

DOCTOR JACK.

By St. George Rathborne.

Continued from 1st page.

Mercedes! "Bring ropes!" he shouts to his men, "we will bind them all. They shall see how sweet a place a Turkish prison is. Gangrene shall eat their flesh. Every breath they draw will be a curse upon the hour they ever leaved the anger of a Pasha. Ropes, I say; tie them here, until the blood stands in their veins like knotted vines. The dogs have come to test the hospitality of a Pasha—they shall discover how warm it is." He laughs like a fiend from Tophet, and rubs his hands together, then suddenly frowns, for in front of him Mercedes appears, and something in her face gives the Pasha a shuddering fit.

"What would you?" he asks, sullenly in Spanish.

"These men must go—you will not keep them here, pasha," returns the woman.

A sneer sweeps over her face. In common with all Turks he has a very poor idea of a woman's abilities, and thinks she is only fitted to be a man's slave, hence he imagines Mercedes means to try her power at pleading—that might have done before, but she has crossed the Rubicon, and become his wife, thus losing all power.

"Out of the way, woman. This is business fit only for men. He was your lover. You shall see how I punish him for crossing my path. Be gone to your apartments!"

If he expects to see Mercedes obey, he makes the greatest mistake of his life. Those black eyes never leave his face, and he experiences a queer feeling—it is fear—something that never before came to him in connection with a woman—tries, however, to even in the Mohammedan worship, as they are not believed to have souls.

"Not yet, pasha. I shall not sleep to-night until every one of these—my friends—have reached a place of safety. And you yourself shall give the command that they be unharmed." He stares at her in blank amazement, perhaps imagining that she has lost her senses. Then a grim smile comes upon his dark face. The electric midnight eyes do not once leave him, but they seem to have lost their power.

"I shall at once give the order for their execution," he says, with a contemptuous look.

"And in so doing sign your own death warrant," she replies, with a contemptuous look.

"What do you mean, woman?"

"Abdul Hamid, your royal master, does not forgive a traitor. If his brother were found in communication with Russia his head must pay the penalty for his offense."

The stout pasha is seized with a species of vertigo. He trembles so that his lips twitch, and his knees seem to knock together. Into his eyes there comes a great fear, as though the woman's words have shot home to his heart. The Turkish Sultan has been known as a martinet in military affairs, and more than one of his subjects has suffered death because of being connected with a plot against the Abdul Hamid dynasty.

"You speak of a matter upon which you are ignorant. What reason have I to fear the Sultan's displeasure?" he demands, boldly, but his assurance is assumed, for secretly he is still trembling with that haunting fear.

"At last your eyes open to that paper, and tell me if you ever saw it before." She hands him a little slip, insignificant in itself, but containing several dozen Turkish names.

At sight of the magic paper the pasha has another desperate fit of trembling, and his teeth rattle in his head like Spanish castanets, while his bulging eyes, filled with terror, are glued upon the face of the woman who stands there—mistress of the field.

"Where did you get this?" he almost shrieks.

"I had a clew, and found the package of papers hidden under the arch in your private den. They were what I wanted to hold over you."

"Jezebel! you but seal your own death warrant. I shall have you share the fate of these fools, and thus prevent your lips ever betraying the secret you have discovered," but Mercedes smiles in his distorted face.

"That will not save you, pasha. The papers I have done up in a package, and placed in the hands of a friend. If I do not personally call for them when the bells of St. Sophia summon the faithful to prayer to-morrow, he is to lay them before the Sultan."

Abdullah Pasha feels his feet slipping beneath him. He lost his hold. If what she says be true he will not be particular in a day or two with regard to the fate of his foe, as he has no chances as he will have no regard to which to wear it.

"You comprehend, pasha. Unless these—my friends—are allowed to depart in peace, your doom is sealed. There is no half way measure. Give the order for their release!"

Eye looks into eye. He knows she has won, and that he is beaten. Personal safety to a man of his calibre is of more value than any other consideration. He has given up his most cherished revenge in order to save his life.

"They shall go, but I must have the papers at daybreak—no wear to get them!" he asks, huskily.

"Yes, I swear. Now tell your men to release the prisoners, and not a man among the dogs shall move from this spot for half an hour."

He obeys, and the janizaries fall back. His aspect is enough to terrify them. Beaten by a woman, he gnashes his teeth in impotent rage, and looks like a savage monster.

Mercedes sees Jack's face—it is filled with admiration and reverence. She chokes down a sob, and gives him her hand.

"Farewell, Senor Jack—we meet no more. I am glad that you owe me something. My fate is not to be envied here—perhaps some time you will think of Mercedes."

"God help me if I ever forget you. What do I not owe you? Is it impossible for you to go with us—must you remain?"

She hesitates, looks toward the pasha, shudders, and then remembers the face of Avis. That decides her. She must stay, since she cannot be more to this, her king, than a friend.

"It cannot be—farewell—forever!" Doctor Jack turns away to hide the tears in his eyes. As he passes out of the door he takes one swift look backward, sees the pasha still gnashing his teeth and shaking his fist at them. Mercedes' head has sunk in her hands, and Doctor Jack feels a lump in his throat that nearly chokes him as he hurries away.

The scene changes—they reach the shore where the boat awaits them. Entering, they pass over the dark water to the yacht. Six hours remain, then their pursuit will be made, and they must depart upon their flight. Mercedes has put a slip of paper in Jack's hand, and striking a match he reads:

"I have managed that the pasha's steam yacht shall be out of order. It will take them a day to get her ready for work. Beware of the forts at the straits."

"God bless her," says Doctor Jack, in his heart, then they reach the yacht, where Avis is waiting to greet them—Alec first, as he is helped on deck, and then Jack, about whose neck her arms are folded as she whispers:

"Safe! Oh Jack, what tortures I have endured."

"All is well now, love. See, already the vessel is up—we are off for Rome, where I mean to claim my reward. No pursuit is made, but the pasha, after he has recovered his papers, sends a message to the forts to send every vessel. Our friends are in hiding, and the Thistle-dawn is making good progress."

At last they are upon the Mediterranean, and all around them is the Hand in hand Doctor Jack and Avis look back upon the troubled wake of the vessel—it is the only blue sea, while beyond lies the calm blue sea, promising a happy future.

THE END.

PUNCHING THE BALL.

AN EASY METHOD OF REDUCING FLESH AND GETTING EXERCISE.

History of This Adjunct of Elastic Science—How to Hang the Ball and How to Fight It—Correct the Champion Ball Puncher.

Some months ago a wealthy friend of mine, who is somewhat of an epicure and was more corpulent than he cared to be, said, "Macdon, I am 15 or 20 pounds heavier than I ought to be. How can I take that weight off without dieting? I am willing to work a bit, but I won't deny myself the pleasures of the table."

"Punch the ball!" I responded. "Ball punching is one of the best of physical methods of reducing the weight and improving the wind of fleshy people. When a ball is fought, energetically and persistently, the exercise produces profuse perspiration. Every muscle of the body and limbs is brought into play and there is little or no danger of straining any of them, and that is more than can be said of 'pulley lifting' and many other kinds of gymnastic work. Fat fairly melts away from the regular ball puncher, and he obtains nearly all the benefits of sparing without any of its inconveniences, such as bloody noses, black eyes, or bruises."

My friend took my advice, bought him a punching ball, fought it every day for fifteen or twenty minutes, according to my advice, and now he tips the scale twenty pounds lighter than he was, and he looks and feels 50 per cent. better than he did before he began the exercise.

The "punching ball" of to-day differs very materially from the "fighting bag" which was used in the days of Tom Hyer, Yankee Sullivan, Henson and Sayers, and even Joe Coburn's time. The bag then used was a huge affair, nearly as tall as a man and twice as bulky. It was filled with cotton waste, and such like heavy yielding material, until it weighed about what its user's intended opponent was supposed to scale. It was suspended by a rope from the ceiling, in a room so that its center of gravity was a little above its user's shoulders. Naturally, in responding to blows, pushes or shoves, it swung slowly and ponderously. The man who fought it not only punched it with all his power, but coiled against it with his shoulders and body. This method of exercise was in measure similar to the jostling and shouldering opponents were expected to receive in a fight.

The first "fast ball" worthy of note was the invention of the proprietor of a Cleveland gymnasium, named Prof. Ramsey, who is credited with having been Mark Hanna's teacher of sparring. This bag or ball was merely a rubber ball, about a foot in diameter, enclosed in a canvas covering and suspended from the ceiling by a cord. The bottom of the ball, which was hung on a level with the user's shoulders, was fastened to a floor by a rubber strap, which was loose enough to permit the ball to fly back about a foot when sharply hit and was a great improvement on its predecessor, for its use made a man much quicker in his movements. Its great defect was the fact that it had to be driven away directly in a line with its puncher's position or it would revolve in a circle and have to be stopped to be steadied.

The present form of punching ball is in its general construction somewhat like the football employed by our college boys in their games, ordinary leather is used for the covering instead of canvas. The ball is usually suspended from a ceiling, but where the ordinary ceiling is too high, a wooden disk, about six or eight feet in diameter, is used instead. This disk is mainly what makes the ball so useful, ordinarily it is suspended from the ceiling by strong iron rods, so that it forms a pseudo-ceiling about eight or nine feet above the floor. The cord suspending the ball can be raised or lowered, so that the center of the ball can be brought, as the puncher may desire, to the level of either his chin or shoulders. Generally the cord is attached to the ball by a metal swivel, which permits it to revolve longitudinally should it not be struck fairly. John L. Sullivan was the first pugilist of note to use the present form of ball in his training. A few days before he fought Patrick Ryan for the championship of America, at Mississippi City, he gave an exhibition of ball punching in his training quarters at Carrollton, above New Orleans, which amazed and delighted his friends. His last blow burst the ball, and as it collapsed, Arthur Chambers claimed, "John, if I see you let go that way to Ryan, in the ring, I'll shut my eyes, for I don't want to see him murdered."

Domink McCaffrey was the first pugilist to give public exhibitions of ball punching. They were given in a Bowery museum, but they did not meet with the hearty approval of the "toughs" of that famous thoroughfare. It is just after his four-round contest with Charley Mitchell, and he was frequently told by members of his "awjenco" "Oh, yes, you kin punch a ball all right, but how about Charley Mitchell?"

One of the greatest exhibitions of ball-punching ever witnessed was that given by Jim Corbett in Madison Square Garden, a few days before he started south to wrest the championship from John L. Sullivan. On that occasion the disk used on the stage was two feet six inches above the top of his head, and the center of the ball was just below his chin.

Among his other feats, that day, he fought the ball with both hands as rapidly as he could hit out, for three minutes, without cessation. Good judges estimated that he sent the ball against the disk not less than 120 times in the minute, or 360 times in all. The ball was blown up very tight, and its resiliency was very great. Assuming that the ball traveled five feet each time it was struck, it went 1,800 feet in all, about one-third of a mile. This was great speed when it is remembered that the ball changed direction 240 times a minute.

The four greatest ball-punchers in the pugilistic profession are Tommy Ryan, Jim Corbett, Bob Fitzsimmons and young Griffo. Parson Davies claims that Ryan is the best of the lot, and I am inclined to agree with him. Corbett makes ball punching one of the features of his theatrical entertainments. Bob Fitzsimmons alternates his fist blows with jabs with his elbows, and he can make the ball fly to the ceiling blue sea, while beyond lies the calm blue sea, promising a happy future.

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People who wish to punch the ball, as an exercise, should suspend it in a room which, while well ventilated, is free from drafts. They should strip to the waist, and wear nothing but drawers and slippers. It is well to encase the hands in loose kid gloves, from which the fingers have been cut. This will prevent any abrasion of the knuckles, which is sometimes caused by glancing blows. One thin exercise is long enough for a beginner, with two minutes' rest between each round. Plenty of good, coarse Turkish towels should be used to wipe off the perspiration caused by the exercise. Five rounds each day are enough for a beginner for the first few weeks. After that, for the next fortnight, the length of the rounds can be increased to two minutes. I would never advise lengthening the rounds beyond three minutes, and care must be taken never to unduly tire one's self. After a bout with the ball the body should be wiped until thoroughly dry, then a quick sponge bath should be taken, and if the puncher, after drying himself, will rub himself with witch hazel and alcohol and handrub himself with soap, he will be perfectly dry, and then don clean underwear in will go forth from the room not only lighter in body and heart than when he was when he entered it, but also wonderfully refreshed and invigorated.

AN HISTORIC PITCHER.

Originally Owned by the Illegitimate Queen Mary.

Sneeringly looked behind glass doors and standing among a lot of cups and saucers of the modern type, which were then in the apartments of Mrs. Dab's, at one of the city hotels, a cream pitcher that figured in the historic supper which Mrs. Dab's gave to the Queen of Scots, before her execution, says the *Chicago News*.

This pitcher, now more than 300 years old and originally owned by the ill-fated Mary Stuart, in spite of its ancient name and fame, is a very unpretentious looking affair. It is of thin, white china, on which is traced a very unobtrusive design in blue and gold, and does not look unlike the delftware popular fifty or sixty years ago.

Mrs. Dab's had the pitcher but a short time, having received it from her grandmother, while on a recent visit to her home in the East, but it has been in the Holman family. Mrs. Dab's ancestors, since the sixteenth century.

The Holmans are descendants of the Plantagenets, the line of which that existed the Normans—and during the middle ages the Holmans were quite an illustrious house. Among some old family papers which are still in existence, one referring to the tea set of which this pitcher was a part. This says that the tea set was brought from "a certain Mistress Kennedy" and that it had formerly belonged to her mistress, the Queen of Scots. Mrs. Kennedy, it will be remembered, was the Queen's faithful servant.

On the night preceding her execution, the Queen, surrounded by her weeping servants, supped in her apartments at "Fotheringhay Castle." She supped sparingly and soberly, as her manner was, says one historian. When she saw her servants weeping she cheered them and then assigned to each his portion of her personal belongings she wished such to have.

After this little feast was over, and on the following day, this pitcher, which is now in Chicago, with the other things that were not given away, was doubtless turned over to Mrs. Kennedy and faithful old Mary, for a while, for a while, the pitcher was in the possession of the Queen's faithful servant.

Through all vicissitudes, the Holmans clung to this memorable set of dishes, but in the course of centuries some have been broken, others lost, until the blue and white pitcher that Mrs. Dab's cherishes so fondly is the sole survivor of its historic family.

"Bring on Your Prosperity." Now let 'em give us prosperity. Bring on your prosperity!

My friend, what are you complaining of? I don't see any of your prosperity. Any of you gentlemen see it anywhere? Look at me! Am I the impersonation of prosperity?

I should say not. Well, then, what's all this shouting about prosperity? If you got prosperity, you'd be out.

My friend, I've got a job up at my house for you.

Job? Yes, work. Cleaning out—Work? It seems to me I've heard that word. Oh, yes; I remember now. No, sir, I refuse. I indignantly decline your offer. I've still got my mission to perform. As I was saying—if any gentleman sees any prosperity trotting around—

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