

A Goddess of Africa

A Story of the Golden Fleece.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

Author of "MISS CAPRICE," "DR. JACK'S WIFE,"
"DR. JACK," ETC., ETC.

(Continued.)

Sometimes it is but a step between absolute poverty and the wealth of a Croesus—this is a strange world in which we live, and singular adventures befall the chosen few. At least it falls to the lot of but a select number to pick up a fortune ready made, and slip jewels worth perhaps a coal million into his pockets. Perhaps Hastings was born under a lucky star.

CHAPTER XII. ON THE ROAD TO HADES.

When he had thus made sure of the quart or so of glistening gems that may have once bedecked the form of the ugliest of idols, Rex found that he could condescend to smaller things. The queer images and vessels fashioned out of pure gold claimed his attention. Their intrinsic value must be quite a snug dot, if one could but convey them to the busy marts of men, where such things were scrambled for with the most feverish eagerness.

Really, he was surprised to see how calmly he could view such a collection of the most precious of metals; but then when one has already dined upon the most exquisite of viands, he is able to look upon an ordinary feast without emotion, though at another time the sight of the same spread might set his mouth watering.

Picking up a couple of the least cumbersome of the images, he lugged them out of the receptacle and planted them at the feet of the working artist, who halted in his labor long enough to vouchsafe the antiquary a scrutinizing glance and then say:

"Found 'em all right, eh—well, they are daisies, now, I'll admit. Get Jim and the rest to assist, old boy. I'm too much engaged, you see—really, wouldn't put a stop to my sketch for all the gold in Africa, Haggard and his King Solomon's mine to the contrary," and he scratched away for dear life.

Bludsoe was quite ready to help, and the others also came quickly to the front, so that in an exceedingly brief space of time the little pile of golden relics had been switched from the interior of the old barbarian god to a spot in the middle of the chamber.

Lord Bruno had finished his sketch of the remarkable three-headed deity and condescended to inspect the collection with the eye of one who might be called a connoisseur.

And forthwith, it was a sight well worthy the attention of prince or peasant, a brave accumulation of quaint vessels that bore such mute though eloquent testimony regarding the cunning and skill of ancient gold-beaters in the days when the Pharaohs reigned over Egypt.

The professor actually went down on his knees before the treasures, as did the reprobate children of Israel before the golden calf. To him the intrinsic part was as tinkling brass when placed in comparison with their amazing historical value.

Even the cowboys were quite taken with the oddity of some among the images, and Red Eric burst into a loud laugh as he snatched up one that appeared to be half way between a gorilla and a man, with a certain suspicious leaning toward the Egyptian style of sculpture as witnessed in the temple of Luxor.

That laugh, how weird it sounded—a dozen tongues seemed to take it up—from one end of the chamber to another it was echoed, and hustled back and forth with the rapidity of a tennis ball in a hard fought championship game.

It was as if the grave assemblage of hideous old gods had been given the breath of life, and were mocking the merry cow-puncher, whose merriment came to a speedy end.

At the same moment, as though there might be some connection between the mad, rebounding echo, and the spirits that haunted the ruined temple of Azor, the brilliant light which had served them so well all this while, suddenly went out, not even deigning a parting flicker in farewell.

Exclamations arose, for the first thought that flashed over them was that there might be something supernatural about it all—they had heard of a curse being left with a hidden treasure, a poisonous vapor perhaps, fastened in a Pandora box, that would immediately finish any one who dared open it.

All of them were plain, practical men of good common sense, and when the first shock had departed, they found themselves ready to laugh at the thrill which had involuntarily swept over their frames under the impulse of that queer coincidence.

"The powder has given out," spoke up the Englishman in a voice that showed no trace of a tremor—"be patient a moment, my hearties. I've another package handy, and we'll soon have plenty of light."

Then a match crackled—puff! the darkness was shattered, and in its stead came that same dazzling light which had before permeated almost every crack and cranny in the great low ceiling chamber.

Hastings uttered an exclamation. "What now?" demanded the Briton, recognizing in this cry a note of alarm, and perhaps believing Rex had been shaken by a sudden winnowing of wings overhead, as some gigantic bat beat the air, frightened at the new flood of light.

"Yonder—I could swear I saw a crouching figure, a giant black, suddenly spring out of sight behind that leaning god."

All eyes were instantly glued upon the spot he indicated, but no sign remained of the phantom figure Rex believed he had seen.

"Possibly a delusion," said Lord Bruno, as he bent over the treasure-trove and examined some of the queer conceits that were far smiles of the barbaric gods with which they were even then surrounded.

Rex had some good stubborn Scotch blood in his disposition, and having taken hold it was hard for him to let go. He shook his head in a negative way, saying:

"Of course that would be a possibility, but I am far from willing to admit that my eyes deceived me. Here is Bludsoe—perhaps he too saw it vanish like the smoke on a windy day—how is it, Jim?"

The cowboy confessed that he had been looking in another quarter when the light resumed sway, and therefore failed to see what Rex mentioned, as no sign of its presence hovered about the spot when he did fasten his eyes upon the angle.

"Still, it's an easy thing to make a dead certainty of it. Come with me, Mr. Hastings, and unless the thing of evil possessed the wings of a bat we'll be sure to discover some sign of his presence, I swear."

Rex instantly understood what he meant to imply. The dust that lay so promiscuously around would betray the fact whether a human being had entered the chamber in that quarter or not.

Jim Bludsoe, ere trusting himself in such a subterranean trap as the black temple of Azor, had prepared for an emergency by securing several billets of wood to serve as torches should the occasion warrant.

Possibly they were not equal to the lightwood flambeaux he might have secured had he been given a better opportunity, but they promised to answer the purpose.

One of these he now dipped in the glowing furnace on the pan. It immediately took fire, and while its puny flame held no comparison with the intense glow of the flash-light, still he was satisfied.

Rex followed at his heels, leaving the others busily engaged in stowing the golden images that were worth five times their weight in sovereigns, into a couple of leather saddle bags, fetched for the purpose.

Straight over to the spot designated by the adventurer Jim Bludsoe stalked, holding the blazing torch above his head.

Rex, even while quivering from excitement, could not but remark what a wonderfully fine picture the athletic cowboy made as he moved on, for you see Rex had been somewhat of an artist in days gone by, and once that spirit finds lodgment in a man it never leaves him.

A dozen strides and Bludsoe was at the spot—he swept his torch in advance as he bent low. Almost immediately Rex heard him give an exclamation, and from its guttural ring he knew in advance that his suspicions were confirmed.

That flying glimpse of a disappearing object was not the stretch of imagination.

"What have you found?" he asked, coming alongside the plainsman, and also riveting his gaze upon the ground.

"Footprints, and not made by an angel, either, you bet," returned the lust Jim, pointing to where the dust had been disturbed, and there Rex discerned a giant imprint.

It meant much to them—discovery—an alarm, the assembling of the black hosts, the destruction of their only path out of the deep crater, a siege, and ultimate destruction! No wonder then, with these possibilities staring them in the face both Rex and the cowboy were anxious to know whether the black spy had flown.

Besides, Bludsoe was at once overwhelmed by a feverish desire to follow, that being a part and parcel of his religion.

He flashed the light over the trail, and Rex did not say nay—indeed, he was in quite the mood to accompany Bludsoe down through the infernal regions if so be there was an object in visiting that abode of the dark shades.

As he went on Jim kept up a running commentary upon the situation, and in that way gave vent to his feelings, while at the same time imparting a certain amount of information; for Rex had never had much practice as a trailer, and might be looked upon as something of a "tenderfoot" in cowboy parlance.

"See, here's where he made that flying leap when you had a glimpse of him, and I just reckon as how the critter must have been scared right to death when the fire flashed up so sudden like. He landed yonder—you can see how he slipped as he came down, but recovered and ran like a scart deer."

"Here's the wall of the place, but jest in this spot you see it's riven, and through that opening our chap went lickety split."

"Now, if you asked my advice, sir, I'd surely say we'd be foolish not to go a little way into that crevice and see if we can't run across this cursed spy, because if he once gets clear, we'll have to pay the piper. Is it a go, Mr. Rex?"

His tone and manner were persuasive, and Rex, falling in with the spirit of adventure, as he recognized the value of keeping this scout from giving the wild alarm, immediately acquiesced.

So they plunged into the black crevice, which looked more like some freak of nature, resulting from a convulsion of the mountain in the days when Krokato was violent, than any possible passage constructed by man's ingenuity.

It was astonishing how rapidly the experienced Bludsoe pushed on. He seemed to keep one eye on the ground so as to follow the trail, while with the other he endeavored to pierce the darkness that lay like a pall just beyond the line marking the limit of their feeble torch's power.

Hastings could not but experience a sensation of thrilling interest as he kept at the other's heels.

They had quickly passed around several angles, so that a backward glance which Rex shot over his shoulder failed to reveal the first sign of light from the rear. On either side were the roughened, black walls, which looked very much as though they had been burned by the fire of ages, while under their feet the base of the crevice was threatening to trip them up with every move.

To add to the interest of the affair, both of them began to sniff suspiciously of the atmosphere, as though it aroused unbidden fears, for it became strongly impregnated with sulphur or brimstone, as though they approached the bottomless pit.

And as they thus rushed on Rex was surprised to have the flambeau thrust into his hand, while his companion shouted over his shoulder:

"We're closing on him fast, sir!"

(To be Continued.)

\$8.25

WILL BUY A

DOUBLE BREASTED
ALL WOOL
WORSTED SUIT

AT

D. A. BRUCES

Summer Suiting.

Our importations of clothes for spring and summer is now complete, and we invite inspection of the latest and noblest stock of suitings, overcoatings and trouseing, to be seen in his city. Correct style, perfect fit and best workmanship guaranteed. Always on hand, a full line of goods furnishing.

JOHN MITCHELL & CO

CITY HARDWARE STORE.

For--

Builders, Farmers, Mechanics,
—HARDWARE—
Paints, oils, glass, carpenters tools, all cheap
FOR CASH.

The celebrated Norton Machine Oil.

TERMS CASH.

R. B. NORTON & CO. LIMITED

LOOK

For Big Bargains on Saturday

J. B. Macdonald & Co.

Will hold a special clearance sale
Saturday of

Ready-to-wear Clothing, Dry
Goods and Boots & Shoes.

It will be money saved to come. See and
buy from us Saturday.

J. B. MACDONALD & CO

Where worth and low price meet.

Dizzy Spells and Headache

Weak, Nervous, and Run Down, would
Shake with Nervousness—A Terrible
Case—A Remarkable Cure.

Mrs. Chas. H. Jones, Pierceton, Que., writes: "For years I have been a great sufferer with my heart and nerves. I would take shaking spells and a dizzy, swimming feeling would come over me. Night after night I would never close my eyes, and my head would ache as though it would burst. At last I had to keep to my bed, and though my doctor attended me from fall until spring, his medicines did me no help at all."

"I have now taken five boxes of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, and it has done me more good than I ever believed a medicine could do. Words fail to express my gratitude for the wonderful cure brought about by this treatment."

Dr. Chase's Nerve Food makes pain, weak, nervous men, women, and children strong, healthy, and happy. In pill form, 50 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edman, Bates & Co., Toronto.

Summer Furniture

REED, RATTAN

FURNITURE for the porch, hall ways and any room where ease, comfort and coolness are desired. We have some strikingly pretty and handsome designs to select from.

WE HAVE ALSO

Those comfortable Basket work chairs which we sell at \$2.00 and rockers at \$2.25. Call and see them. They are just the thing for the verandah or lawn.

John Nevson

PICTURESQUE Prince Edward Island

25c at all Bookstores.
An illustrated book on P. E. Island, an interesting souvenir for tourists.

CHARLOTTETOWN— TIME TABLE

(LOCAL TIME.)

Arrival and Departure of Trains
and Steamers.

TRAINS

Express leaves for the west.....	8 35 a. m.
Express arrives from the west.....	9 50 p. m.
Accommodation leaves for the west.....	4 10 p. m.
Accommodation leaves for the west.....	6 00 p. m.
Accommodation arrives from the west.....	10 55 a. m.
Express leaves for the east.....	2 25 p. m.
Express arrives from the east.....	7 05 a. m.
Accommodation leaves for the east.....	9 10 a. m.
Accommodation arrives from the east.....	3 00 p. m.
Express leaves for the west.....	4 50 p. m.

STEAMERS

PRINCESS.
Leaves for Picou every morning..... 9 00 a. m.
Arrives from Picou every evening..... 8 30 p. m.

LA GRANDE DUCHESSE.
Leaves for Boston and Halifax every Monday..... 12 p. m.
Leaves for Boston and Halifax every Wednesday..... 10 a. m.

HALIFAX.
Leaves for Boston and Halifax every Thursday..... 7 p. m.
Leaves for Halifax and Boston every Friday..... 1 p. m.

CAMPANA.
Leaves for Montreal and Quebec every alternate Friday.....
Leaves for Quebec and Montreal the following Monday evening.

CITY OF GHENT.
Leaves for Halifax every Thursday afternoon.....
Leaves for Halifax every Friday..... 10 a. m.

JACQUES CARTIER.
Leaves for O'well Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday..... 3 p. m.
Leaves for Crapaud every Friday..... 3 p. m.
Leaves for Crapaud every Saturday..... 2 p. m.

FERRY BOATS.
"Hillborough"—Leaves Ferry Wharf for Southport every half hour.
"Edin"—Leaves for Rocky Point daily at 6.30, 8.9, 11, a. m. 1. 2. 4. 6.30, p. m. Local time. Sundays at 9 a. m. 12.45, 3. 4. 4 p. m. Returns at 1.15, 2.30, 3.15 and 5 p. m.

Southport—Runs up East River every Tuesday, leaving at 5.30 a. m. and 3 p. m. local. Runs up West River every Friday, leaving at 5.30 a. m. and 4 p. m. local.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION.

For the benefit of tourists and others we publish the following list of hotels and boarding houses in Charlottetown and elsewhere:—

- Charlottetown—Hotel Davies, Quebec Hotel, Bevere Hotel, Eureka House, Ocean House, Railway House, LePage House, Duncan House, Finlay House, McFadyen House.
- Summerside—Clifton House, Russ Hotel, Campbell Hotel, Perry House.
- Souris—Sea View Hotel, Ocean House.
- Tracadie—Acadia Hotel.
- Ruston—Sea Side Hotel.
- Stanhope—Cliff House, Mutch House.
- Brackley Point—Shaw House.
- Alberton—Seaforth House, Albion House.
- Malpeque—Hodgson House, North House.
- Pownal—Florida Hotel, Dominion House.
- Vernon River Bridge—Finlay House.
- Georgetown—Aitken House, Tupper House, Acadia House.
- Cape Traverse—Lansdowne Hotel.
- Tignish—McKeena House, Bellevue Hotel, Railway Hotel.
- Kingston—Clarke's Hotel, Commercial Hotel.
- Montserrat—Medonald House.
- Mount Stewart—Clarke's Hotel, Main House.
- Hampton—Pleasant View House.
- Port Hill—Port Hill House.

Besides, there are a good many private homes throughout the province where excellent accommodation at a reasonable price may be obtained. Further information may be obtained upon application to the Bureau of Tourists.

BRIGHT'S DISEASE

is the deadliest and most painful malady to which mankind is subject. Dodd's Kidney Pills will cure any case of Bright's Disease. They have never failed in one single case. They are the only remedy that ever has cured it, and they are the only remedy that can be depended upon. There are imitations of Dodd's Kidney Pills—pill, box and name—but imitations are dangerous. The original and only genuine cure for Bright's Disease is

DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS

Dodd's Kidney Pills are fifty cents a box at all druggists.