### AT LOVE'S COMMAND.

By John A. Steuart.

other in our daffin, never dreaming we were of the same blood. Your looks tell me I'm right in taking you for the heir of Kilburnie. Home from college likely. I've heard of ye from Peter. Faith, Peter says yer an unco "It's a pleasure to me to welcome you to Kilburnie," interrupted my "And it was wholly unex-

pected.' "Pleasures are aye sweetest when unexpected, cousin," returned Mr. Clephane, urbanely. "What's expected is discounted, enjoyed before its time, so to speak, like wind raised by post obit. I was in the country side and could not leave without looking in at Kilburnie. And I'm lucky in finding you altogether, and doubly lucky in finding an old friend," turning his radiance upon me, "though, to say the truth, what the minister called him

"Andrew," said my mother. "To be sure," said Mr. Clephane, laughing. "My memory's no worth a preen, as Bobbie says. I might have remembered what Peter has so often told me. 'Father,' he has said, 'there's not the like of Andrew Kilgour in our university. Mind you what I tell ye. he's born to make his mark.' But the fact is that old folks are so much fashed wi' the world, the flesh and the devil their minds get slippery and lose the grip o' things. I hope the colan auld saying and a true, stick to the school-the schule, we said, in my haffin days-and the school will stick "It's a curious coincidence," said

my father, when the voluble Mr. Clephane had been induced to take a seat, "that we should just have been talking about a profession for him." "A very important matter, cousin," responded Mr. Clephane, with deep gravity of tone and countenance. Then, assuming his sprightliest manner, and looking at me, he added, "The most important except getting married. Aye make that exception, Andrew. Faith, the lasses take the lead, will we, nill we. Solomon with all his wisdom couldn't resist them, and when he failed who's likely to succeed? What's this the poet says? There's nae poetry in law, cousin, and I'm clean forgetting the warblings of the camp or grove love's supreme. A man profession, cousin-excuse my digression into the realms of sentiment and romance. Lawyers go there but seldom, and, truth to tell, dinna feel ower well at home when they do make an excursion. What's to be Andrew's profession, if it's a fair question?" "There's a difference on the point," answered my father. "I'm for the law partly because I remember your own prosperity, cousin, and he's-well,

he's against it." "H'm, ha!" said Mr. Clephane, stroking his well-nourished chin. "Dear me, that's unfortunate, and yet it would never do for us all to be of the same mind. There are many ways laddie has his own tastes nae doot. As to the law, it's with it as with many another thing, those like it best who know least about it. At the best it's a slippery game, in which ten fall for one who keeps his feet. I have sprackled through-I'll no deny it, but wi' the skin o' my teeth, as the man of Uz says. I'm not sure I'd advise But dinna let me interfere; dinna let me come between father and son." Whereupon Mr. Clephane rubbed his ceed if he decides for himself." hands, thus figuritively washing them of the whole business, and the subject of talk was changed.

When Highland hospitalities had been dispensed, Mr. Clephane and my of speaking with my mother, who, good soul, was ever willing to take only a mother can. I also told her the history of my relations with away, Sir Ti Peter, which startled and surprised tremulously.

with the tears gleaming in her dear eyes, "but Mr. Clephane probably knows nothing of Peter's behaviour, and at any rate for your father's sake we must uphold the honour of Kilburnie. It must not be said he came here and was ill-received." And then with many a caress she told me she quite understood my unrappy position, and that she would

do what she could to re-establish me in my father's favour. I could see, however, that the loyal heart was deeply troubled. She would fain have seen me obey, while pledging her word as a partisan. My blessings on her

As fate would have it, when my father and his visitor returned they were accompanied by a neighbouring laird, Sir Thomas Gordon, of the Elms, of whom the reader has already casually heard from mine host of the Hound and Stag. Meeting the baronet in the course of their walk, my father, with the impulsive generosity which had wrought such trouble to his house, insisted on taking him home for luncheon regardless of domestic convenience or resource. But my mother was right glad to see Sir Thoma's, and he in turn was glad to see her, declaring in his fine old-fashioned manner it did his heart good just to cross the threshold of Kilburnie.

Sir Thomas, my mother had told me, always gave her the impression that he was extremely lonely. He might have been happy as the world goes. A retired Anglo-Indian official, he was wealthy, and though a widower, he had the companionship of a devoted daughter whose equal in beauty and Thomas," returned my father, quickly left Paradise. But these blessings were mysteriously counterbalanced. There was a break in his health, and -one could see it plainly—a break in his heart, two evils for which money is no medicine, and which even filial devotion can hardly do more than al-

Sir Thomas had both seen and done a great deal in times that history now calls stirring. He had been a promihad crowned his exertions. Yet he had a skeleton in the cupboard. He would—well—who would underta was downcast. But he was not of those who parade their woes. In company he was cheerful, in a subdued way, and always gentle and con-siderate. Much knowledge of men and their imperfections had not hard- whom I should very much like to have ened him, and bitter experiences had intelligence." He stopped a moment, but saddened, not soured, his sweet | fingering his glasses absently, lifting it spirit. Nor had years of authority and much honour destroyed his child-

I hoped that luncheon would pass without reference being made to what had brought me home, but in that I was disappointed, for the matter lay too near my father's heart to be kept out of his conversation. Sir Thomas was told of the plans that had been made for me, and how for some unaccountable reason I was bent on

'We must not be angry or disapprinted if youth does not see with the eyes of age," said Sir Thomas, graciously, looking at me. "Morning and evening have different lights. Mr. Andrew has the fresh vision and quick intelligence of his time of life. They are not to be despised. At the same time I am sure he will consider soberly, and not underestimate the importance of the decision he is called on to make. Least of all will he grieve by any obstinacy those to whom his welfare is perhaps dearer than to himself," and then he added, after a pause:-"People's thoughts run on the lines that are most familiar to them. India occurred to me. I make a mere suggestion. How would you like to make your fortune in India?"

"No better place in the world for a young man of ability and enterprise," put in Mr. Clephane, quickly.
"Dod, many's the fortune has been made in India. I think I see in Andrew a nabob in embryo."

No one took the least notice of him, all the attention being bent on me. I was embarrassed and floundered like a man out of his depth and reckoning. I had not thought of India, but as the drowning man clutches at a straw so I ardently expressed a desire to go to India, greatly to the astonishment of my father, and the horror and consternation of my poor mo
"Thank you, my dear boy," respondshe said :—"This is for luck. One is
for Donald—you see I expect you to

at dinner. Perhaps we may have the your service on any other condition." company also, and. Mr. Clephane, I fear," answered my father for me. shall be honoured if you, too, will join us. Then we can all help destiny to choose a career for Mr. Andrew."

"Make vourself quite at ease on that score. If he changes his mind, he will tell you so frankly." And so it was arranged. For the "My heart's thanks to you, Kilpresent at least I had relief.

CHAPTER IV. THE ELMS-A MOMENTOUS DE-CISION.

Youth has an enviable knack of

turning its back upon the troublous past so soon as a blink of hope shines out of the future. Next day I had forgotten my woes, and was as snugly in conceit with myself, as ardent, as full of preposterous schemes as if, instead of being the football of fortune, I had been her first favourite and grand vizier. I passed the day zealously cultivating those aerial estates which make so fine a show in the eye of imagination and promise so rare a revenue, and waited with impatience for the evening. Yet when the hour came, and I found myself at The Elms, somehow my elation forsook me, and with it my confidence and self-possession. The ordeal of the introduction to Miss Gordon was trying. It left me with

hot gills and an uneasy foreboding

When we sat down to dinner, I was

that I was going to make a fool of

still haunted by this fear, and consequently very flustered. It would have been unspeakably grateful to slink into an obscure corner whence I could watch without attracting attention, but a perverse fate placed me disconcertingly close to the radiant being who presided as hostess. It may seem an odd thing, but in the distress of the first fifteen minutes, had there been the choice, I would gladly have resigned my seat beside the beautiful young mistress of The Elms to charge upon a blazing park of artillery, and I would sooner have fought ten men than address a volunlege days are not over, Andrew. It's tary remark to her. To find her so much as looking at me was to be struck with a ridiculous palsy that sent a nervous tremour all through me, as if there were an electric battery in her eyes; to be directly addressed by her was total overthrow of the wits and paralysis of the tongue. That was during the first half hour of our contact. By degrees I came to feel it was good to be near her, and listen to her wondrously vivacious and renetrative talk, and watch the flying shadows of thought on her superbly moulded and expressive face, and the gleam of her raven hair, and the sunshine that rippled in dimpled cheek

and chin, and the sparkle of her dark eyes, eyes which were equally ready to laugh in joy or melt in pity or flash in stern indignation and rebuke. I am not going to attempt a description of her surpassing beauty, a formal portrait being to me a thing niuse, but anyway he means that in clean out of the question. She was twenty, a child of the sun, and the meets his fate when he meets his wife. Mind that, Andrew. But about the her whose face had launched a thousand ships and burned the topless towers of Ilium, and if she caused me a flutter of fright it was a species of delirious ecstacy, a delicious pain, that was the very essence of delight. Dinner had not long begun when my

ousiness was introduced. "It is not a thing to be lightly decided upon," said Sir Thomas, serious-"You are at a time of life now, Mr. Andrew, when every act, every decision, is momentous. Our acts and decisions indeed are always momentous, but they are peculiarly and particularly so in youth, when we give the tone and bias to our whole later life. A hasty or an unwise decision of making a living, cousin, and the in early years, too, often involves a lifelong regret. I hope you have wellconsidered with your father and mo-

"As to that, Sir Thomas," chimed in my father, ere I could speak a word, "his mother and myself have come to no decision in the matter. To be perfectly candid, we have not been consulted. But he is free to choose. another fellow to follow in my steps. If he thinks it will be to his advantage to go to India, let him go to India. He will be the likelier to suc-"My sentiments exactly," said Mr. Clephane, emphatically. "I have a son of my own, and I say: 'Peter, my boy, choose for yourself. We are all endowed with different tastes and diffather went out for a walk, leaving ferent faculties, therefore choose for me behind. I was not sorry, since yourself.' I make no doubt that Antheir absence gave me an opportunity drew is quite competent to select a ca-

reer for himself.' "Probably he is," responded Sir my part. I told her my whole story Thomas, quietly. "Yet most of us unreservedly, and she sympathized as are wiser at sixty than at twenty." "And India is so dreadfully far away, Sir Thomas," put in my mother. "Why, as to that, cousin," said the

"It is a shame, Andrew," she said, lawyer, with an unctuous smile, "coelum non ani:num mutant, qui trans mare current" (crossing the seas does not change a man's nature). No notice being taken of this speech, I stammered what I regret to have to confess was hardly the truth-namely. that I had given the matter careful consideration and was fully resolved

to go to India. My mother said nothing, but it was clear the dinner had little relish, for she and Isabel left the table early, There was silence for a little while after their withdrawal. Then Sir Thomas said: "Since you have decided then, Mr. Andrew, if it would not be prying too much into private affairs might I ask-if I am impertinent pray tell me so-what your

plans are after your arrival in India. I have a special reason for asking." To this I was forced to confess that I had not thought out my plans, that, in fact, I had no plans at all. "Youth trusts to luck," said the lawyer ever ready to thrust his tongue where it was not wanted. "Fortune favours them who have the pluck to show they don't care a rap for the jade."

"I trust, Kilburnie," said Sir Thomas, turning to my father and ignoring the lawyer's remark, "that when you have heard my reason you lost trace of him." will not deem me tolerably selfish. I had fully made up his mind before intruding any personal concern of my own, lest his generosity might lead him

to neglect his own interests."
"You are quite incapable of doing goodness has not breathed since Eve and cordially. "Whatever be your reasons, I am ready to wager they do you honour. "You are extremely good to express

such sentiments," said Sir Thomas, "but I am afraid my motives in this instance are selfish. "Then, Sir Thomas, I shall be very much surprised, indeed," responded my father, promptly.
"You are too generous, Kilburnie," said Sir Thomas, "but you will be bet-

nent actor in more than one memor- ter able to judge when I have explainable and exciting scene. He had ed my reasons for being inquisitive fought a valiant battle, and victory The fact is I am anxious to find some trustworthy friend going to India who would-well-who would undertake a My heart jumped at this. What could the family mission be? And

would Isabel be interested in it? "There are those in India," continued Sir Thomas, after a short pause, "of to his mouth and putting it down again without drinking. Then he went on, while we all listened intently: "I think it is generally supposed by my friends and neighbours that Isabel is my only child, but that-I speak in confidence, gentlemen-is a mistake.

She has a brother Donald-Donald Gordon--and it is of him I would fain have news. The young man himself is not addicted to letter writing, and my correspondents in the East seem somehow or other to have lost sight of him. It may be that he is dead," and there was a quiver in his voice. "If so, it would be some satisfaction to know it. And, to be brief, I thought that if Andrew were going to India he might possibly be able to look Donald up."
"Gad, Sir Thomas, Andrew is just the very man to do that," put in Mr. Clephane. "I'll warrant he'll find and maybe Duncan will never set eyes

your son. It is a mission to suit one on him again. And, God bless him, of Andrew's adventurous spirit. I only wish I could substitute my own son. But Andrew is not to be superseded. lungs can blaw. Ave, will he too." envy him his opportunity." "We all envy the opportunities youth," said Sir Thomas. Then turning to my father, with a smile, "You his chanter was silent, however, and see, Kilburnie, my motives are selfish the dusk had fallen, and we three,

"As I was ready to wager, your sat together, there was talk, but no motives do you honour, gir Thomas," answered my father, stoutly, "and he were no son of mine, who, going to India, would not exert himself to do With that my father looked at me as if to say :-" There, now, speak up,

"I need hardly assure you, Sir Thomas," I said, clearing my throat, for my excitement was great, "I need foot in India my first business will be to find Donald."

and his eyes glistened. "Thank you, | find him. The other," and her voice "Do not make a hasty choice," said Orly pray remember that should you fell to a mere whisper, "is for your Sir Thomas, in his kindly tone. change your mind you will not let "Come to The Elms to-morrow even- this generous promise to me in any ing, and we will talk the matter over | way hinder you. I will not accept | both again." honour of Mr. and Mrs. Kilgour's "Never fear, Sir Thomas. Never

have made me fifty years younger. My spirit—ah, me! But there, there. Shall we join the ladies? I daresay they are feeling rather lonely." And we rese and left the room. "My dear Isabel," cried Sir Thomas, with the glee of a boy, as we entered the drawing-room; "come here, child. I have news for you." She rose in-

look of expectation on her face. "Mr. Andrew is going to India and o mind ye of old friends, and wh will search out Donald," continued Sir ve come back ye'll can march to you Thomas. "There's news to gladden your heart, my child." Isabel turned toward me, her eyes gleaming with a dewy, wistful brightness, and her hands shaking with a sudden tremour, so that I would fain have taken hold of them to comfort

"Oh," she said, advancing a step nearer me, and speaking in a low voice which I fancied was meant for my ear alone, "if you could only get tidings of my brother I cannot tell how grateful I should be. But the news that you are even to try seems too good to be true. How can we ever thank you? What can we ever do to repay you?" And I, with my hot face and leaping heart, certainly cculd not tell ner. The joy that gave Sir Thomas and Isabel new life filled me also with an

exquisite delight, but when they were radiant with hope and happy by anticipation, my dear mother's face blanched so that my gladness was checked by the duty of comforting her. In this office Isabel came to my help with the sweet words and winning ways that were all her own, and by dint of our unceasing perseverance in looking at the sunny side of things and keeping the dark out of view, in a little while my mother smiled through her tears, owning, with a fervent embrace, that it was good for young men to go out into the world and try hazards with fortune. "Few have such friends, Andrew," she said, looking toward Isabel, while clinging to me. "And I would not stand between you and distinction, far less would I hinder you from doing a worthy action." And then she and Isabel laughed and cried together, while I chewed my thumb in a corner, and there was an end of ob-

it must be understood that I was not to go solely as Sir Thomas' emissary to seek out Donald. I was going primarily on my own account-to push my own fortune-and Sir Thomas' mission was, as he was pleased to put it, "a mere act of charity done to a stranger out of the goodness of my heart." Yet in truth the charity and goodness were all on the other side. Sir Thomas urnished me with letters of introducion to the best known and most nfluential men in Bombay, besides riting many private and special leters in my behalf which I did not see. that, on mature consideration, being hought to afford the easiest and

peediest way to affluence for one of ly talents. "The richest Europeans in India are erchants and bankers," said Sir Thomas, "and they are all, as the sayng is, self-made men. The days of he East India Company are over. There are no fortunes being made in that service now, though," in a signiicant voice, "it was not always so. But India is a wide field, and these letters, Mr. Andrew, will, I think, put you in a position to choose according to your tastes. I have no advice to offer except not to be in too much haste to decide."

For what Sir Thomas had specially

at heart all provision was made both in letters and in money. Of the last there was to be absolutely no stint. I was to spend as much and as long as I should think proper, or in other words as long as there should be the faintest hope of tracking Donald. "My bankers shall have full instructions in the matter," said Sir Thomas, "and in the meantime we must not forget preliminary expenses." Whereupon he insisted on my taking in ready money and bankers' drafts a sum that seemed to me a fortune. Finally, as I was in great glee with my prospects and protested against delay, it was arranged that in exactly three weeks from the date of my home-coming I was to sail from London in the steamship the Pearl, of the Orient, commanded by Captain Rogers, who, being a friend of Sir Thomas, was charged to provide for my comfort on ship-

bcard And so the ultimate decision was made. I was to lift anchor and set sail for the unknown, as so many did before and so many will do after me. How I fared there, how the reality belied all dreams and anticipations, how fate mocked at wisdom, made naught of forethought and a plaything of me it will be the business of succeeding pages to tell. Coming events cast no shadow before, and in the meantime

I was eager and happy. How the three weeks passed I cannot very well say. I was a frequent guest at The Elms and saw a good deal of Isabel, whose presence I learned to bear without shrinking or shaking. She talked to me of her life in India, and also of her brother, for whom she had the warmest affection and admiration.

"They may tell you stories about Donald," she once said, "They may say he was a scamp, and all that, for it is easy talking. But don't believe them. He was high-spirited, that was his fault, and my father crossed him. His worst sin was to become a soldier when his friends wanted him to be something else, and the records of the War Office show he was no coward. He saved the British colours when the enemy broke a British square, and he has done many a brave thing since. If he had remained in the army, he'd have got got almost any rank, but he hadn't peace to do the fire fiend that, as it were, but I that, and it's since he left it we have never come near him in steamer or

ing about him. He seemed to fill her will one day wreak on this world. whole soul, to be her only thought, a circumstance that secretly piqued me "Oh," she would often break out in the most irrelevant way, "if you could ried us down the river and along the

only find my brother, if you could only find Donald, I should be so grateful to you. But indeed, indeed," and here she would look in my face till I thought I saw visions of heaven, "I will be just as grateful to you if you never find Words cannot express your goodness in trying." Then I would reply that if Donald entered the strait, casting a glamorous were in India I would find him, a iridescent light on the receding land speech which always brought me a and the sails of the many stately

I will pass swiftly over the preparation made at Kilburnie for my departure. My dear mother took care that my outfit lacked nothing it was possible for her to procure, and my father softened toward me, busying himself with my affairs and seeming conscience-stricken for having been so stern with me. evening, when we chanced to be by ourselves, and his voice was husky.

visions of paradise.

"You do well, Andrew," he said one "You do well, Andrew, I have no doubt, in following your own instincts. When you go far away—for to a homekeeping man like me it is so far away, though it is still in God's universewhen you go away, do not forget that we are left behind, and you'll let us hear from you. And as to the other thing, we may and a way out of our troubles. God bless you, my boy. We are all in His hands." And he could

At dinner, on the last evening, Duncan, the coachman, who was also gamekeeper, factor, forester, and general factotum, and served the Kilgours, man and boy, for fifty years, got out his pipes and serenaded us in his most stirring manner. "It is for Mr. Andrew," he said. "He will be going away, God bless him,

and be a big man, with black servants, he will have the pipes to his denner whatever, just as loud as auld Duncan's And so lustily did Duncan blow that not a word of conversation could we have during the whole meal. When my father, my mother, and myself, syllable of it will be set down here, Next morning Duncan drove me to the village to meet the stage-my father and mother accompanying. Early as was the hour, Sir Thomas and Isabel were waiting for us, and

There's something to your taste per- greeted us with a fervour that was almost silent. Isabel held in her hand two little bunches of white heather on which she looked down from time to time, as I fancied, with some embarhardly assure you that if ever I set rassment. At last she came close to me, and with a soft emotion suffusshe said :-" This is for luck. One is dead. self. It will keep you in mind of the old home, and perhaps I may see them

As she ceased speaking, the shrill notes of a bugle broke upon the morning stillness, and a minute or two later the stage-coach came up at a handsome pace, the horses fresh and the "My heart's thanks to you, Kil-burnie," murmured Sir Thomas. "You was quickly bundled up, farewells were

hastily taken, and I mounted to my place, feeling as if I were in an unfamiliar region of mists. Suddenly old Duncan scrambled up beside me, parcel rolled in blue cloth in his "Take it," he said, hus pushing it into my arms. "God ye, take it. It will be the stantly, and met him with a pretty pipes I learned ye to blaw on. the seas ye'll can gie a skirl at

> own quickstep, and maybe Donald will be there to fling his bonnet in the air. Heoch aye! God bless ye-Go bless ye!" and a tremulous hand patted me like a baby on the back. The Duncan leaped down and stalked back to his horses, daring any one to say tears were on his cheeks or that his hands were shaking as if with a palsy. His was an odd gift, but I took it knowing how refusal would hurt him. In another minute the driver had gathered up the reins, touched the prancing leaders with his whip, and we were off. I gazed back, waving my hand to the little group by the inn door till we turned a bend in the rcad. Then, seeing none too well, I turned, setting my face resolutely forward.

CHAPTER V. THE SEARCH FOR DONALD GOR-

On the journey south, my spirits being now mounting like mercury in the sun, I could not resist the temptation to spend an hour or two in Edinburgh in the delectable diversion of making my old comrades envious. The achievement was not difficult. A few significant hints, and the sight of my letters and drafts brought every man of them as near to tursting as the frog in the fable. Some envied me the money, some the adventures, others said it was the beautiful combination of both that took their fancy, and all agreed I had certainly been bern with the coveted silver spoon in my mouth. "It's one of the shameless tricks of Madam Fortune," said an embryotic divine, slapping me on the shoulder. 'Here you go out there to ride elephants and shoot tigers, and other flunkies, and enrich yourself from inexhaustible treasures of gold and gems, while I am left to wrestle with

the wonders of the Indies, and was to give particular information on these two points-namely, the feeling inspired by a wounded tiger charging full upon you when your gun is empty, and what I thought of the heathen gods-from a financial point of view. "I believe," remarked one, with a taste for finance, "those unconscion able ragans make themselves deities of the finest ore set with precious stones, while we haven't cash enough for an afternoon's outing. Just send us a god, old chappie, till we see how the heathen abomination would melt in the crucible of a Christian goldsmith.'

harrowing problems in theology.

I was to write them volumes about

you call that fair ?"

They escorted me in a body to my coach. For, being prosperous now, acquaintances became friends. They gave a prolonged cheer as the vehicle moved off, and a unanimous injunction to mind my liver and be on my guard against the encroachments of pride when, as nabob with a retinue of slaves, I hobnobbed with the dusky and luxurious potentates of the East. Only one thing marred my enjoy ment. I had it set in my mind to give Peter Clephane the soundest drubbing he had ever had in his life, but as he happened to be absent in Dundee my virtuous intent did not blossom into

Arrived in London, my first business was to find Captain Rogers. He had heard from Sir Thomas and received me with great affability and consideration, undertaking to have me bestowed in the best part of the ship and to let me see something of the town before we started. In me, as I remember, our sight-seeing expeditions produced perhaps as much bewilderment as pleasure. I wandered through the seething, roaring wilderness of the largest city of the world eager to learn and a.imire, yet feeling so utterly out of my element, so much confounded by the din and smoke and rush, by the ruthless self-assertiveness and indifference that seemed to characterize men and things alike, by the ssualor and splendour so grotesquely blended and tragically contrasted-in a word, so dazed by the distracting throb and tumult of a nation's mighty heart, that

I was glad to get away. When the time came to sail, the river sides were thronged with people to witness the spectacle of our departure for, that being just the beginning of the era of steam, it was thought a miraculous thing to see a stately threedecker sailing off with never a stitch of canvas set nor any visible means of getting forward save by a wheel that frantically churned the water into foam; and if it was strange to the spectators on shore to see a big ship going bravely on independently of wind and tide I must own it was rather startling to one at least of those on board to be caged up on the waters with a belching, pounding, wheezing, screeching fire demon that seemed to be crying out in eternal agony and struggling with all its frenzied might to burst its bonds and wreak destruc-

Often in the night have I lain listen-

tion on all about it,

ing to it in its miniature pandemonium, never silent, never slumbering, never for one brief moment at peace, but forever wrenching and writhing, forever setting up the same inappeasable cry of labouring pain and the same terrible threat of vengeance. Nowahissing locomotive without a shudder But in that fresh experience curiosity and interest soon mastered fear. There was gladness in the ease and speed coast of Kent, and past "the tall white cliffs of Dover," the last prominent spot on which the exile's straining eye rests when he is leaving England for the East, and the first on which it wistfully falls when hap-

pily he returns. The sun was going rapturous smile of thanks and further ships that were bearing gallantly up and down, some, like ourselves, outward bound, others, their wanderings for the present over, bound for the home we had left. I stood on the deck gazing backward till the land melted into darkness, then Captain Rogers quietly slipped his arm in mine, and we went below to supper. The Pearl of the Orient made a quick and prosperous passage, landing us in Bombay in a day less than the time reckoned for the voyage before starting. You may be sure I did not allow Sir Thomas' business to lag.

Having presented my letters of introduction, and undergone a brief but flery course of hospitality, I set vigorously to the work before me, assisted by the numerous friends of my patron. I had no difficulty in discovering that Donald Gordon had been in Bombay some eighteen months before, and had suddenly disappeared. But whither he had gone, whether he had departed by the hand of the assassin, no one had the least idea. There were of course conjectures in plenty, He might be hunting in the jungle, or taking the cool air among the hills, or trafficking with oily natives in another town. He might be in China or Japan or Australia or the South Sea islands or Peru, or in the interjor of some enterprising shark. The possibilities were endless, but there was only one certainty-that he had completely slipped all his friends in Bombay. In my first report home, then, I had nothing better to send than hope, of which I was no niggard. I stated, truthfully enough I trust, that I had already learned something about Donald; also, I fear not quite so truthfully, that I was not without reasonable ground for thinking that he and I should shortly have a dish of curry together. I did not tell them that as a last resource I had employed the cleverest private detective in the city to help me, and that he had failed to find so much as a single clue. Had I written what was in my mind I should have said frankly that so far as could then be seen there was not the remotest chance of being able to

To be Continued.

trace Donald. Perhaps the better

course would have been to say that,

I saw this more clearly when the let-

ter was gone, and I had stronger rea-

son to conclude he must be really

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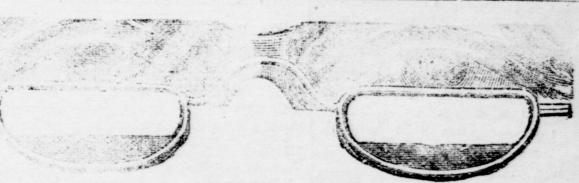
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