By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

AUTHOR OF "KING SOLOMON'S MINES," "SHE," "JESS," "THE WITCH'S HEAD," ETC.

INTRODUCTION.

"DECEMBER 23. "I have just buried my boy, my poor handsome boy, of whom I was so proud, and my heart is broken. It is very bard, having only one son, to lose him thus; but God's will be done. Who am I that I should complain? The great wheel of fate rolls on like a Juggernaut, and crushes us all in turn; some soon, you, Good?" some late, it does not matter when; in the end it crushes us all. We do not prostrate ourselves before it like the poor Indians; we

fly hither and thither—we cry for mercy; but it is of no use, the blind, black fate thunders on, and in its season reduces us to

"Poor Harry to go so soon! just when his life was opening to him. He was doing so well at the hospital; he had passed his last examination with honors, and I was proud of them; much prouder than he was, I think. And then he must needs go to that smallpox hospital. He wrote to me that he was not afraid of smallpox, and wanted to gain the experience, and now the disease has killed him; and I, old and gray and withered, am left to mourn over him, without a chick or child to comfort me. I might have saved him, too-I have money enough for both of us, and much more than enough-King Solomon's mines provided me with that; but I said, 'No, let the boy earn his living; let him labor that he may enjoy rest. But the rest has come to him before the labor. Oh,

"I am like the man in the Bible who laid up much goods and builded barns-goods for my boy, and barns for him to store them in; and now his soul has been required of him and I am left desolate. I would that it had been my soul and not my boy's!

"We buried him this afternoon under the shadow of the gray and ancient tower of the church of this village where my house is. It was a dreary December afternoon, and the sky was heavy with snow, but not much was falling. The coffin was put down by the grave, and a few big flakes lit upon it. They looked very white upon the black cloth. There was a little hitch about getting the toflin down into the grave-the necessary ropes had been forgotten; so we drew back from it and waited in silence, watching the big flakes fall gently one by one like heavenly benedictions and melt in tears on Harry's pall. But that was not all. A robin redbreast came as bold as could be and lit upon the coffin and began to sing. And then I am afraid that I broke down, and so did Sir Henry Curtis, strong man though he is; and as for Capt. Good, I saw him turn away too; even in my own distress I could not help noticing

The above, signed "Allan Quatermain," is an extract from my diary written two years and more ago. I copy it down here because it seems to me that it is the fittest beginning to the history that I am about to write, if it please God to spare me to finish it. If not, well, it does not matter.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONSUL'S YARN. A week has passed since the funeral of my poor boy Harry, and one evening I was in my room walking up and down and thinking, when there was a ring at the outer door. Going down the steps I opened it myself, and in came my old friends Sir Henry Curtis and Capt. John Good, R. N. They entered the vestibule and sat themselves down before the wide hearth, where I remember a particularly good fire of logs was burning.



The Consul's Yarn. "It is very kind of you to come round," I said, by way of making a remark; "it must have been heavy walking in the snow.1

They said nothing, but Sir Henry slowly filled his pipe and lit it with a burning ember. As he leaned forward to do so the fire got hold of a gassy bit of pine and flared up brightly, throwing the whole scene into strong relief, and I thought what a splendid looking man he is. Calm, powerful face, clear cut features, large gray eyes, yellow beard and hair-altogether a magnificent specimen of the higher type of humanity. Nor did his form belie his face. I have never marched boldly up to the house of her seen wider shoulders or a deeper chest. Indeed, Sir Henry's girth is so great that, though he is six foot two high, he does not "Well, where a I could not help thinking what a curious contrast my little dried up self presented to his grand face and form. Imagine to your-on to Mt. Lekakisera," answered Sir Henry. self a small, withered, yellow faced man of 63, with thin hands, large brown eyes, a head of grizzled hair cut short and standing up like a half worn scrubbing brush-total weight in my clothes, nine stone six-and you will get a very fair idea of Allan Quatermain, commonly called Hunter Quatermain, or by the natives "Macumazahn"—anglice, he who keeps a bright lookout at night, or, in vulgar English, a sharp fellow who is not

Then there was Good, who is not like either of us, being short, dark, stout-very stoutwith twinkling black eyes, in one of which an eve glass is everlastingly fixed. I say stout, but it is a mild term; I regret to state that of late years Good has been running to stomach in a most disgraceful way. Sir Henry tells him that it comes from idleness and overfeeding, and Good does not like it at all, though he cannot deny it.

They sat and smoked and drank whisky and water, and I stood by the fire also smoking and looking at them.

At last I spoke. "Old friends," I said, "how long is it since we got back from Kukuana-"Three years," said Good. "Why do you

"I ask because I think that I have had a long enough spell of civilization. I am going Sir Henry laid his head back in his arm

chair and langued one of his deep laughs. "How very odd!" be said; "eh, Good!" Good beamed at me mysteriously through his eye glass, and murmured, "Yes, odd— zie's," I said. "Well," answ

"Don't you, old fellow?" said Sir Henry;

valking up here we had a talk,"

"What do you think?" asked Sir Henry. I shook my head. It was not likely that I should know what Good might be talking about, he talks about so many things,

"Well, it was about a little plan that I have formed-namely, that if you were agreeable Africa on another expedition.

I fairly jumped at his words, "You don't

"Yes I do, though, and so does Good; don't

"Rather," said that gentleman. "Listen, old fellow," went on Sir Henry, with considerable animation of manner. "I'm tired of it too, dead tired of doing nothing, except play the squire in a country that is sick of squires. For a year or more I have been getting as restless as an old elephant who scents danger. I am always dreaming of Kukuanaland and gagool and King Solomon's mines. I assure you I have become the victim of an almost unaccountable craving. I am sick of shooting pheasants and partridges, and want to have a go at some large game again. There, you know the feeling-when one has once tasted brandy and water, milk becomes insipid to the palate. That year we spent together up in Kukuanaland seems to me pains, but I can't help it; I long to go, and, what is more, I mean to go.'

"Ah," I said, "I thought you would come what is your reason for wanting to trekhave you got one?" "I have," said Good, solemnly. "I never

lady-at least, if it is, it's several." I looked at him again; Good is so over-poweringly frivolous. "What is it?" I said. "Well, if you really want to know, though

"Shut up, Good!" said Sir Henry, "And now, Quatermain, tell us, where do you propose going to?"

I lit my pipe, which had gone out, before "Have you people ever heard of Mt.

Kenia!" I asked. "Don't know the place," said Good. "Did you ever hear of the Island of Lamu?"

I asked again. "No. Stop, though-isn't it a place about

300 miles north of Zanzibar!" "Yes. Now listen. What I have to propose is this: That we go to Lamu, and thence make our way about 250 miles inland to Mt. Kenia; from Mt. Kenia on inland to Mt. Lekakisera, another 200 miles, or thereabouts, beyond which no white man has, to the best of my belief, ever been; and then, if we get so far, right on into the unknown interior. What do you say to that, my hearties?" "It is a big order," said Sir Henry reflect-

take it that we are all three of us in search of | Zulu. a big order. We want a change of scene, and we are likely to get one-a thorough change. All my life I have longed to visit those parts, me and civilization, and I'm off to my native wilds. And now I'll tell you another thing, heard rumors of a great white race which is stare. supposed to have its home somewhere up in this direction, and I have a mind to see if there is any truth in them. If you fellows like to

come, well and good; if not, I'll go alone."
"I'm your man, though I don't believe in your white race," said Sir Henry Curtis, one! quick one! whose shot never misses rising and placing his arm upon my shoulder.
"Ditto," remarked Good; "I'll go into training at once. By all means let's go to Mt. Kenia and the other place with an unpronounceable name, and look for a white race that does not exist. It's all one to me." "When do you propose to start?" asked Sir

"This day month," I answered, "by the British India steamboat; and don't you be so certain that things don't exist because you do not happen to have heard of them. Remember King Solomon's mines."

Some fourteen weeks or so had passed since the date of this conversation, and this history goes on its way in very different sur-

After much deliberation and inquiry we came to the conclusion that our best starting point for Mount Kenia would be from the neighborhood of the mouth of the Tana river, miles nearer Zanzibar. This conclusion we arrived at from information given to us by a German trader whom we met upon the steamer at Aden. I think that he was the dirtiest German I ever knew; but he was a good fellow, and gave us a great deal of valuable information. "Lamu," said he, "you goes to Lamu-oh, ze beautiful place!" and he turned up his fat face and beamed with mild rapture. "One year and a half I live there and never change my shirt—never at

And so it came to pass that on arriving at the island we disembarked with all our goods and chattels, and not knowing where to go,

though he is six foot two high, he does not strike one as a tall man. As I looked at him for?" asked our friend, the hospitable consul,

"Quatermain has got hold of some yarn about there being a white race up in the unknown territories beyond."

The consul looked interested, and answered that he had heard something of that too. "What have you heard?" I asked. "Oh, not much. All I know about it is that

a year or so ago I got a letter from Mackenzie, the Scotch missionary, whose station, 'The Highlands,' is placed at the highest navigable point of the Tana river, in which he said something about it."

"Have you the letter?" I asked. "No, I destroyed it; but I remember that he said that a man had arrived at his station who declared that two months' journey beyond Mt. Lekakisera, which no white man has yet visited-at least, so far as I know-he found a lake called Laga, and that then he went off to the northeast, a month's journey, over desert and thorn veldt and great mountains, till he came to a country where the people are white and live in stone houses. Here he was hospitably entertained for a while, till at last the priests of the country set it about that he was a devil, and the people drove him away, and he journeyed for eight months and reached Mackenzie's place, as I heard, dying. That's all I know; and if you ask me, I believe that it is a lie; but if you want to find out more about it you had better go up the Tana to Mackenzie's place, and ask him for information."

Sir Henry and I looked at each other. Here was something tangible. "I think that we will go to Mr. Macken-

"Well," answered the consul, "that is your I said, "I know thee from of old. Ever ambi-

"I don't quite understand," said I, looking | best way; but I warn you that you are likely | tious, ever pletting to be great, I fear me that from one to the other, for I dislike mysteries. to have a rough journey, for I hear that the thou hast overreached thyself at last. Years Masai are about, and, as you know, they are ago, when thou wouldst have plotted against then I will explain. As Good and I were not pleasant customers. Your best plan will Cetywayo, son of Panda, I warned thee, and be to choose a few picked men for personal thou didst listen. But now, when I was not servants and hunters, and to hire bearers by thee to stay thy hand, thou hast dag a pit "If Good was there you probably did," I put in, sarcastically, for Good is a greathand at talking. "And what may it have been at talking. "And what may it have been as to choose a rew picked men for personal thou didst listen. But now, when I was not by thee to stay thy hand, thou hast dug a pit from village to village. It will give you an infinity of trouble, but perhaps on the whole But what is done is done. Who can make it will prove a cheaper and more advantage- the dead tree green or gaze upon last year's ous course than engaging a caravan, and you sun! Who can recall the spoken word or will be less liable to desertion."

time a party of Wakwafi Askari (soldiers). Let it be forgotten!

The Wakwafi, who are a cross between the

"And now, behold, Umslopogaas, I know

Masai and the Wataveta, are a fine manly thee for a great warrior and a brave man, we should pack up our traps and go off to race, possessing many of the good qualities of faithful to the death. Even in Zululand, of the Zulu and a greater capacity for civili- where all the men are brave, they called thee zation. They are also great hunters. As it the 'Shughterer,' and at night told stories happened, these particular men had recently round the fire of thy strength and deeds. been a long trip with an Englishman named Hear me now. Thou seest this great man, my Jutson, who had started from Mombasa, a friend"-and I pointed to Sir Henry; "he also port about 150 miles below Lamu, and jour- is a warrior as great as thou and strong as neyed right round Kilimanjairo, one of the thou art; he could throw thee over his shoulfellow, he had died of fever when on his re- this one also; him with the round stomach, turn journey, and within a day's march of the shining eye and the pleasant face. Boug Mombasa. It does seem hard that he should | wan" (glass eye) "is his name, and a good man have gone off thus when within a few hours is he, and a true, being of a curious tribe who of safety, and after having survived so many | pass their life upon the water and live in floatperils, but so it was. His hunters buried him, and then came on to Lamu in a dhow. Our triend the consul suggested to us that we had travel inland, past Dongo Egere, the great better try and hire these men, and accord- white mountain" (Mt. Kenia), "and far into ingly on the following morning we started to the unknown beyond. We know not what interview the party, accompanied by an in- | we shall find there; we go to hunt and seek

In due course we found them in a mud hut worth all the other years of my life put together. I dare say that I am a fool for my frank looking fellows they were, having a shall befall thee, that I know not. Once be more or less civilized appearance. To them | fore we three journeyed thus in search of adat first with very scant success. They declared to that sooner or later. And now, Good, that they could not entertain any such idea, traveling, and that their hearts were sore at the loss of their master. They meant to go do anything without a reason; and it isn't a back to their homes and rest awhile. This effecting a diversion I asked where the re- Umslopogans?" mainder of them were. I was told there were six, and I saw but three. One of the men I'd rather not speak of a delicate and strictly said that they slept in the hut, and were yet personal matter, "Fil tell you; I'm getting too | resting after their labors-"sleep weighed | bition that led me to my fall, but, shame on down their eyelids, and sorrow made their hearts as lead; it was best to sleep, for with woman's face. Let it pass. So we are going sleep came forgetfulness. But the men should

-the first two men being evidently of the same the appearance of the third and last nearly made me jump out of my skin. He was a very tall, broad man, quite six foot three, I should

came out with his thin, aristocratic looking hand placed before his face to hide a yawn, so I could only see that he was a "Keshla," or ringed man, and that he had a great three cornered hole in his forehead. In another second he removed his hand, revealing a powerful looking Zulu face, with a humorous mouth, a short woolly beard tinged with gray, and a pair of brown eyes keen as a hawk's. I knew my man at once, although I had not seen him for twelve years. "How do "You are right," I answered, "it is; but I | you do, Umslopogaas?" I said, quietly, in

The tall man (who among his own people was commonly known as the "Woodpecker," and I mean to do it before I die. My poor almost let the long handled battleax he beld boy's death has broken the last link between in his hand fall in his astonishment. Next second he had recognized me, and was saluting me in an outburst of sonorous language and that is, that for years and years I have | which made his companions the Wakwafi

> "Koos" (chief), he began, "Koos-y-Pagate! Koos-y-umcool!" (chief from of old-mighty chief). "Koos! Baba!" (father). "Macuma zahn, old hunter, slayer of elephants, eater up of lions, clever one! watchful one! brave who strikes straight home, who grasps a hand and holds it to the death" (i. e., is a true friend). "Koos! Baba! wise is the voice of our people that says: 'Mountain never meets with mountain, but at daybreak or at even man shall meet again with man.' Behold! a messenger came up from Natal. 'Macuma- reckoned those whom another man had zahm is dead!' cried he. 'The land knows Macumazahn no more.' That is years ago. And now, behold, now is this strange place of stinks I find Macumazahn, my friend. There is no room for doubt; the brush of the old jackal has gone a little gray, but is not his eye as keen, and are not his teeth as sharp? Ha! ha! Macumazahn, mindest thou how thou didst plant the ball in the eye of the charging

buffalo-mindest thou"-I had let him run on thus because I saw that his enthusiasm was producing a marked effect upon the minds of the five Wakwafis, who appeared to understand something of his talk; but now I thought it time to put a stop and not from Mombasa, a place over 100 to it, for there is nothing that I hate so much as this Zulu system of extravagant praising-"bongering," as they call it. "Silence!" I said. "Has all thy noisy talk been stopped since last I saw thee that it breaks out thus, and sweeps us away? What doest thou here with these men-thou whom I left a chief in Zululand! How is it that thou art far from thine own place, and gathered together with

strangers?" Umslopogans leaned himself upon the head of his long battleax (which was nothing else but a pole ax with a beautiful handle of rhi-

noceros horn), and his grim face grew sad. "My Father," he answered, "I have a word to tell thee, but I cannot speak it before these low people" (umfagozana), and he glanced at the Wakwan askari; "it is for thine own ear. My Father, this will I say," and here his face grew stern again, "a woman betrayed me to the death, and covered my name with sham -ay, my own wife, a round faced girl, betrayed me; but I escaped from death; ay, 1 broke from the very hands of those who came to slay me. I struck but three blows with this mine ax Inkosikaas-surely my Father will remember it-one to the right, one to the left and one in front, and yet I left three men dead. And then I fled, and, as my Father knows, even now that I am old, my feet are as the feet of the Sassaby, and there breathes not the man who, by running, can touch me again when once I have bounded from his side. On I sped, and after me came the messengers of death, and their voice was as the voice of dogs that hunt. From my own kraal mouth. I flew, and, as I passed, she who had betrayed me was drawing water from the spring. 1 fleeted by her like the shadow of death, and as I went I smote with mine ax, and lo! her head fell; it fell into the water pan. Then I fled north. Day after day I journeyed on: for three moons I journeyed, resting not, stopping not, but running on toward forgetfulness, till I met the party of the white hunter who is now dead, and am come hither with his servants. And naught have I brought with me. I who was high born, ay, of the blood of Chaka the great king—a chief, and s captain of the regiment of the Nkomabakosi —am a wanderer in strange places, a man without a kraal. Naught have I brought save this mine ax; of all my belongings this remains alone. They have divided my cattle, they have taken my wives, and my children know my face no more. Yet with this ax"— and he swung the formidable weapon round his head, making the air hiss as he clove it-"will I cut another path to fortune. I have

I shook my head at him. "Umslopogaas,

bring back the spirit of the fallent That Fortunately there were at Lamu at this which Time swallows comes not up again.

ghest known mountains in Africa. Poor der. Incubu is his name. And thou seest ing kranls.

"Well, we three whom thou seest would adventures and new places, being tired of sitting still with the same old things around us, on the outskirts of the town. Three of the Wilt thou come with us? To thee shall be men were sitting outside the hut, and fine, given command of all our servants; but what we cautiously opened the object of our visit, venture, and we took with us a man such as thou-one Umbopa; and, behold, we left him the king of a great country, with twenty that they were worn and weary with long Impis" (regiments), "each of three thousand plumed warriors, waiting on his word. How it shall go with thee I know not; mayhap death awaits thee and us. Wilt thou throw did not sound very promising, so by way of thyself to Fortune and come, or fearest thou,

The great man smiled. "Thou art not altogether right, Macumazahn," he said; "I have plotted in my time, but it was not amme that I should have to say it, a fair to see something like the old times again, Macumazahn, when we fought and hunted in Presently they came out of the hut, yawning | Zululand? Ay, I will come. Come life, come death, what care I, so that the blows race and style as those already before us; but fall fast and the blood runs red! I grow old, I grow old, and I have not fought enough! And yet am I a warrier among warriors; see my scars"-and be pointed to countless cicasay, but gaunt, with lean, wiry looking limbs. | trices, stabs and cuts that marked the skin of My first glance at him told me that he was his chest and legs and arms. "See the hole no Wakwafi-he was a pure bred Zulu. He in my head; the brains gushed out therefrom, yet did I slay him who smote, and live. Knowest thou how many men I have slain, in fair hand to hand combat, Macumazahn? See, here is the tale of them"-and he peinted



"See, here is the tale of them." to long rows of notches cut in the rhinoceros horn handle of his ax. "Number them, Macumazahn-103-and I have never counted but those whom I have ripped open, nor have I

"Be silent," I said, for I saw that he was getting the blood fever on him; "be silent; well art thou called the 'Slaughterer.' We would not hear of thy deeds of blood. Remember, if thou comest with us we fight not save in self defense. Listen; we need servants. These men"-and I pointed to the Wakwafi, who had retired a little way during our "indaba" (talk)-- "say they will not

"Will not come!" shouted Umslopogaas; "where is the dog who says he will not come when my Father orders? Here, thou"-and with a single bound he sprung upon the Wakwaii with whom I had first spoken, and seizing bim by the arm, dragged him towards us. "Thou dog!" he said, giving the terrified man a shake, "didst thou say that thou wouldst not go with my Father? Say it once more and I will choke thee"-and his long fingers closed around his throat as he said it-"thee, and those with thee. Hast thou forgotten how I served thy brother?"

"Nay, we will come with the white man," gasped the man. "White man!" went on Umslopogaas, in simulated fury, which a very little provocation would have made real enough; "of whom

speakest thou, insolent dog?" "Nay, we will go with the great chief." "So," said Umslopogaas, in a quiet voice, as he suddenly released his hold, so that the man

fell backward. "I thought you would."
"That man Umslopogaas seems to have a curious moral ascendency over his companions," Good afterwards remarked, thought-

(To be continued.)

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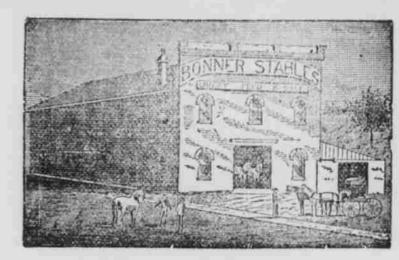
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