

LOST ON THE... VELD

A STORY OF THE BOER CAMPAIGN IN NATAL

By H. B. Mackenzie

CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

"Was it anything, dearie?" She uttered an exclamation as she saw Bluebell's white face. "The Boers—they're going to attack us, Bluebell? Is that it?"

"No, no, auntie—not so far as I know," said the girl, with an attempt at a wan smile. "At least, that wasn't what I wanted. But don't ask me tonight, auntie, I'm tired. Good night. Miss Elizabeth was all of mother she had ever known."

"Good night. God keep you, dearie," the elder woman whispered. Her words remained with Bluebell after she had shut herself into her room.

God keep her! There was one to whom she should turn now for help in this most terrible crisis of her young life. Bluebell threw herself on her knees, burying her face in her hands. Oh, God, show her what was the right thing to do. Help her, oh, God, for there was no other who could tell her what she must do!

Save her father from the consequences of a deliberate crime by selling herself to this scoundrel! It was a fearful sacrifice! Did God demand it of her? Nay, would she be doing right in making it? Bluebell was a good, sweet, true-hearted girl. She had always shown respect and affection for the most unlovable man who was her father, even when he was least worthy of respect; but she had an unusual amount of common sense for a young girl, and was not likely to be betrayed into any sentimental and maudlin course of action.

As she knelt there a sudden thought came to Bluebell, bringing the warm blood in a palpitating wave over the pallor of her white face, and quickening the throbs of her heart that had been beating so low and despairingly. It was the thought of Adair Rothes.

"If he were only here," Bluebell said to herself, "I think he would help me. He said he was my friend."

Her thoughts wandered from the terrible crisis of the moment to the brief time of happiness in the afternoon when Rothes had first met her. It had not lasted long, that was true; but somehow the memory of Rothes' clasp of her hand, of his long look into her eyes, brought a kind of brief sweetness into Bluebell's heart, which even the pain and sorrow of the present could not quite blot out.

When she rose from her knees her mind was quite made up. "I shall not marry that man," she said, and her eyes were full of a strange, deep determination. "It would not make dad's sin the less if I did so. It would be a sin on my part to marry a man like that. It would be adding sin to sin. Dad must escape, but it will be in some other way. I will help him to do so. He must escape to England, and auntie and I will carry on the farm here."

This determination brought a certain restfulness to Bluebell. She undressed, got into bed, and presently went to sleep, though it was a sleep disturbed by troubled dreams of Boers attacking New Kelsa, setting fire to it, and tying up all its occupants to stakes in order that they might be burnt also.

Adam Leslie had a worse night than his daughter. He was up at daybreak and riding over his farm. As he was returning about 7 o'clock he saw a tall, dark figure approaching him on horseback. He recognized it at once, and his heart sank.

Moore rode quickly up to him. Mr. Leslie could see some excitement on the usually dark, impassive face.

"News, Leslie—great news!" he exclaimed, as he came close to the other man, and flung himself off his horse.

"Listen, man; but first"—he dropped his voice—"what of my love affair. How have you succeeded with the little bride-elect?"

Leslie's rubicund face blanched, but he endeavored to put on an air of assurance.

"My dear Moore, she will come round; I am not afraid of that. Of course you must allow for a little reluctance at first; but there isn't the slightest fear but she will give in. But you'll give us a day or two more of grace, will you not?"

His tone of abject entreaty told more than his words did to the keen ear of Gerald Moore, who turned aside for a moment, and passed his hand over his lips as if to conceal their expression.

"Yes, I will give you a day or two more," he said presently, "for there's some work before you, Mr. Leslie, if, as I think, you feel inclined to tell something which the British general at Ladysmith would give his ears to know. In a few days some of the biggest men on the Boers' side may be made prisoners. Ha! is that not tidings worth hearing? I could give the information myself, but I wish you to have the chance of a little glory, and also of a pecuniary reward. You do not need to sell this information under several hundred pounds."

The eyes of Adam Leslie glistened. Avarice was one of the man's besetting sins. It was the haste to be rich which had landed him in the net of the billionaire Gerald Moore.

He grasped Moore's arm.

"And you can give me this information—? For pity's sake, let me know all, Moore."

The other man bent his head, and

for a few minutes spoke in a low but deliberate and distinct voice. Leslie drank in every word. His hatred of the Boers was only equalled by his lust for gold, and the two passions, seeing a way to be satisfied here, rendered his rubicund face agitated and convulsed with emotion.

"You are willing to inform? Then go, and at once!" exclaimed Moore. "Not a moment is to be lost! It is utterly impossible that the information can be carried to Ladysmith in any other way. I solemnly assure you that no one else knows it but myself. You can reach Ladysmith by 9 o'clock. So then, without more ado, go!"

As Adam Leslie, full of the design that was to deliver the very leaders of the Boer army into the hands of the enemy, hurried within his steadings, the other man looked after him with a smile.

"So you have worked into my hands, friend Leslie," he muttered. And he rubbed these useful members together as if Leslie were literally between them.

"Now my path will be easy. Yes, my charming Bluebell, you will find Gerald Moore is capable of revenge as well as love!" And he laughed. "And if you will not yield to persuasion, my dear young lady, why, then, we must needs try force!"

CHAPTER V.

Bluebell had come down prepared to give her father her answer, and to make her proposal to him, in the morning; but to her surprise and consternation, she learned that he had gone off on horseback, no one knew whither, not saying when he should return.

"It was Sam who saw him go," said Miss Elizabeth, in a frightened tone, "and he says he went in the direction of Ladysmith; but of course he may be going much farther than that—he may be going by train. Do you know nothing about it, Bluebell?"

Bluebell shook her head. She was more put about even than her aunt by this new move. What could it mean? "Dear auntie, you're not afraid of the Boers, are you? They have never done us any harm, why should they now? Though they are fighting with Britons, it is with British soldiers armed themselves, not with helpless, unarmed people, especially women."

The day passed, the women going about their usual avocations; but Adam Leslie did not return. It was not till late in the evening that he rode at a hard pace up the avenue and into the steading, right up underneath the stoop or veranda. Bluebell went down to meet him, then turned away with a shudder, for she could see he was deeply flushed and his eyes blazing, while he staggered slightly as he got off his horse.

"Sam!" cried Bluebell to the Zulu servant who had appeared at the sound of the horse's hoofs, "take my father's horse. Father, take my arm," she said, in a low voice.

But he flung her off with an oath. "Away into the house! You are a disobedient creature, and I will have nothing to do with you!" he snarled. He himself staggered into the sitting room, where he lay down on a couch and fell asleep, without even removing his great riding boots.

Bluebell could not speak to him that night. She crept away, bitterly humiliated and distressed; and Miss Elizabeth came in and endeavored to comfort her; but it was such comfort as one who is ignorant of the real nature or depth of a wound can give.

By the morning her father had slept off his drunken fit. Bluebell managed to get a few minutes alone with him after breakfast, during which he was sullen and silent, not exchanging a word with the women.

Bad as Adam Leslie was, he had still a few instincts of a gentleman, and one of these told him that he had been guilty of a base and dishonorable act in selling the information which was to betray the Boer leaders into the hands of an enemy.

"Father, I must speak to you for a minute," Bluebell said, very pale but very determined. "I have been thinking over what you said last night. I cannot do what you wish. It would be a crime to sell myself to a man I loathe and fear. But—but you must escape. This is the time to do it, when all the country is in confusion, and people are leaving every day. You must go down to Durban and get to England. Aunt Elizabeth and I shall stay on here, and we can send you the money we make. The only thing we have to do is to throw Mr. Moore off the scent."

He had been glaring at her with a look that vaguely terrified Bluebell up to this moment. Now he interrupted her in a hoarse, sullen tone.

"You are mad, child! You don't know what you are talking about! I am not going to escape, or to do any such thing, in the meantime. As for you, you will have to make up your mind sooner or later to marry Gerald Moore; but he is not going to insist at once. You will have a week or two in which to accustom yourself to the idea that seems so disagreeable to you."

He turned without another word, and walked out of the room. Bluebell

looked after him, with mingled agony and humiliation in her heart.

He had not always been like this. Bluebell could remember her early years of childhood in far-off Scotland, when a sweet-faced, brown-haired woman ruled the house, and Adam Leslie had been as different from what he was now as day is from night.

Then the sweet mother had died, and Leslie had been turned out of the inheritance he had thought would be his, by a cousin, long supposed to be dead, turning up; and, in a sullen, defiant mood, the man had set off for South Africa, taking his sister with him. The passion for making money had entered his heart, which seemed to have no longer any sweet home affection to soften it since his wife died; and he had become harder and more sullen and more immersed in money making until this fearful end had come.

A day or two passed. Gerald Moore seemed to have disappeared, and Bluebell began to breathe more freely. Perhaps, after all, he was not so bad as she had thought; perhaps her evident aversion to the idea of marrying him had offended him, and decided him to act a more merciful part than he had at first intended.

Meantime, too, they had heard no further news of the invading Boers.

One night Bluebell had gone to her own room rather earlier than usual. She had had a headache—an uncommon ailment with her—and, saying to her aunt that she felt sure that there was a thunderstorm coming, she bade her good-night and went to bed; but for a long time she could not sleep.

The night was very hot—an unusual thing at that season, when, though the days are swelteringly warm, the nights are correspondingly cold—and there was the strange stillness in the air which precedes a thunderstorm. Bluebell lay waiting for the first sudden clap of thunder, the first dazzling blaze of lightning, all her nerves unstrung, not by fear, but by the overcharged electricity in the air, and her own throbbing temples.

At last Bluebell's ears, strained to catch any noise, detected a strange throbbing sound; but it seemed to be very far away. It was certainly not the rumbling of thunder. Was it a real sound, or did it exist only in her fancy, in the throbbing tympanum of her ear? Bluebell lay still and listened.

No, it was no fancy! She heard it again, and this time more distinct. It was the sound of horses' hoofs—of many horses' hoofs—Bluebell well knew, though the noise produced was not that of several distinct sounds, but of one galloping along the wagon-path of the veldt.

Bluebell started up in bed, a sudden trembling seizing her. The Boers! Of course it was the Boers! She did not have a doubt on the subject. But in what direction were they going. Ah! they were coming towards New Kelsa! She could hear their horses approaching every moment.

Almost mechanically Bluebell threw herself out of bed and dressed herself quickly, then thrust her feet into her slippers. All the house was silent. It was about 1 o'clock in the morning, and every one was in bed. Should she go to wake them? Bluebell hesitated. Perhaps the horsemen would pass right on; they must be going towards Ladysmith. Was it not better that her father should sleep on in ignorance that the hated Boers were so near. If he knew of their proximity, who could tell what bad step his hatred of them might induce him to take?

Bluebell determined to remain where she was and watch. She stood behind the muslin curtains, which alone protected the unshuttered window, watching. Her heart beat fast and unevenly, and nervous little shoots of pain ran through the palms of her hands.

(To be continued.)

With the Eyes of Faith.

Some idea of amateur photography as it was in its early days may be gathered from an incident which the late Bishop Walsham How confided to his note book. Before he became a bishop he used to call together the old men of the parish on New Year's day, and on one occasion he displayed to his guests a photograph of two old men who had long worked at the rectory. They were photographed in their working clothes, one with a spade and the other holding a little tree as if about to plant it. A very deaf old man, Richard Jones, took the photograph in his hands, and looking at it said: "Beautiful! Beautiful!" So the rector shouted: "Who are they, Richard?" "Why," he said, "it's Abraham offering up Isaac to be sacrificed!" The rector tried to undeceive him, and as the old man who had been photographed were sitting opposite him, he said: "You'll see them before you if you'll look up." Richard smiled serenely but all he said was: "Yes, yes, I see 'em before me—by faith!"—Youth's Companion.

Faithful.

Mrs. Bingo—"You went to Mickleman, the painter, didn't you? And how was he?" Mrs. Kingley—"Wonderful! His powers of divination are really marvelous." What did he say?" "He said I would be without a cook for nearly a month."—Detroit Free Press.

Its Drawbacks.

"Dreadful!" exclaimed Cholly Angloman as he looked at an old painting where the costumes included decubet and hose. "It's picturesque." "Perhaps. But how could a man roll up his trousers like they do in London?"—Washington Star.

THE MAGIC QUILT

A JUVENILE STORY

BY MARY CAROLINE HYDE

In a little house on the edge of a wood there lived Rosalie and her baby sister Elsie. The house was built of logs and had but one room, one window, one door and a big chimney pushing its way through a miserable roof of thatch. Rosalie shivered whenever the little sister awoke, for she knew that each meal brought them so much nearer the end of the food. There were but two potatoes left and only a crust of bread. Elsie awoke crying hard for something to eat. Rosalie gave her the crust and set the potatoes to roasting in the ashes of the big fireplace.

Against the panes of the one window there had been a feeble drizzle all the morning and now it began to pour in torrents, and Rosalie and Elsie were forced to the chimney place to keep dry. Even here the raindrops sometimes managed to find the way and spluttered and hissed as they fell on the fire. Rosalie went to a large wooden box and flung handful after handful of dry sticks on the flames.

There came a pounce upon the door as if someone were hitting it in a great hurry to get in. Rosalie crept cautiously to the window and looked out. All that she could see at the door was an old woman, in a high, peaked hat and a patchwork quilt pinned over her shoulders to keep off the rain.

"Poor old creature," cried Rosalie to herself, and she flew to the door to let her in. The old woman made a low courtesy and entered hobbling. Her face was wrinkled and very ugly and her feet were quite bare. She made her way across the room to the fireplace where she sank wearily upon a bench.

"I am sorry for you," said Rosalie, pityingly. "I ought to have opened the door sooner," and she looked at the water dripping from the quilt and saking little pools on the floor.

"Bless you, my child," responded the old woman. "I was doubting if you would let such an ugly old woman come in at all."

"Indeed I would," said Rosalie honestly. "I am very sorry for you. Won't you please take off your things?" and she glanced from the dripping quilt to the high, peaked hat. The old woman's eyes almost twinkled as she unfastened the quilt and laid it on the floor, but she did not take off her hat.

"She is hungry," thought Rosalie, swallowing her own hunger. "Won't you have this roast potato?" she said aloud, and drawing it out of the hot ashes, she broke it open, sprinkling it with salt and handed it to the old woman.

"My child, you are very good," said the old woman, seizing the food and eating it so greedily that soon nothing was left but the crisped, brown shell.

"I am very sorry for you," said Rosalie, "but we have no more potatoes. Perhaps when my father comes home from the war we shall have plenty. I wish he would come soon, but he is far away."

As Rosalie said the third time, "I am sorry for you," the old woman's face grew actually lovely.

"My dear child," she said, "I have been clear round the world to find some one to say to a poor, ugly, old woman: 'I am sorry for you.' At last I hear it from a little girl, who gives me shelter and her last mouthful of food. Do you know that these words, three times repeated by you, have broken my wretched enchantment? I am once more myself and you shall be rewarded. This quilt I lend you. It is in six blocks, and each block will yield you a wish. After I leave, touch each block with your hand, and all is as you command."

Speaking thus, a marvelous change was taking place in the old woman. Her bent and shriveled body was becoming upright and beautiful, her peaked hat had changed to a crown of gold, and her coarse and ragged gown to a dress of filmy primrose gauze. She was now a lovely fairy. With her staff transformed to a fragile wand studded with jewels she touched the quilt and said:

One, two three,
I bid thee
Be good
To Rosalie,
As she
To me.

Then with a shimmer and flash that lighted the dull room like a burst of sunshine, she floated toward the fireplace and vanished up the chimney. At this instant the rain ceased. Rosalie gasped with astonishment at all these phenomena, while little Elsie clasped her hands with glee at the pretty transformation.

"Oh, Elsie! isn't it wonderful!" cried Rosalie at last. "And the quilt; she has left it to us. How beautiful it is! It is made of velvet and silk and quilted with gold! What was I to do with it, Elsie? To wish? Let me see; I will wish right away. What shall it be for?" and she laid her hand upon a red silk block covered with round symbols of orange velvet, that suggested gold to her. "I wish, I wish for money good, to buy us each some hearty food."

As her fingers pressed the block she felt lying snugly in the cotton wadding several coins. In a moment she had seized the scissors to rip the block open, when out there rolled from it a dozen gold pieces, while the block itself became detached from the rest of the quilt and flew up the chimney. Elsie laughed and clasped her hands again at this queer sight, and Rosalie, her face flushed with delight, gathered up the coins and tried to count their value. This was impossible, for she had never seen so much money before,

so she hid it, all but one coin, folded the quilt most carefully and put it into the chest that had been her mother's most valued piece of furniture. Then tying on Elsie's bonnet, she started with her to the village to buy some food.

"I guess maybe you've heard from your father?" said the baker, of whom they bought some bread and cakes. "When is he coming home?"

"I don't know," said Rosalie, and the coin went into his till, without his having any idea of its origin.

The basket filled with food was heavy, and Elsie walked very slowly, so that it was nearly dark when they reached their lonely home. Elsie was heartily fed and tucked into her cradle with a plum-jumble to munch upon, while Rosalie put away her new stock of eatables and tried to decide what next to wish for.

"I think I had better wait till morning and take all night to choose what it shall be," she said to her sister, who was already asleep. "How nice it would be to wish for a new house, made of stone with a tight shingle roof and a vine growing over the front porch."

Rosalie, by the light of the still crackling fire, drew the quilt from the



chest, pressed her fingers upon the second block and wished for a new home supplied with every comfort inside and out, to say nothing of the vine over the front porch. Like the first, the second block ripped itself free from the rest of the quilt and flew up the chimney. Even as Rosalie refolded the quilt and put it in the chest, there seemed something unusual going on about her, but she went to bed without trying to see what it was, and strange to say, was at once asleep, not to waken till the sun, an hour high, looked in through the windows of her pretty new home and aroused her.

Elsie, too, was awakened by the bright sun, and, sitting up in her bed cradle, laughed to see herself in a fine new room. Her cradle and the chest in which Rosalie kept the quilt were the only things unchanged.

"Isn't it beautiful here, now?" exclaimed Rosalie. "I wish father were here to help us enjoy it. I am going to ask the quilt to write him a letter for me, because I don't know just where he is, and tell him to come home this very day, if he can."

She opened the chest, drew out the quilt and, laying her hand on the third block, said:

"Dear quilt, won't you please write father a letter, and tell him he'd better come home and see the new house of stone you have built for us alone."

Immediately there shifted out from the edges of the block a letter stamped and addressed to Rosalie's father, while the block fluttered loose from the rest of the quilt and sailed across the room to the new fireplace, up which it disappeared.

"Dear!" exclaimed Rosalie, picking up the letter, "why didn't I wish it sent directly to father; he won't get it for a long time if I send it by the village post," and touching the fourth block, she said:

"Please, quilt, speed today, father's letter on its way. Bring him ere night to his daughters, two, as you know so well how to do."

No sooner had she said this poor little rhyme than the letter vanished and the fourth block followed the others up the chimney. She put what was left of the magic quilt again into the chest and began at once to get everything ready for her father's return.

During the day no one came, but toward nightfall there was a heavy step upon the new front porch. Rosalie, watching, knew it was her father and hurriedly opened the door to find him standing there, his hand covering his eyes.

"Oh, father!" she cried. "I knew you would come; the quilt never fails. Why do you cover your eyes?"

"I am just off the battlefield, Rosalie," he said, "where a shot destroyed my sight. The rest I cannot tell you about, only that I am here. If I could only see you and Elsie, we would never complain."

"You shall see us, father," said Rosalie, taking his hand and leading him across the room to the chest. "Feel this, father, it is all that is left of the quilt. Now I shall wish that you get back your sight," and she pressed her hand upon the fifth block.

In a twinkling it had separated from the last block and whirled up the chimney, and Rosalie's father's sight had been perfectly restored.

"What magic is this?" he cried. "I can see as well as ever!"

"It is the precious quilt, as I told

you, father," she answered, putting the last block into his hand.

"Seeing is believing," he said, looking at the block curiously. "Put it away, Rosalie, to wish by when you are married."

Rosalie took it from him. "I wish for nothing more, now that you are home, but that we shall live long and be happy."

This was enough! The block fluttered from his fingers, drifted across the room, up the chimney, leaving the gift of long life and happiness in the pretty home on the edge of the wood.—Detroit Free Press.

A TAILOR OUTWITTED.

The Victim Tells the Story at His Own Expense.

At the expense of himself a certain fashionable Philadelphia tailor told the following story: Quite recently a man went into his establishment and told him that Mr. So and So, a prominent customer (in full standing) had said that Mr. Tailor had several misfit suits to dispose of and as he needed a new suit immediately he thought he'd like to look them over. One was found to fit him perfectly and he took it at the price, \$50. "But," he said, "Mr. Tailor, I have not enough ready money to pay you. I must have the suit. Now do you know Mr. Pancake, the Chestnut street confectioner? Well," on being assured that Mr. Pancake was also a customer in good standing, "he owes me some money, which he has promised to pay this afternoon, and if you are agreed I will walk over there with you and ask him to send \$50 of it to you." Such a proposition and the riddance of a bad suit could not be overlooked, and when they arrived at Mr. Pancake's shop, without preliminaries the man said: "You know that hundred you promised to send me to New York, Mr. Pancake? Well, just send fifty of it to Mr. Tailor and the other fifty to the address I gave you."

That afternoon Mr. Tailor received a neatly done up package containing 50 beautiful cream puffs.—Philadelphia Times.

MAX NORDAU AT HOME.

Peculiar Style in Which the Great Man Lives.

Max Nordau lives in Paris above a drinking shop. It appears that the name "Nordau" was originally used by its owner as a pseudonym to newspaper contributions. With the consent of his father, Herr Sudfeld, a well-known Pesth Hebraist, he legally assumed it, transforming himself from "South Field" (Sudfeld) into "North Meadow" (Nordau). Except when he is visiting his patients, Dr. Nordau spends all his time in his study. The room is plainly furnished. A bookcase is one of its conspicuous features. Among the books are many presentation copies of Lombroso's works. With this author and scientist Dr. Nordau keeps up a constant correspondence, and prides himself on being one of the very few men in Europe who can decipher the professor's handwriting, which appears to most people entirely illegible. Leading out of this room is Nordau's barely furnished bed room, the camp bedstead of which may be seen through the open door. A small trapeze hanging through the doorway would seem to indicate that he has faith in "parlor gymnastics." It is in this room that all books since the publication of "Degeneration" have been written, and where he is at present writing a novel.—Literary Life.

Poultices for Beauty's Face.

All women cannot go to Paris to consult a celebrity who has just come to the fore with a plan to benefit complexion. It consists of making poultices of the interior of fruit, and wearing these over the face at night, says the Philadelphia Inquirer. All fruit is good, but the best of all is the strawberry. You need not use pounds of fruit, like Mme. Tallien—a very little will suffice. You spread the fruit on a band of linen, and tie this over the wrinkled part of the face. Even one trial will astonish you; but if you continue the result will exceed your wildest expectations. Women who follow this treatment never wash the face in quite plain water, nor in cold water, nor with soap. Never, either, use glycerine or any fatty substance on the face. A little powder may complete the perfect drying of the face, but it must be of the very best quality. Plain orris root is the best of all. However, by continually using fruit plasters or bandages nothing else will be required to maintain the complexion young, and restore it to youth and beauty if damaged by sickness, bad cosmetics or time.

Politics and Long Life.

Lady Georgiana Grey, who just celebrated her 100th birthday, attributes the wonderful preservation of her faculties, says an English exchange, to the calm which she has always been careful to practice. She considers agitation the great consumer of health. To a young kinsman of hers who visited her the other day she expressed her earnest hope that he would not enter upon a career of politics. "It is so agitating, my dear," she said. "Why, if my poor brother had kept clear of politics I firmly believe he would have been alive today." The brother referred to was the famous third Earl Grey, who was long a prominent member of Whig cabinets. He was 92 when he died.

The Effect.

"What a lot of bric-a-brac Mrs. Knolly has in her parlor!" "Yes. Looks exactly as though she were going to have an auction, doesn't it?"—Puck.