemed almost without breath or being. She was not looking at Don any longer now. Her blue eyes were gazing into vacancy, with an expression of horror in them, as if they gazed in reality upon that ghastly scene the Prince had painted—her husband's revolver pointed at her father's breast. The silence and the anguish of it all grew more than Don could bear.

"Lillie!" he cried.

She made no movement. It was as if she had become unconscious of his presence or even life itself.

"Lillie! For mercy's sake, Lillie, look at me! Lillie! Lillie!"

He had gone to her side now and touched her cold hand, and at the touch she swayed a little and would have fallen senseless, but he caught her in his arms and laid her on the low divan. He threw himself on his knees beside her, and looked at her with his breath coming in hard, quick gasps.

Despair and shame overwhelmed him to suffocation, and paramount through it all came the proud fear for that self which had hitherto ever been first with him all his life long—the self for which he had often sacrificed the happiness of others or well-nigh forfeited honor, for which at last in a moment of frenzy he had even sold his soul.

He saw himself in that awful moment for what he was, and even with Captain Derwent's dead body at his feet he had failed to see himself.

Scorned and shamed before men, it brought near to him another tribunal, higher and all-powerful, at whose portals he must needs stand at the last day, and he bowed his head in the first real prayer that had ever rent his bleeding heart.

"My God, my God, be merciful!"

How would she for whom he had sinned look at him when those closed eyes opened? Would she not shrink from his touch as from some unclean thing? Would her love not fall before this blow he had dealt it, or was it that love possessed of a divine pity which would not turn even from the hand that struck it? He took the ivory fan which had dropped from her nerveless fingers and waited it softly over her pallid face.

Her long, thick lashes quivered, the white eyelids opened at last, and her blue eyes were looking into his.

He covered his face with his hands and bowed his head on the cushion beside her, for he could not dare to look at her now. She put out a trembling hand and touched his thick brown hair.

"Don," she whispered faintly, "tell me it is not true!"

"I cannot!" The hoarse reply pierced her very soul. Her hand dropped. She burst into sudden and passionate weeping. With a strong effort Don recovered his self-control, and spoke with labored intensity.

"It was not my shot that killed him—as God is my judge, I swear to you it was not; but, in a fit of anger, I fired, and it might have killed him. He insisted you were to marry that dark fellow, and he would not listen to me, and I lost my head. Lillie, Lillie! don't look like that! Don't! I cannot bear it!"

She had stayed her convulsive sobs, and her blue eyes were regarding him in a way that made his proud lips quiver.

"You did that, yet you came back to me and told me nothing of it, and you made me marry you!" The words broke from her in low, halting sentences, as if they choked her to utter them.

"Lillie, be merciful! It was my love for you that made me reckless. What good would it have done to tell you of our quarrel? For I never dreamt you would come to know of it."

"Oh, why did you make me marry you?" she wailed. And now she broke down once more and wept bitterly.

"Lillie!" he cried, beside himself with remorse and suffering, "you don't believe me guilty of his death? Don't tell me you doubt me!"

"I do not doubt you," she spoke at last; "but you have deceived me, and oh, Don, it has broken my heart!"

He looked at her wildly, and seemed to realize, with a new sense of desolation, that it was indeed true. He had shattered alike her faith in him and her love.

"Oh!" he cried out, "if you had loved me as I love you, you would understand and be pitiful!"

"I do love you," she answered brokenly—"you as you should be, as God meant you to be, not what you are."

"Don't!" he cried again. "Oh, if you only knew what a purgatory remorse has made my life ever since that fatal night, you would pity me and forgive!"

"I do forgive you," she said, after a silence that seemed an eternity to the man who hung upon her words; "but life can never be the same again—never, never!"

She staggered to her feet and flung back the long strands of her flaxen hair from her face with a despairing gesture. With a wild rush of memory it had dawned upon her that this was

her wedding day, and that in an hour's time she was expected to leave her maiden home a happy bride.

Her wedding day! Was it indeed only a few hours since she laid her hand in Don's and vowed that him she would love and cherish and obey till death them did part?

She turned now and looked at him, with the misery of that remembrance writ large upon her face, and Don winced beneath that look as if she had struck him a blow.

"Oh, that we could undo this day!" she said.

He knew then the thing he dreaded had come upon him. He had lost her love, and he was yet to lose herself. And a fierce despair fell upon him. He strode towards her and took her in a passionate embrace.

"No, I will not let you say it!" he cried hoarsely, "for I could not live without you, Lillie!"

## CHAPTER IX.

Bombay at last!

"Oh, the terrible strain of those nights and days since the garrison of Rawal Pindi had bidden the newly married pair 'God speed,' and that journey had begun which should have been one all-too-swiftly-passing stream of happiness, and held nothing but the long-drawn-out agony of tortured hours—hours spent together in closest companionship, yet in which they were kept apart by the widest gulfs.

Don thought there could well be nothing bitterer than that stage of the journey which was over. The forced inaction on board the trains, the fierce satisfaction of arranging every little detail for his wife's comfort, always with the knowledge that that right to do so would all too soon cease to be his; the constant strain to keep up appearances before servants and officials, the utter inability to break down the barrier of pain when they were alone.

Sometimes he told himself it had been better to speak that last goodbye at Bombay and prolong the agony no longer; but as a drowning man clings to the rope of succor, he had not the courage to be the one to cut the cord which bound them. She had consented he should take her home, and he would go through with it to the bitter end. His thoughts never went beyond that end. After their farewell had been spoken, what mattered it wither he went?

And now they were on board the big steamer at last, and the May day was dying in a golden haze over land and sea. The pilot had long since gone ashore in the tug steamer, and the great Indian land of glory and death was sinking fast astern into the world of waters.

Lillie stood on the poop and looked her last upon it with a bursting heart. She had come hither a gay and happy girl, she was going hence a broken-hearted woman, a wife in name alone.

Don was below, conferring with the steward about their luggage and cabins. She was free to let fall those salt tears she hid from him with proud, Spartanlike fortitude. If she suffered, she suffered in silence, and perhaps Don never guessed how deep that suffering was. He came up by and by, and found her still standing by the taffrail alone. She had checked her tears and recovered her habitual calm; but though she had drawn her veil down, through its thin texture Don saw how pale and worn her lovely face looked.

"You are tired," he said, compassionately. "Shall you go below at once?"

"I would rather stay here a while. I am not in the least sleepy."

(To be continued.)

**SURVIVAL OF THE UNFITTEST.**  
Instances in Nature Where Good Wins Way to Seemingly Evil.

A matter that has attracted the attention of all outdoor students for ages, and which still remains unsettled, is the fact that, although the farmer wages a constant warfare on weeds in order that his crops may grow, the food-bearing plants often fall to seed fruition, but the weeds never. The more noxious the plant the more certain it is to flourish, says a New England writer. What is true of the plant world is true of bird and mammal life. The English sparrows, which nearly every one hates, increase at the rate of millions yearly, in spite of rigid winters and bounty laws, while the birds which add the beauty of color and song to outdoor life are tending toward extinction. The frost that imprisons the grouse, by forming a crust over the snowbank where he has sought shelter, at the same time protects the field mouse pest from his natural enemies. The same crust bears up the wolf, while it practically imprisons the deer. Insect parasites kill the game birds, while the owl seems to enjoy their companionship and cares not how thickly they swarm within the cover of his plumage. The crows fly over morning and evening from roosting to feeding place and return in flocks as great as those of a century ago. The ducks and geese return from the south spring after spring with constantly thinning ranks. As the eastern writer puts it, the chances are that a hundred years hence, in the death of game, the leading sportsmen will be wrangling over the merits of their skunk dogs and bragging of their bags of crows and sparrows.

She used smokeless powder. He—That's a peculiar ring you are wearing. Has it a history? She—Yes, it's a war relic. He—Indeed! Tell me about it, pray. She—Oh, there isn't much to tell. I won it in my first engagement.—Chicago News.

## THE COMEDY OF IT.

The Hennesseys and the Whimpetts were at it again. It was the revival of an ancient unpleasantness, and it had its beginnings in the fact that when Mick Hennessey, for reasons not necessary to mention, was laid off at the stockyards, Bill Whimpett went in and took his job. Immediately upon this, Nora Hennessey, as bad luck would have it, fell ill with rheumatism, and, while she was in bed, little Pat, who was 10, got into bad company, and taking the bit in his teeth, as young colts will now and then, he ran away. It was three months before he turned up again at home, and when he did he had acquired a good deal of knowledge which a boy of 10 can do nicely without. All of which the Hennesseys laid at the door of the Whimpetts. Indeed and indeed, when Mary Whimpett ventured over to the Hennesseys with a baking of warm bread—that was while Nora Hennessey was in bed—she got her trouble for her pains, and the bread flung back at her.

In the course of time both families would have been well enough pleased to have fluttered a flag of truce, but a perverse fate attended all efforts at reconciliation. If the grown folks were in a mood for amity, the youngsters gave each other bloody noses, and the respective mothers, fierce as tigresses, espoused the part of their young. Moreover, Mick got a place on the Halsted street line as grip driver, and the first thing he did was to run over the Whimpett's terrier. The terrier had been more petted by the Whimpetts than any child they ever owned, and the death was celebrated with solemnity.

The Whimpetts had, moreover, some cause for envyings. They were better off than they had ever been before in their lives. They enjoyed the distinction of a front flat, a piano, a new set of parlor furniture and some flowered dishes—125 pieces, including scimitar-shaped dishes for the rings of baked potatoes. With such conveniences it is possible to live in an elegant manner. Jack Whimpett had, moreover, gone to Cuba at the call of his country, and though he was now engaged in rolling barrels of sugar and flour from the trucks of a wholesale grocery house he made bold to wear his blue jacket and buff leggings and the slouch hat that suggested San Juan and other heroic episodes. But with the Hennesseys it was different. They had seen much better days, and it was not easy for them to forget it. When methods were simpler, Mick Hennessey had been a contractor and had made money. But figuring got too close, finally, and Mick made blunders, lost his property and his reputation, and had the pain of seeing his family move out of their imposing three-story brick into an apartment beside the Whimpetta. However, they still lived in the shadow of prosperity, for Mrs. Hennessey's sister, Kate Cragin of Boston, had the goodness to keep Rosemarie Hennessey at the convent, a fact which the Hennesseys flouted now and then before the Whimpetts, who sent their brood to the public school and had expectations of nothing better.

"Keep you clear of that Rosemarie Hennessey!" warned Mrs. Whimpett, speaking to her son the day before the girl's expected return.

"Heh!" sniffed Jack. "I've no need to go to the Hennesseys, I hope, to find a girl to my liking."

"Say, there's others, ain't there, Jack?" piped Dick, who knew things the rest of the family did not. He had seen Jack taking girls into ice cream parlors, big as life. Jack was a handsome fellow. His broad shoulders and sturdy legs, his big round head with its clustering black curls, his brave eyes and simple manner, were calculated to do execution, though, to be just, he was not vain.

The Whimpetts heard great goings on the night of Rosemarie Hennessey's return. There were lights in all the windows, and the sound of fiddling, and an ice-cream freezer from the caterer's standing out in the hall. The young Hennesseys paid full tribute to the glory of the occasion by running out in the corridor, in their Sunday best, and sticking out their tongues at the young Whimpetts.

Jack Whimpett sat in his own house and endeavored to read the book he had brought home from the public library. It was a good book, but he could not really understand it because of the fiddling next door, which got into his blood and made his heart dance, though he forced his feet to keep perfectly still. He had no mind to let the feet of a Whimpett make merry to the music of a Hennessey. Besides, as mentioned before, the Hennesseys and the Whimpetts had been at it again.

It was a close summer night, and he determined at length, the younger children being in bed, his mother nodding over her paper, and his father not yet home—he was on a night shift at the yards—to go out for a little air. He had to pass the Hennesseys' door to reach the stairs, and he meant not to acknowledge the merry-making by even a turn of the head. But there was such a glare of light, such a babel of voices, such a whirling of starched skirts, that, because he was not yet one and twenty, he looked out of the corner of his eye—and was lost.

For this is what he saw: A tall, slender, smiling girl with raven black hair braided about her head in the most engaging fashion, a pair of bluest eyes, full of modesty and merriment, a rounded throat, a pink and white skin, a fluttering white gown and some pink roses. It was altogether the prettiest thing Jack had ever seen off the stage, and he stopped as if an enchantment had been cast over him, and from the safe gloom of the hall stared upon this apparition. Some one spoke to the girl, but she did not turn her head.

She still looked in Jack's direction. The truth was, that half in shadow and half in white light, she saw a young soldier, handsomer than any man she had ever beheld, looking at her from his loneliness, with eyes of appreciation and reverence. This made the hall much more interesting than the parlor, and she, too, moved by an inclination for fresh air, left the room where her friends were and stepped into the hall.

No one noticed her departure, and she slipped away from the door, then, feigning to refresh herself in the draft that came up the stairway, she covertly observed the soldier. He drew back further in the shadow, then, after a pause, he came nearer to her. She looked at him frankly then, challenging him to speak.

"The sound of the music is gay," said he, accepting the challenge. But his voice was quite sad. He had, in truth, never been to such a grand party as the one with which the Hennesseys celebrated the homecoming of their daughter.

The girl whirled about lightly on her slippers feet.

"I can't keep still when I hear music like that!" she cried. "I could dance all night."

"I couldn't sit still any longer in my room," Jack confessed. "And I thought it would be silly to get up and dance all by myself, so I concluded to go out for a walk."

The music took a new turn, a caressing measure. The two young people stood near each other in the dusky hall and listened, he in his soldier clothes, she in her perfumed white frock. The scent of the roses she wore stole to their nostrils. The long hall invited them. Jack flung his hat on the floor.

"Come!" said he.

The girl blushed, hesitated, harked to the rhythm of the waltz, and then laid her white hand on Jack's arm. They went waltzing in and out amid

the shadows of the corridor. At the far end the music stopped. The girl sprang from Jack's arms, looked at him abashed. Just then Mrs. Dennis, who lived upstairs, came along.

"Mrs. Dennis," whispered Jack, "who is that girl in the white dress that just went in the Hennesseys' door?"

"That?" said Mrs. Dennis. "Did she have blue eyes and black hair? Why, that's Rosemarie Hennessey, to be sure, Jack Whimpett, and not for you."

Jack tossed his head and became audacious.

"O, I don't know," he said.

It would be impossible to describe the amazement of the Hennesseys and the Whimpetts the next day when they saw Jack and Rosemarie boldly standing together in the hall talking.

"It's a warm Sunday," said Jack. "Wouldn't you like a taste of ice cream, Miss Hennessey?"

"I would that, thank you, sir. But my mother may object."

"Ask her," said Jack, and he felt braver than he ever did in Cuba. Rosemarie came back and shook her head.

"Mother says no," said she.

"I'll call again tomorrow," he responded, and he did. But there was still a refusal, and at home he was bullied unmercifully. In fact, the wrath which the Whimpetts and Hennesseys had hitherto poured upon one another they now turned upon their outrageous offspring. But that did not keep roses from being thrown over the transom at Rosemarie's feet, nor little paper boxes of ice cream from finding their way to her hand, and ultimately to her mouth. And to cap it all, one night when Mick Hennessey was home, in walked Jack, with a daisy in his buttonhole, and stood up straight as a dragoon before the frowning old man.

"Good evening, Mr. Hennessey," said he.

Mick Hennessey took his pipe out of his mouth and gave a surly "Good evening."

"I'd like to call on Miss Hennessey, if you please, sir."

"Well, you can't, bad cest to yeh," responded Hennessey, and turned his back.

"I've got a new place, sir, and a raise in salary, and a promise of something better."

"It's less than nothin' to me. Ave seen more money than ye'll have the countin' av if yeh live to be a hunder."

"Very likely, sir. But why may I not call on Miss Hennessey?" He smiled pleasantly, and somehow got old Hennessey's eye, and because his eyes were merry and the turn of his calf was good, something got hold of old Hennessey's better self and he broke into a smile so comprehensive that it fairly swallowed his face.

"Git along wid ye, ye spalpeen! Come see the girl, if her mother's willin'." Yeh come of a good fightin' family, I'll say that for ye."

And the next morning a girl in a fresh gingham gown, with a rose in her black hair, called on Mrs. Whimpett.

"Here's a little drawn work I did at the convent, ma'am," said she, modest and as soft as could be. "And I thought maybe you'd have the goodness to accept the same from me." She looked up under her long lashes de-

precatingly. Mrs. Whimpett drew back and trembled a little. Then she caught the girl in her arms and kissed her. "Come in!" she said. "Sit down. You're just the one to help me plan a picnic. I was thinkin' of askin' your pa and ma!"

And so the feud of the Hennesseys and Whimpetts died. There are other chapters to the story, but it is not necessary to write them. They can be taken for granted.—Chicago Tribune.

## HONESTY IN ALASKA.

A Different Code of Ethics Prevails There Than in the States.

"Quite a different code of ethics obtain at Cape Nome," said a young attorney, who hung out his shingle in that metropolis last summer, "from that which governs this part of the country. We can't look up men's records, we can't test a man's honesty before trusting him. Much has to be taken for granted, and we rely a great deal on what is written in the face. I was sitting in the feeding grog shop in Nome one afternoon, busily making out the deeds for the transfer of the property on which the saloon was situated, when I felt something hit the wall just above my head, and a bag of gold dust fell into my lap. 'Take keer o' that fer me, youngster,' called out a drunken miner, who reeled out of the crowd about the bar, in a voice as unsteady as his legs. 'Take keer o' that till I call fer it.' There was at least \$2,500 in the bag, but the man was too drunk to argue with, so I put the stuff in my pocket and went on with my work. Later I labeled it, put it in the safe in my office, and never thought of it again for several weeks. One day a poor, desolate creature came stumbling into my room. His face was the picture of despair, he was ragged and dirty, and his hat had a great hole in it which emphasized his miserable appearance. 'Ain't yer got something that belongs ter me?' he queried. 'What do you mean?' said I, recognizing him at once as the poor, reeling creature who had slung the gold at me in the saloon. 'Wal,' he explained, 'some time ago I went up the beach and panned out nigh about \$3,000 worth of dust. 'Twas more money than I ever had in my life before, an' I made up my mind I'd go home ter my folks in southern California, and have a pleasant winter. But when I came ter the city I got inter bad company. We drunk and drunk. I remember gettin' rid of \$500 worth of the stuff, and then I don't remember no more, save a sort of a glimmer of your face, an' thought yer might know something of my dust.' While he was telling his story I had taken the gold out of the safe, and suddenly tossed it into his lap. I think I never saw a more delighted man, and no one can persuade him that he is not a reader of character."

## Weight of Precedent.

There is a story reported as having been told by Col. Fred N. Dow of Portland, Maine, which shows well how customary usage "broadens down from precedent to precedent." And no less plainly does it show the weight of the exceptional precedent. Colonel Dow once visited friends at Quebec, and while seeing the sights of the city and its surroundings, he took a public carriage to visit the Falls of Montmorency. At a half-way house on the road the driver pulled up his horse and remarked, "The carriage always stops here." "For what purpose?" asked the colonel. "For the passengers to treat," was the reply. "But none of us drink and we do not intend to treat." The driver had dismounted, and was waiting by the roadside. Drawing himself up to his full height he said, impressively, "I have driven this carriage now more than thirty years, and this has happened but once before. Some time ago I had for a fare a crank from Portland, Maine, by the name of Neal Dow, who said he wouldn't drink; and what was more to the point, he said he wouldn't pay for anybody else to drink." The son found himself occupying the same ground as that on which his father had stood.

## His Sarcasm.

"Brudern and sistahs," sternly said good old parson Woolimon, after the collection had been taken up on a recent Sabbath morning, "before the hat was done parsed I expounded the request that the congregation contribute accawdin' to deir means, and I sho expected dat yo' all would chip in magnanimously. But now, upon examinin' de collection, I finds dat de connected amount contributed by de whole entire posse ob yo' am only de significant and pusillanimous sum of sixty-free cents. And at dis junction dar ain't no 'casion for yo' all to look at Brudder Stewfoot, what done circumambulated de hat around, in no such auspicious manner; for, in de fust place, Brudder Stewfoot ain't dat kind ob a man, and, in de second place, I done watched him like a hawk all de time muhself. No; sixty-free cents was all dat was flung in; and I dees wants to say dat, in my humble opinion, instead ob contributin' accawdin' to yo' means, yo' all contributed accawdin' to yo' meanness. De choir will now favor us wid deir regular melodiousness."—Harper's Bazar.

## Rolling an Umbrella.

The proper way to roll an umbrella is to take hold of the ends of the ribs and the stick with the same hand, and hold them tightly enough to prevent their being twisted while the covering is being twirled around with the other hand.

## Qualit Little People.

The natives of the Andaman Islands, the smallest people in the world, average three feet eleven inches in height and less than seventy pounds in weight.

