

CHAPTER XIX-Continued. -12-

King nodded again, for a nod is less committal than a word; and the nod | that is offered !" was enough to start the mullah off again.

"I saw the Sleeper and his bride before she knew of either! It was I who let her into Khinjan! It was I who told the men she is the 'Heart of the Hills' come to life! She tricked me! But this is no hour for bearing grudges. She has a plan and I am minded to help."

King lay still and looked up at him. sure that treachery was the ultimate end of any plan the muliah Muhammad Anim had. India has been saved by the treachery of her enemies more often than ruined by false friends. So has the world, for that matter.

"A jihad when the right hour comes will raise the tribes," the mullah growled. "She and theu, as the Sleeper and his mate, could work wonders. But who can trust her? She stole that head! She stole all the ammunition! Does she surely love thee?"

King nodded again, "for modesty could not help him at that juncture. Love and boastfulness go together in the "Hills."

"She shall have thee back, then, at a price !"

King did not answer. His brown eyes watched the mullah's, and he drew his breath in little jerks, lest by breathing aloud he should miss one word of what was coming.

"She shall have thee back against Khinjan and the ammunition! She and thou shall have India, but I shall be the power behind you! I have men in Khinjan! I have as many as she! On the day I march there will be a rewolt within. She would better agree to terms!"

King lay looking at him, like a prisoner on the rack undergoing examination. He did not answer.

"Write thou a letter. Since she loves thee, state thine own case to her. Tell her that I hold thee hostage, and that Khinjan is mine already for a little fighting. In a month she cannot pick out my men from among her own. Her position is undermined. Tell her that, Tell her that if she obeys she shall have India and be queen. If she disobeys, she shall die in the Cavern of Earth's Drink !"

"She is a proud woman, mullah," answered King. "Threats to such as ohe-?"

another and some for no reason at all. Ball-with-a-beard looks the other way. Speak thou to them about the pardon

So King went down among them, taking some of the tools of his supposed trade with him and trying to crowd down the triumph that would well up. The seed he had sown had multiplied by fifty in a night. He wanted to shout, as men once did before the trails of Jericho. Possibility of pardon and reinstatement, though only heard of at second hand, had brought unity into being. And unity brought

engerness. "Let us start tonight!" urged one man.

"Nay!" the Pathan objected at once. "Many of you can hardly march. Rest ye here and let the hakim treat your bellynches. Bull-with-a-bearo bade me wait here for a letter that must go to Khinjan today. Good. 1 will take his letter. And in Khinjan I will spread news about pardons. It is likely there are fifty there who will dare follow me back, and then we shall march down the Khyber like a full company of the old days!"

King got busy with his lancet, but the mullah came back and called him off and drove the crowd away to a distance; then he drove King into the cave in front of him, his mouth working as if he were biting bits of vengeance off for future use.

"Write thy letter, thou! Write thy letter! Here is paper. There is a pen

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE, NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA.

ordered, and with his rifle at the straight into the eyes of the Rangar with her not only to become scented feud. Witness the Nikalseyns, whe "rendy" and the letter tucked inside Rewa Gunga! his shirt, the Pathan favored King

with a farewell grin and obeyed. "Get out I" the mullah snarled then immediately. "See to the sick. Tell into this camp! Come over here, sathem I sent thee. Bid them be grate- hib. I bring word from her." ful !"

King went. He recognized the almost madness that constituted the mul- ropes. The Rangar led him to where to make an end! lah's driving power. It is contagious, the tents were forty feet apart and that madness, until it destroys itself. none was likely to overhear them. It had made several thousand men fol- There he turned like a flash. low him and believe in him, but it had once given Yasmini a chance to fool him and defeat him, and now it gave King his chance. He let the mullah think himself obeyed implicitly.

He became the busiest man in all the "Hins." While the mullah glowered over the camp from the cave mouth or fulminated from the Quran or fought with other mullahs with words for weapons and abuse for argument, he its touch. It was a dagger with bronze to what only the West has endured bandaged and lanced and poulticed and blade and a gold hlit-her dagger. It hitherto with any complacency-a physicked until his head swam with weariness.

The sick swarmed so around him of the least sick from among those suprise.

And because each of those men had friends, and it is only human to wish ted to himself afterward that it was He had been blind. He had overlooked one's friend in the same boat, especially when the sea, so to speak, is rough, the progress through the camp became a current of missionary zeal and the virtues of the Anglo-Indian raj were better spoken of than the "Hills" had

heard for years. Not that there was any effort made to convert the camp en masse. Far from it. But the likely few were pounced on and were told of a chance to enlist for a bounty in India. And what with winter not so far ahead, and what with experience of former fighting against the British army, the choosing was none so difficult. From the day when the lad first feels soft down upon his face until the old man's beard turns white and his teeth shake out, the hillman would rather fight than eat; but he prefers to fight on the winning side if he may, and he likes good treatment.

Before it was dark that night there were thirty men sworn to hold their tongues and to walt for the word to hurry down the Khyber for the purpose of enlisting in some British-Indian regiment. Some even began to urge the hakim not to wait for the Orakzal Pathan, but to start with what he had.

"Shall I leave my brother in the lurch?" the hakim asked them; and though they murmured, they thought better of him for it.

Well for him that he had plenty of Epsom salts in his kit, for in the "Hills" physic should taste evil and show very quick results to be believed in. He found a dozen diseases of which he did not so much as know the name, but half of the sufferers with a story of her own, and leaving faquir and have foisted him to a pillar himself alive behind her? of holiness had he cared to let them.

"How did you get here?" he asked

in English. "Any fool could learn the password

The ground was criss-crossed like a man's palm by the shadows of tent-"She sends you this!" he hissed.

In that same instant King was fightthey were down together among the tent-pegs, King holding the Rangar's to break it, and the Rangar striving

for another stroke. The dagger he held had missed King's ribs by so was her perfume in the air. They rolled over and over, breathing

hard. King wanted to think before prisoner and hand him over to the

mullah. That would have been a ridiculous thing to do, for it would have forced as if the Rangar had read his mind. had to redouble his own or die. Perhis effort, for his strength came back to him as a madman's does. 'The Rangar gave a moan and let the knife fall. And because jealousy is poison King did the wrong thing then. He pounced on the knife instead of on the Rangar. He could have questioned him-knelt on him and perhaps forced explanations from him. But with a sudden swif' effort like a snake's the Rangar freed himself and was up and gone before King could struggle to his feet-

gone like a shadow among shadows. King got up and felt himself all over, for they had fought on stony ground and he was bruised. But bruises faded into nothing, and weariness as well, as his mind began to dwell on the new

complication to Lis problem. It was plain that the moment he had returned from his message to the Khyber the Rangar had been sent on this new murderous mission. Yasmini had never believed her letter would be fooling him and undermining his deshe contemplated bolting into India physical health was good.

even to get her hair on his person,

then gone was all imagination of her from first to last! Then she had tried

to make him love her that she might of their own. use him, and finding she had failed, she had sent her true love with the dagger through the camp, and the mullah

In a moment he imagined a whole picture, as it might have been in a them. crystal, of himself trapped and made

to don the Roman's armor and forced to pose to the savage "Hills"-or ing for his life. In another second fooled into posing to them-as her lover, while Rewa Gunga lurked behind the scenes and waited for the wrist with both hands and struggling harvest in the end. And what kind of harvest?

And what kind of man must Rews Gunga be who could lightly let go all little that his skin yet tingled from the prejudices of the East and submit "tertium guid?"

Yet what a fool he, King, had been not to appreciate at once that Rewa that he had to have a bodyguard to he gave an alarm, and he could not Gunga must be her lover. Why should keep them at bay; so he chose twenty think with that scent in his nostrils he not be? Were they not alike as and creeping into his lungs. Even in cousins? And the East does not love who had talked with the Pathan after the stress of fighting he wondered how its contrary, but its complement, being the Rangar's clothes and turban had older in love than the West, and wiser come to be drenched in it. He admit- in its ways in all but the material. nothing else than jealousy that sug- the obvious-that from first to last her gested to him to make the Rangar plan had been to set herself and this Rewa Gunga on the throne of India!

He washed and went through the mummery of Muslim prayers for the watchful mullah's sake, and climbed his own betrayal to the mullah. But on to his bed. But sleep seemed out of the question. He lay and tossed for he suddenly redoubled his efforts and an hour, his mind as busy as a terrier King, weary to the point of sickness, in hay. And when he did fall asleep at last it was so to dream and mutter haps the jealousy helped put venom in that the mullah came and shook him and preached him a half-hour sermon against the mortal sins that rob men of peaceful slumber by giving them a foretaste of the punishment to come. All that seemed kinder and more rebeen, for when the mullah had done at last and had gone striding back to the cave mouth, he really did fall sound asleep, and it was after dawn when he awoke. The mullah's voice, not untuneful, was rousing all the valley echoes in the call to prayer.

CHAPTER XXI.

And while King knelt behind the mullah and the whole camp faced Mec-

ca in forehead-in-the-dust abasement there came a strange man down the midst-not strange to the "Hills," where such sights are common, but strange to that camp and hour. Somebody rose and struck him, and he knelt treated seriously by the authorities, like the rest; but when prayer was and had only sent it in the hope of over and cooking had begun and the camp became a place of savory smell, termination. Perhaps she saw her he came on again-a blind man. He own peril. Perhaps she contemplated was clean shaven, and he looked as -gosh ! what a contingency !-- perhaps | if he had not been blind long, for his

swore they were cured after the first the mullah to his own devices! Would he walled. "Where is the famous hadose. They would have dubbed him she dare escape into India and leave kim? Show me the way to him! Oh. the famous, great, good hakim who can

with her unmistakable perfume but worship a long-since-flead Englishman. "We see!" yeiled one of them,

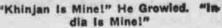
"We see!" they chorused, and the love for himself! Then she had lied idea took charge. From that minute they were a new band, with a war-cry

> "We see!" they howled, scattering came out to glare at them and tug his beard and wonder what possessed

"To Khinian!' they roared. "Lead us to Khinjan !"

"To Khinjan, then !" he thundered, throwing up both arms in a sort of





double apostolic blessing, and then motioning as if he threw them the reins and leave to gallop. They roared back freshing than King's own thoughts had at him like the sea under the whip of a gaining wind. And Ismail disappeared among them, leaving King alone. Then the mullah beckoned him and showed him a letter he had crumpled in his fist. There were only a few lines, written in Arabic, which all mullahs are supposed to be able to read, and they were signed with a strange scrawl that might have meant anything. But the paper smelt strongly of her perfume.

> Come, then. Bring all your men, and 1 will let you and them enter Khinjau caves. We will strike a bargain in the Cavern of Earth's Drink.

That was all, but the fire in the mullah's eyes showed that he thought If was enough. He did not doubt that once he should have his extra four thousand in the caves Khinjan would be his; and he said so.

"Khinjan is mine !" he growled. "India is mine!"

King did not answer him. He could only be still and be glad he had set the camp moving and so had forced the mullah's hand. "The old fatalist would have suspected her answer otherwise!" he told himself for he knew that he himself suspected it. While he and the mullah watched the tents began to fall and the women labored to roll them. The men began firing their rifles, and within the hour enough ammunition had been squandered to have fought a good-sized skirmish; but the mullah did not mind, for he had Khinjan caves in view, and none knew better than he what vasi store of cartridges and dynamite was piled in there. He let them waste. Watching his opportunity, King slipped down the ramp and into the crowd, while the mullah was busy with personal belongings in the cave. King see again! I see! My eyes have light | left his own belongings to the fates, of in them! Allah! Oh, Allah heap to any thief who should care to steal riches on the great, wise hakim who them. He was safe from the mullab can heal men's eyes! Allah reward in the midst of his nearly eighty men, who half believed him a sending from the skies. "We see! We see !" they yelled and Before ever the mullah gave an order they got under way and started Afridi came striding down the camp climbing the steep valley wall. The with a letter for the muliah held out mullah on his brown mule thrust forward, trying to get in the lead, and King and his men hung back, to keep at a distance from him. Two or three miles along the top of the escarpment the mullah sent back word that he wanted the hakim to be beside him, answer him. It seemed to King that But King's men treated the messenger to open scorn and sent him packing.

The mullah mumbled and strode back and forth three times between King's bed and the fire, with his fists knotted together behind him and his head bent, as Napoleon used to walk. When he stood beside the bed again at last it was with his mind made up, as his clenched fists and his eyes indicated.

"Make thine own terms with her!" he growled. "Write the letter and send it! I hold thee; she holds Khinfan and the ammunition. I am between her and India. So be it. She shall starve in there! She shall lie in there until the war is over and take what terms are offered her in the end ! Write thine own letter! State the case, and bld her answer!"

"Very well," said King. He began to see now definitely how India was to be saved. It was none of his business to plan yet, but to help others' plans destroy themselves and to sow such

The mullah left him, to squat and gaze into the fire, and mutter, and King ammunition. lay still. After a while the muliah went to the mouth of the cave, to stand and stare out at the camp where the thousand fires were dying fitfully and wood amoke purged the air of human nastiness. The stars looked down on him. and he seemed to try to read them, standing with fists knotted together at his back.

And as he stood so, six other multahs came to him and began to argue with him in low tones, he browbeating them all with furions words hissed be- raj are one-one to remember-one to fortween half-closed teeth. They were whispering still when King fell asleep. It was courage, not carelessness, that let him sleep-courage and a great hope born of the mullah's perplexity.

CHAPTER XX.

Next morning the Orakzai Pathan my government and well able to do so. "I invite you to return to India with sat and sunned himself in the cave mouth, emitting wordly wisdom unadulterated with divinity. As King went toward him to see to whom he that end. spoke he grinned and pointed with his thumb, and King looked down on some sick and wounded men who sat in a crowd together on the ramp, ten feet or so below the cave.

They seemed stout soldierly fellows. Men of another type were being kept at a distance by dint of argument and threats. Away in the distance was Muhammad Anim with his broad back turned to the cave, in altercation with a dozen other mullahs. For the time he was out of the reckoning.

Pathan explained. "Some have sores, watched him seal it up, sunudging the had gone perhaps ten paces into the nome are sick of words, hot and cold by thumb. Then he shouted for the Orak- by the wrist. day and night. All have served in the zai Pathan, who came striding in, all army. All have medals. All are de- grins and swagger. serters, some for one reason, some for "There-take it! Make speed!" he



So King Began to Write in Urdu.

-take it! Sit! Yonder is ink-ttuttttutt !-- write, now, write !"

King sat at a box and waited, as if to take dictation, but the mullah, tugging at his beard, grew furious.

"Write thine own letter! Invent thine own argument1 Persuade her, or die in a new way! I will invent a new way for thee !"

So King began to write, in Urdu, for reasons of his own. He had spoken once or twice in Urdu to the mullah and had received no answer. It was a fair guess that Muhammad was ignorant of the scholars' language.

"Greeting," he wrote, "to the most beau-tiful and very wise Princess Yasmini, in her palace in the caves in Khinjan, from bear fruit in time.

surrender of Khinjan Caves and of all his Further, he demands full control of you and of me and of all your

"He threatens as a preliminary to blockady Khinjan caves, unless the answer to this prove favorable, letting none but calling his own men out to join him. This would suit the Indian government, because while the 'Hills' fight among themselves they cannot raid India, and while he blockades Khinjan caves there

will be time to move against him. "Knowing that he dares begin and can complish what he threatens, I am sorry; because I know it is said how many services you have rendered of old to the government I serve. We who serve one one to help each other in good time.

"It may be that vengeance against me would seem sweeter to you than return to your former allegiance. In that case, Princess, you only need betray me to the mullah, and be sure my death would leave nothing to be desired by the spectators. At present he does not suspect me. "Be assured, however, that not to be-

tray me to him is to leave me free to serve

me, bearing news that the mullah Mu-hammad Anim and his men are bottled in Khinjan caves, and to plan with me to "If you will, then write an answer to Muhammad Anim, not in Urdu, but in a language he can understand; seem to sur-

message, either by the bearer of this or by ome trustler messanger "India can profit yet by your service if

you will. And in that case I pledge my word to direct the government's attention only to your good service in the matter. It is not yet too late to choose. It is not It is not yet too late to choose." "Nor can I say how gladly I would subscribe myself your grateful and loyal servant.

Muhammad Anim slept most of the day, like a great animal that scorns to live by rule. But at evening he came to the cave mouth and fulminated such a sermon as set the whole camp to roaring. He showed his power then. The jihad he preached would have tempted dead men from their graves to come and share the plunder, and the curses he called down on cowards and laggards and unbelievers were enough to have frightened the dead away again.

In twenty minutes he had undone all King's missionary work. And then in ten more, feeling his power and their response, and being at heart a fool as all rogues are, he built it up again.

He began to make promises too definite. He wanted Khinjan caves. More, he needed them. So he promised them they should all be free of Khinjan weary bones up the ramp, for the fight caves within a day or two, to come and go and live there at their pleasure. He premised them they should leave their wives and children and belongings safe in the caves while they themselves went down to plunder India. He overlooked the fact that Khinjan caves

for centuries had been a secret to be spoken of in whispers, and that prospect of its violation came to them as a shock.

Half of them did not believe him. Such a thing was impossible, and if he were lying as to one point, why not as to all the others, too?

And the army veterans, who had been converted by King's talk of pardons, and almost reconverted by the sermon, shook their heads at the talk of taking Khinjan. Why waste time trying to do what never had been done, with her to reckon against, when a place in the sun was waiting for them down in India, to say nothing of the hope of pardons and clean living for a while? They shook their heads and combed their beards and eyed one another sidewise in a way the "Hills" understand.

That night, while the mullah glowered over the camp like a great old owl, with leaping firelight reflected in his eyes, the thousands under the skin tents argued, so that-the night was render to him. But to me send a verbal all noise. But King slept.

All of another day and part of another night he tolled among the sick. wondering when a message would come back. It was nearly midnight when he bandaged his last patient and came out into the starlight to bend his back straight and yawn and pick his way reeling with weariness back to the mullah's cave. He had given The mullah pounced on the finished his bag of medicines and implements yard and a half of exquisitely fine Some have the bellyache. Then again, hot wax with his own great guarded dark when a strong hand gripped him One thread of hair that conjured up strong !"

"Hush !" said a voice that seemed familiar.

He turned swiftly and

There was an alternative, the very thought of which made him fearfully uneasy, and yet brought a thrill with it. In all Eastern lands, love scorned face looked strangely familiar, though takes to the dagger. He had half believed her when she swore she loved him! The man who could imagine himself loved by Yasmini and not be thrilled to his core would be inhuman, whatever reason and caution and caste and creed might whisper in imagina-

tion's wake. Reeling from fatigue (he felt like a nan who had been racked, for the Rangar's strength was nearly unbelievable), he started toward where the mullah sat glowering in the cave mouth. He found the man who had carried his bag asleep at the foot of the ramp, and taking the bag away from him, let him lie there. And it took him five minutes to drag his hurt.

had taken more out of him than he had guessed at first. The mullah glared at him but let him by without a word. It was by the fire at the back of the cave, where he

stopped to dip water from the mullah's enormous crock, that the next

LONINE

disturbing factor came to light. He kicked a brand into the fire and the flame leaped. Its light shone on a

heal men's eyes!

"I am he," said King, and he stepped down toward him. The blind man's it was partly disguised by some gummy stuff stuck all about the eyes. He stared at the face again.

"Ismail !" he said . "You?" "Aye! Father of cleverness! Make play of healing my eyes !"

So King made a great show of rubbing on ointment. In a minute Ismail, looking almost like a young man without his great beard, was dancing like a lunatic with both fists in the air, and yelling as if wasps had stung him.

"Aleee-aleee-aleee !" he yelled. him richly; for I am a beggar and have no goods!"

The whole camp began to surge toward him to see the miracle, and his | danced around him. chosen bodyguard rushed up to drive them back. And as they went a tall in a cleft stick in front of him.

"Her answer!" said Ismail with a wicked grin.

"What is her word? Where is the Orakzai Pathan?"

But Ismail laughed and would not he scented climax. Also he chose in that instant to force the mullah's hand, on the principle that hurried buffaloes will blunder.

"To Khinjan!" he shouted to the nearest man. "The mullah will march on Khinjan!"

They murmured and wondered and backed away from him to give him room. Ismail watched him with dropped jaw and wild eye.

"Spread it through the camp that we march on Khinjan! Shout it! Bid them strike the tents!"

Somebody behind took up the shout and it went across the camp in leaps, as men toss a ball. There was a surge toward the tents, but King called to his deserters and they clustered back to him. He had to cement their allegiance now or fail altogether, and he would not be able to do it by ordinary argument or by pleading; he had to fire their imagination. And he did,

"She is on our side!" That was a sheer guess. "She has kept our man and sent another as hostage for him in token of good faith! Listen! Ye saw

this man's eyes healed. Let that be a token! Be ye the men with new eyes! Give it out! Claim the title and be true to it and see me guide "Some of these are wounded," the letter, pretended to read it, and to a man to carry ahead of him and hair, like spun gold, that caressed his you down the Khyber in good time like ally patronized by Mrs. Jibway on her shoulder and descended down one arm. a regiment, many more than a hundred

> They jumped at the idea. The "Hills" -the whole East, for that matter-are ever ready to form a new sect

"Bid the mullah hunt himself another hakim! Be thou his hakim! Stay, we will give thee a lesson in how to use a knife!"

The man ran, lest they carry out their threat, for men joke grimly in the "Hills."

Ismail came and held King's stirrup, striding beside him with the easy hillman gait.

"Art thou my man at last?" King asked him, but Ismail laughed and shook his head.

"I am her man."

"Where is she?" King asked. "Nay, who am I that I should know?"

"But she sent thee?"

"Aye, she sent me."

"To what purpose?"

"To her purpose!" the Afridi answered, and King could not get another word out of him. He fell behind.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Superiority. "Women are queer."

"Yes?" "Mrs. Twobble has just returned from a trip to New York and merely because she stayed at a hotel with more dining rooms than the hotel usueastern trips can boast of she's inclined to look down on Mrs. Jibway."

Only when a man is getting the best of it will be admit that he is getting



DEALTON

'Hush!" Said a Voice That Seemed

Familiar.

a million thoughts, and in a second

upset every argument! If Rewa Gunza had been near looked enough to her and intimate enough or join a new band or a new blood- the worst of it.