

In The Power of The Khalifa.

Charles Neufeld is in London, but—as is usually the case with much sought-after "lions"—he is by no means accessible. As a representative of the Westminster Gazette, however, I was specially favoured, and having been warned by Mr. Neufeld on no account to divulge his resting-place, we set to work.

"The story of my betrayal into the hands of the Dervishes," began Mr. Neufeld, "is, I think, fairly well known. That was in 1887, when I left Wady Halfa for Kordofan, to collect a quantity of valuable merchandise. I was first taken before the great Emir, Waden-Nrjoui, and then on to Omdurman, where to my amazement and alarm, I was hailed as a great 'pasha,' or general, of the British Army!

"I was also looked upon as fair game for the mob in Omdurman, and the Dervishes had a regular 'fantasia,' with me, threatening me with spears (I tried to throw myself upon some of their weapons, by the way, to put an end to my tortures,) and finally leading me out to be hanged. By this time I was so weary of life that I was only too anxious to put my head in the noose that dangled above the angareeb on which I was squatting. But at the last moment they told me that the Khalifa had graciously pardoned me, and I was taken off to the notorious Saier Prison, which played so important a part in the history of the Soudan. Every notability, native or foreign, was at some time or other confined in the Umm Hagar, or 'stone jug,' and they all confided in me pretty fully.

"Of the nights in the Umm Hagar I can not write in my story as explicitly as I could wish. I only hint at the ghastly scenes, which, I imagine, transcend even those of the famous Black Hole of Calcutta. Imagine a large room without windows or ventilation of any kind, and simply packed with cursing, fighting, and struggling human beings, all trying to live through the long hours of a burning Soudanese night. Sanitary arrangements there was none, and when newcomers were introduced, the assistant gaolers simply hurled armfuls of lighted glass into the reeking mass of humanity, and struck out right and left with their murderous hippopotamus-hide whips. No wonder that every morning seven or eight corpses were dragged out and thrown into the Nile.

"Oh, there is a vast deal to be told," Mr. Neufeld went on reflectively, "For example, I don't think it is generally known in this country that it was I who designed the Mahdi's tomb, which I modelled upon the tombs of Caliphs, at Cairo; my design, however, was afterwards slightly altered. Then there was the bogus saltpetre-making, and the equally bogus machines which were intended to manufacture both cartridges and powder. My sole object in tinkering with these ridiculous things was to get out of the Saier and arrange the details of my escape across the desert.

"Father Ohrwalder was very kind to me, and used to bring me food during the great famine in Omdurman. Talking about famines, the most curious we experienced was an absurd scarcity of coined money. You see, as Khalifa, Abdullahi was entitled to one-fifth of all loot—property, taxes and goods—coming into the Beit-el-Mal; and as all money was hoarded it never came into circulation again. The silver dollars so deteriorated that finally they were made base metal with a light plating, and when people grumbled, copper dollars pure and simple were unblushingly issued.

"Naturally the official die-sinkers cut dies for themselves and their friends, and the false coiners began to turn out better dollars than the official Treasury itself—quite a fantastic and ridiculous state of affairs. And the false coining business flourished exceedingly until Elias-el-Kurdi, one of the best of the die-sinkers, lost his right hand and his left foot.

"Sovereigns might at any time be bought for a dollar, their owners being glad to get rid of them, as the possession of a gold coin denoted wealth—which was fatal. Often persons endeavouring to change a gold coin returned home to find the house in the hands of the officials, who were searching for the remainder of the presumed gold hoard. I did a little coining myself, but purely in an official capacity.

"For ten years I had been so used to walking with irons on my legs that it was only with an effort that I could raise my feet from the ground in order to shuffle from place to place. The bars of iron connecting my ankles restricted me to a stride or shuffle of about ten or twelve inches. Curiously enough, when these fetters were knocked off (which was done when I volunteered to do some 'valuable' work for the Khalifa,) I ran and jumped about all day like one possessed. Then the reaction set in. The strain upon muscles so long unused resulting in a swelling of the legs from the hips to the ankles; and this was accompanied by the most excruciating pains.

"The vanity of the Khalifa," pursued Mr. Neufeld, "was quite wonderful, and he always looked forward to the day when he would erect his scaffolds in Cairo citadel, and haul up 'the Mohammedan boy Abbas

(he meant the Khedive) and Burren' as his first victim. All over the Soudan Lord Cromer—or 'Burren,' as they mispronounced his name of Baring—was looked upon in the same relation to the Khedive as Yacub was to the Khalifa.

"I recollect a very comic interview between Osman Digna and Abdullahi, when the former came back to Omdurman after a disastrous defeat, to report to the Khalifa.

"What news have you brought me, and how fare the faithful?" inquired the Khalifa. "Master," replied Osman, "I led them to Paradise."

"Now Osman had been doing this at every battle for year, and the Khalifa's patience was exhausted. What he wanted was victories, and not wholesale pilgrimages of his best troops to a better world.

"Then why did you not go with them?" retorted Abdullahi.

"Whereupon Osman replied piously, 'God hath not ordained it so. He must have more work for me to do. When that work is finished, He will call me.'

"Abdullahi knew as well as any one in the Soudan that Osman had an excellent eye on the field of battle, and knew an hour before anyone else when to make a bolt for it.

"The defences designed during the last days of Omdurman's existence were fantastic to a degree. On one occasion a Mograbin, from Tunis or Algiers, came to Yacub, and said he could make torpedoes which would blow up every vessel on the Nile. He proposed to take two big boilers, then lying at Khartoum, cut them into, fill them with powder, seal up the ends, and then fire them by means of electricity, as the gunboats passed over them. It was explained to me that each half of the boiler was to contain thirty cantars (one and a half tons) of gunpowder. The experiment ended in disaster, however, for no sooner had one torpedo been lowered, than a terrible explosion ensued, and the boats, packed with over forty men, were blown to atoms. Among the killed was the Mograbin himself, who had originated the idea.

"What the feelings of the prisoners were during the bombardment of Omdurman may be much better imagined than described. We simply shuddered and looked helplessly at one another. As the shells screeched over our heads, I shouted insanely that at length my 'brothers' had got my messages, and that now only the Saier would be left intact in Omdurman. No sooner had I declared my belief in this, than seventy-two men, who were praying in the mosque, were blown to pieces by a bursting shell."—Westminster Gazette.

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Every human creature is sensible of the propensities to some infirmity of temper, which it should be his care to correct and subdue, particularly in the early period of life; else, when arrived at a state of maturity he may relapse into faults which were originally his nature, and which will require to be diligently watched and kept under through the whole course of life; since nothing leads more directly to the breach of charity, and to the injury and molestation of our fellow creatures, than the indulgence of an ill-temper.—Blair.

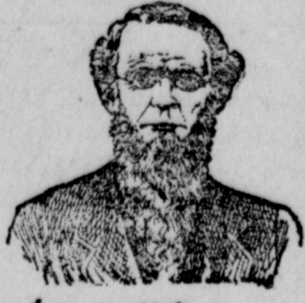
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"I have used Burdock Blood Bitters for Dyspepsia and sick headache. Before I started taking it I was thin and run down in health. Two bottles have completely cured me and since then I have gained about fifty pounds in weight." Mrs. Ellen Vaughan, Oulton Station, Ont.

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Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, for diseases of the Kidneys, Liver, Bladder and Bowels. One pill a dose; 25c. a box.

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An Honest Lad.

An English farm labourer recently went to a small store kept by an old woman and asked for "a phand o' bacon."

She produced the bacon and cut a piece off, but could not find the pound weight.

"Oh, never mind t' phand weight," said he. "Ma fist just weighs a phand, so put t' bacon in t' scales."

The woman confidently placed the bacon into one side of the scales, while the man put his fist into the other side, and, of course took good care to have good weight.

While the woman was wrapping the bacon up the pound weight was found, and, on seeing it the man said:

"Nah, you see if my fist don't just weigh a phand."

The pound weight was accordingly put into one scale and the man's fist into the other, this time only just to balance.

The old woman, on seeing this, said:

"Wha, I niver seed aught so near afore! Here's a red herrin' for thee honesty, ma lad!"

Piles for 15 Years.

Mr. Jas. Bowles, Counsellor, Embro, Ont., writes: "For over 15 years I suffered the misery of bleeding, protruding piles. The many remedies I tried all failed. I was advised to use Dr. Chase's Ointment, and must say that the first application gave relief, after the third day the bleeding stopped and two boxes cured me completely."

The puzzled old gentleman from Upcreek, who had been watching the switch engine at work up and down the side track on the occasion of his first visit to a railroad town, scratched his chin and remarked to the loungers on the station platform:—"I can understand how the engine pulls the cars. I've got that all figured out. But I'll be darned if I can see how the cars pull the engine back!"

"Have you seen the new Murilla that the city has purchased?" "No. I've been having a dressmaker, and haven't been to the zoological garden for a week."



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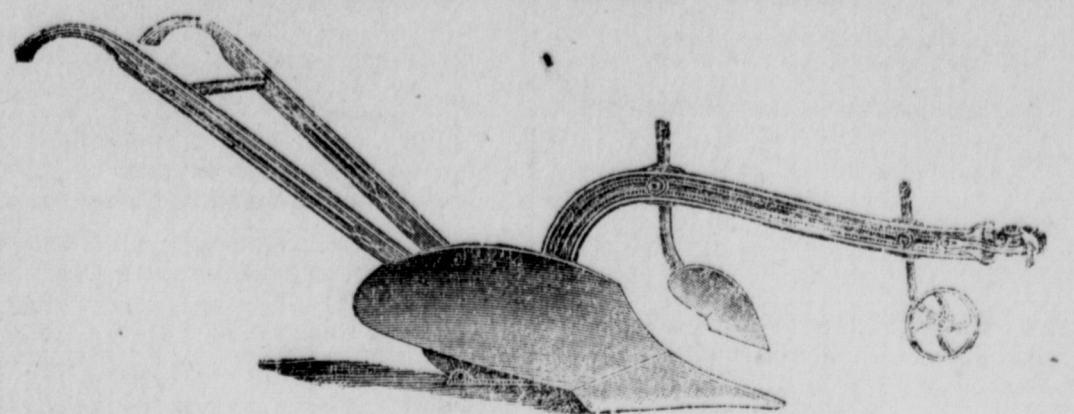
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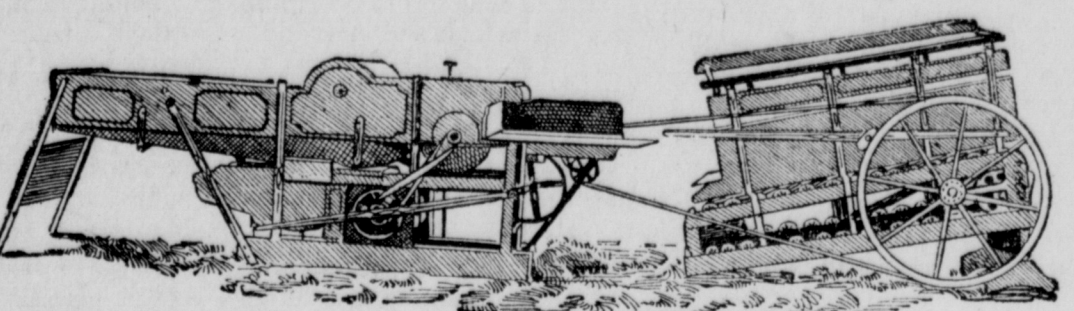
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TORNADO.

We have a good many unsolicited letters like this one from Mr. Grant

CENTRAL SOUTHAMPTON, York Co., 17th Dec. 1898.

MESSRS. CONNELL BROS., Woodstock, N. B.
DEAR SIRS,—As we are about through with this season's thrashing and as I am aware you feel interested in the machinery you manufacture, no doubt it will be pleasing to you to hear good reports of same. The TORNADO Threshing Machine manufactured by you that we bought in August last has proved to be the best thrashing machine that ever was in this section of the country. That is the unanimous verdict of every man the machine has done work for. She has thrashed for thirty men in this section, and men that never were satisfied before were more than pleased with the work that the machine did; they were satisfied they got all their grain and well cleaned, even the women were pleased because they did not have a crew of men around several days thrashing a small quantity of grain. The machine has thrashed this season about ten thousand bushels of all kinds of grain and I am happy to inform you that there was not one thing broken about the machine, not as much as a tooth. She has thrashed over a bushel a minute, and with a suitable team, she will thrash 300 to 400 bushels a day. It is gratifying to me to congratulate you for perfecting and manufacturing the best two horse power thrashing machine in the Dominion of Canada, and maybe in the world.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in advance, I remain,

Yours truly,

H. C. GRANT.

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Gen. Agent.

He Got Away.—"What is the sense of the meeting?" asked the president of the new woman's club as she brought down the gavel. "It has none," shouted a red-faced man who had sneaked into the rear of the hall. And he just escaped half-a-dozen clubbed umbrellas as he rushed through the door.

A Reader of War Despatches.—Teacher—"You should be very careful what you say, Johnny. Do you know what will become of you if you keep on telling stories?" Johnny (who reads the papers).—"Yes'm; I'll get invitations to all the big dinners when I grow up, and become a United States Senator from New York."