#### AT LOVE'S COMMAND.

By John A. Steuart.

I asked Tabal what he thought would be the result of the battle we had fought and lost. "The ravaging of the whole country by Yumen Yusel and the man on the black horse," he answered, promptly. "Amood Sinn hath fattened and grown large on his neighbours, and Abou Kuram hath had immense tribute for rendering aid. Three times have they levelled the palace of Yumen Yusel and enriched themselves with great plunchief. der. Now methinks it is Yumen Yusel's time to win."

That means that the enemy will converge on Amood Sinn's capital," I "Yes," said Tabal; "wouldst thou

the fruits of victory?"

A brilliant idea flashed upon me. "Let us go to Amood's capital also," I said. "I would fain meet the man on the black horse again." "And be cloven in two for thy pains," returned Tabal, quickly. Thou shouldst see us embrace like

Tabal glanced at me with the old expression of incredulity and jumped in his hands and could not dissent.

We had travelled slowly for perhaps
two hours round the shoulders of bluffs and about crags and rocks and on the brink of dizzy precipices and oxer rubbly hills, when all at once we he have while I breathe! came upon a spot of such verdurous beauty it might have been the veritable garden of Eden. It lay in a deep depression, walled about by cliffs, save at one corner, where there was a narrow gate-like opening. As soon as we sighted it, Tabal, who suspected It might be inhabited, whispered to me to remain quiet, and slipping from his horse went stealthily forward and peered over the breastwork of rock in front of us. Returning, with gestures for silence, he took charge of the horses and I went softly to spy. Climbing the parapet I looked cautiously down the other side, and there, to my amazement, was Ahmed, the son of Koor Ali, sleeping like a cherub. Motioning to Tabal to remain still, I ran quickly to the entrance, went in, and then crept along the base of the rock, intending to give Ahmed a fine surprise. Reaching him on tiptoe, I

drew his dagger, which was his sole "Put up thy dagger, Ahmed!" I said. "I am surely thy friend." 'Thou art no friend," he returned, savagely. "A man does not spit on his friend. Thou hast cast the rinsings of thy foul mouth into my face, a disgrace, for which thy blood will atone. I will fight thee where thou standest, dagger to dagger, but I will numbering at least 200, squatted to eat, not let thee call thyself my friend." Tabal, Ahmed, and myself being or-With that he wrapped his torn mantle about his left arm, as a sort of shield, and put himself in a posture me the honour of keeping me close to

"Let it be quick," he hissed. "Stand not dallying as thou wert afraid of "What thou sayest is impossible," I answered, drawing myself up just enough to show I was not held back by fear. "It would be a sin in me to fight thee. Thou art in the midst of grievous misfortune." "Thou art right," he said. " But I

will bear my grief as becometh a man, and desireth not any sympathy at thy hand. I was eager to meet thee alone, and, lo ! here thou art, and we

"We will not fight," I returned.
"Thou art famished with hunger and weak from fatigue and would be at a is thy belly likely to cry out ere thou sore disadvantage. I will give thee a hast more to offer it. Come ye share of my food; it is not much, but it will strengthen thee, and when thou hast eaten thou shalt rest undisturbed. If after that thou be of a mind to fight, I may gratify thee. Meantime put up thy dagger.

He kept his blazing eyes on me for the space of perhaps half a minute, then sullenly thrusting the dagger in-to his girdle he threw himself on the ground without a word.

Tabal came down with the horses and the dates, and Ahmed was invited to eat. He accepted the invitation with an ill grace and a lowering glance at me. But he was in my power, and I would not let his petulence or ingratitude irritate me. "If thou wilt sleep now," I said, when he had finished our dates, "I

promise thee no harm shall come to "I are in need of no more rest," he answered, gruffly. 'Concerning this quarrel, then," I said, "which you choose to make between us-

"It was thou put disgrace on me," he growled "It was not intended as such, Ahmed," I said. "I did but jest in putting water on thee,' "Nay; by my faith, it was no jest," he returned, sharply. "It was done in ignorance of the

customs of thy country," I explained, He appeared to sway for a moment between two opinions. "What sayest thou?" he asked, turning suddenly to Tabal. "Thou

art of my own nation and not ignorant, like this infidel. Thinkest thou the Christian meant dishonour in casting water in my face ?"

not in malice; but, as he sayeth, in ous liar." ignorance. Think what that meaneth! Peradventure if thou wert to visit the Christian's country thy ignorance should betray thee into error." This lucid reasoning seemed to weigh with Ahmed. "It may be thou speakest the truth." he said, turning to me. "I will so take it. Only remember that, if thou put disgrace again upon me, wittingly or unwittingly, I will kill thee on the spot." "I am warned and agree," I replied, "and now what news hast thou of the

"The worst that tongue can tell. The troops of Abou Kuram are scattered as chaff in the wind, and my father is dead, as thou knowest. But his death shall not be unavenged. A he were the very devil himself, and I had to hunt him to the ends of the

earth. I have sworn it, and that which I swear I will do." It was useless to argue, so I held my peace. For awhile he sat in silent anger, his hand clutching the hilt of his dagger, his blazing eyes on the ground. But, looking up and finding Tabal and me watching, he rose, shock himself, tossed his head proudly, and began to talk as if he had

never known a grief. All this time our horses were feed-ing on the rich grass with such relish as only Arabs escaped from the desert can know. I saw Tabal looking thoughtfully at their swelling sides as yea, eat and drink," turning to me if he were concerned about the matter. "Are thy sins troubling thee that thou art so solemn, good Tabal?" I

"By the holy prophet, sins enough have I to troubde me," he answered. "Yet it was not of them I was thinking. Look you how these horses swell, If we were to be pursued, where would be their wind? Let us take them where the grass is less

"Thou speakest wisely," I replied. "Let us go." I put Ahmed on my mare by way of cementing our friendship, and then Tabal insisted I should ride his horse. "I have the goat's pleasure in climb-

ing," he remarked. "'Twill be but a pastime to me." Nay, nay, Tabal," I said, "I will not consent to anything of the sort. I am more of a mountain child than thou art. I could scramble with delight over rocks the mere look of which would make thee giddy. Besides, thy wound is worse than mine. Mount, my friend, and let us be off."

"Nay, not while I have two feet to walk and thou but one whole leg," he answered

answered.

"Tabal, do not put me to the trouble of hoisting thee by the back of

thy neck and the wide part of thy breeches. Up with thee. Not a word more. Am I not leader, and shall I not be cheyed?"

Tabal laughed loudly, and declaring I was making him as the grandmother of a hundred children leaned into the of a hundred children leaped into the

At first our path was no more than crags, and at times so steep that the breakneck gorge a mile from the restsort of level dip several miles in extent and giving one the impression of

having been hollowed out by the hand "We must go warily," said Tabal. Perchance we are not alone." When he spoke, we were winding among a confused mass of bowlders, riomentarily expecting to debouch upon the open space or plateau. I was stumbling on behind, my eyes on the ground for the greater safety of my neck, when all at once I heard strange voices, and looking up saw a dozen voices, and looking up saw a dozen men about Tabal and Ahmed, some pulling at the bridles and others dancing about in a disquieting manner with spears and matchlocks. It required no wizard to explain the situation. They were Bedouins, and we were prisoners. "Whence come ye and whither go ye ?" demanded a man, who appeared

from his air of authority to be the

"We are fugitives from the bat's of which my lord has doubtless heard," answered Tabals who was coolest of us three. "We have lost all." "Nay, by my father's honour, that is a lie!" said the Bedouin. "Ye have have them victorious without reaping here two as good horses as ever blessed a man's sight. Yet there is truth in what thou hast said, for presently ye shall be without them. Take these horses, Saba, and get ye down, my friends," addressing Tabal and Ahmed. "And thou step beside them," turning to me, "so that we may see if ye be worth stripping. Torn and ragged," he remarked, examining us like a Jewish pawnbroker's assistant. to his feet, saying we must saddle up and get to the green valleys and rush-"take this fellow and leave him naught

but the skin God gave him. By my sword, 'tis more than he deserveth." "He may strip my dead body," I said, stepping quickly back and pulling my pistol, "but not a stitch shall "Sayest thou so?" laughed the chief. "I have spoken," I answered.

"And, by that baby face of thine. thou hast spoken bravely," returned the Bedouin. "If thy deeds equal thy words, thou art a comrade worth having. Mohammed, thou mayest leave him his clothes as well as his skin. Heaven hath been gracious of late, and each man may in the meantime carry his own garments. It will be a convenience. And now, my men, 'tis time to eat and drink. Let us join our companions, for by this time the feast will be ready." They took the horses and marched on, we three walking, carefully guarded, in their midst. At their rendez-

vous, in a smaller opening higher up

tickled him under the chin with my finger. He sprang up, as if I had the cooks were blazing, and cakes were not right the wrongs of battle. Koor Ali fell like a gallant soldier. Lay pierced him with a spear, a moving the cooks were busy, others fee, sherbet, and tobacco-things you would not see in a Bedouin encampment oftener than once in a lifetime. There were also many horses and a drove of camels, besides bundles of dresses and various other articles of merchandise, all testifying to the exceptional luck of the band in its recent enterprises. When we arrived the cooking was held to be done, and the company, Tabal, Ahmed, and myself being ordered to join. In appreciation, as he said, of my brave words, the chief did himself, and we sat down beside the carcass of a gazelle, which had been roasted whole. As usual at such merrymakings, decency was thrown to the winds. Every man had a wolf's appetite, and took a wolf's ready method of appeasing it. The chief opened the

> the gazelle's mouth and tearing out its half-raw tongue. Taking a huge site himself, he requested me to folow his example. "Bite," he said, holding the bleeding piece of flesh to my mouth. "Bite. By the prophet's mule, never hast thou had such a sweet morsel under thy tongue. Thou wilt not !" he exclaimed, as I drew back in disgust. "Then bither," he called to Tabal and Ahmed, who were a little distance off. "Come ye hither and bite. Ha! ye know

proceedings by thrusting his hand down

now to drive the fangs," as they complied. "What aileth the other dog?" "Defeat lieth heavy on his stomach, Suleiman," put in one of his comrades, with a laugh. "Perchance, Abd el Mahsin," returned Suleiman. "Nevertheless the rogue shall eat. It is my humour. Perdition to him, what is he that he should cross my purpose? Come near, thou dog, and bite," he added, addressing me. "Bite, or by our holy religion I will crush it down thy threat with the shaft of my spear.

Nay, I may even widen the passage "My lord," I replied, in my humblest and most respectful manner, "I have already eaten and have no appetite." "No appetite for such as that, thou mongrel cur! Thy vile stomach knoweth not what is good. Had eaten a two-year-old camel, yet would

find appetite for such sweet bread as that. I say to thee, stick thy teeth in it.' I might have perished in my refusal, for the look of the thing sickened me. but just then my eve caught Tabal's, which gave me a hasty but earnest admonition. So I bit at the outer edge, where the meat was best done. "A dainty bite, by my sabre hilt." cried Suleiman. "'Twas but a pre-

tence. Open thy jaws and try again, as thou valuest thy welfare. That is better. So, so," he laughed. "Now thou shalt drink, my merry one. Tomorrow morning I may find it in my heart to give thee to the sun to roast and the vultures to eat, but to-day thou shalt fare as if thou wert a broadst then ast water in his face," ther. Take that," and he held up a Italhe grave impartiality goblet of coffee. "If thou say not our chief herdsman, and shall have two it is the rarest mocha, I will tell thee meant him dishonour. But he acted to thy pretty face thou art a scandal-

I drank, and the coffee was good

so good that my lips smacked of their

own accord. "Ha, ha! my gazelle hath the right taste in his mouth yet," cried Sulei- ily outrun a spent horse. Thou shalt beloved friend and brother Amood Thou mayest have head of He is an unfortunate son of Ishmael, but a right good judge of coffee. Yet is it not better than his sherbet, which delighteth the soul as the smile of the houris? Amood Sinn is a man of understanding. He goeth forth to battle and leaveth his good things to the needy. My blessings on him. May the holy prophet give him the bliss of paradise "-taking a draft of sherbet. "It grieveth my heart son liveth after him. Look you here. to think that Yumen Yusel and that The man on the black horse is a devil on the black horse will be drink-mighty warrior, but I will slay him if ing his wine and dividing his wives so soon. Take a cup of his sherbet, my gazelle. Ha! that is good. Thou smackest thy lips again. Now thou

shalt have another bite," and, the tingue having by this time disappeared, he seized the carcass and tore a hind leg off. He held it toward me, and I, remembering Tabal's admonish ing look, made a feint of biting greed-"Nay, not all! By my faith, not all!" cried Suleiman. "Abd el Mah-

sin, seest thou this? He who a moment ago would not put tooth on a tongue is now ready to devour an entire limb. He will be asking for a whole carcass next. Yet he shall eat; again. "Youder is the desert that will bring my gay one's sides together So saying he pushed the mass of

meat against my mouth and laughed uproariously because I showed symptoms of choking. But now that I was docile the diversion of coercing me was at an end, and so, letting me eat as I pleased, he centred his attentions to himself. Never surely did man regale himself with such desperate energy. Nor was he alone in his voracity, for the entire band laid to in such an exhibition of ravening as the civilized cannot imagine, Whole carcasses disappeared as mouthfuls, and where ore minute there was meat enough to furnish a score of butchers' shops the next there was only a heap of bones piled for the wolf and the hyena. Tobacco and huge drafts of coffee and sherbet followed. Then the gormandized camp lay down to sleep off its surfeit, the

debauched. They would get their share later. When we rose again, there was no longer any hilarity. The festivities were over, and the festive spirit gave place to one strictly concerned with business. Men who had laughed riotously at the feast were grim and hard faced, and among the grimmest of the lot was the erstwhile jocular Suleiman. He looked indeed as if he had never learned how to smile, and I noticed his curt orders were obeyed with a silent alacrity that told of an authority which would brook neither questioning nor insubordination. The saddling up was done so quietly that you would not

sentries alone remaining alert and un-

Though there was no path save such | viciously at the thought of finding the as could be picked among broken ra- pillaging half done. The crooked chanvines and craggy watercourses and up and down breathless steeps, the pro- ing people who had been hunted out of gress was swift, for Bedouin horses their houses like rabbits out of burleap and dodge and climb with the rows, to be chased for sport and reagility of goats. In trying moments when we three strangers were demonstrative from fear of our necks we but did not detain us, for the call was were admonished to silence with the eager on every hand :-" To the castle, butt end of a spear, and so learned to hold our peace and look death in the spoil!"

By nightfall, after a ride that recklessly tore and jolted the soundest joints and bones, we emerged from the range on a level dip on one of the spurs overlooking the plain to the west. Here we halted for supper, which was stealthily prepared and silently eaten; for the need of concealment had come. As soon as the meal was over, Suleiman and Abd el Mahsin held a brief but animated consultation, the result of which was an immediate order to mount and march. By daybreak we were at the mouth of a steep plain, and here we rested in the shadow of some tall precipices, I managing to snatch perhaps an hour of

The east was blazing in all the glory of crimson and gold, when someone prodded me vigorously in the ribs, and I leaped up to find the company tightening girths for the road. Tabal, who insisted on being at once brother and servant to me, had my mare ready by my side. I had just time to take the rein when Suleiman gave the order to mount, and, like one man, the band sprang into the saddle. guard, going southward with the captured horses and camels and other us striking out to the north-west. Before parting I managed to get a

word with Ahmed. "We may never meet again, Ahmed," I said, "and I wish to assure roar of caged beasts rending each other thee I am thy friend. Should you make thy way back to Abou Kuram, as I trust thou wilt, tell him I shall not forget his kindness, and that I commend to him the son of the valiant Koor Ali.' "It shall be done as thou desirest,"

he answered.

'One thing more I would beseech of you," I added, "and it is this-that if horse thou wilt not fight with him nor provoke him." "I will slay him," returned Ahmed, fiercely. "Nay, Ahmed, tempt him not lest he slay thee," I said. "As for avenging the death of thy father, thou canst that to thy heart. Farewell.'

Farewell," answered Ahmed. will think of what thou hast said." And we parted, I turning to pressing interests of my own. It was easy to see from the demeanour of Suleiman and his men that something big was in the wind, and presently an inkling of its character was conveyed in a whisper that we were bound for Amood Sinn's palace. The band swelled with elation, for the prospect was glorious, but they held their peace, and our march was as the march of the army of the dead.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN AMOOD SINN'S PALACE. We pushed on with the speechless haste of men who cannot afford to waste energy on words, neither heat of sun nor lack of water being allowed to detain us. In and out among drifting dunes, across shifting ridges, over fissures that would have swallowed us all without being aware of it, through black rocks and scraggy shrubbery, dipping into valleys, climbing hillocks skirting villages-on, on we went, with never an abatement of the pace and no hint of our burning impatience save what might be gathered from flashing eyes and keen set faces. To me it was the old agony over

The pangs of thirst were upon me, and my hurt was paining me dreadfully. From his uneasy wriggling and his peculiar stoop I understood that Tabal, too, was suffering. But as we had no desire to be stripped and left in the desert to console each other in native nakedness, no murmur of complaint escaped our lips. Two days and nights this continued. with scarce a pause or remission. Our food was eaten in the saddle, and, as for prayers, heaven and the prophet would forgive a little present neglect in view of the urgency of our business and the amplitude of the after atonement. We did not think of eating, we had no time for devotions, and such momentary halts as were permitted were wholly out of consideration for the labouring horses.

By noon on the third day we entered upon a high plateau of tableland. clothed with succulent grass, and giving promise of some sort of civilization. The eagerness of the men increased. They began to strain their eyes, and whispers were passed that now we must near the place of spoil. We came upon many herds of goats and cattle, with some camels, and the herdsmen when questioned fold of the commotion and revolution of war. Toward evening one of them reported having seen several bands of our own order, as well as parties of troops that he took to be portions of the victorious army of Yunnen Yusel. Suleiman listened with interest, and invited the man to become our guide.

"How shall I answer my master for forsaking the flocks intrusted to me ?" he asked, tremulously. "Truly he will beat me, and it may be have me put to death.' "We will ourselves take the blame

of thy faithlessness," said Suleiman. "We have a notion of taking possesslaves for thy friendliness, the sleekest that can be found, besides much rich apparel and dainty food. We are in haste and cannot tarry. Get thee hold of my stirrup strap, my gazelle. So. I know by thy looks thou canst use the feet God gave thee, and canst eas-"That is from the store of our | feast in Amood Sinn's banqueting hall -yea, thou shalt be in paradise ere thou knowest it. Be not afraid to grip, my brave one. And thou wilt

take us by the shortest way. It will be best for thyself." We started at a good round trot, the guide running as he was directed and not daring to complain. "Thou wilt do," remarked Suleiman, encouragingly. "Thou skippest like a roe on the mountains. Yea, thou art fleeter of foot than the leopard. I said two slaves, by my sword hilt, thou shalt have three.

Presently we began to fall in with rival bands of marauders, hard, fleshless, flerce-eyed rogues, who scowled and snarled at each other and at us, thee. and rode faster and ever faster as they found more and more competitors for Amood's spoils. As they fouled and jostled in their haste there were high words and sudden gleams of steel. Indeed it often looked as if we were on the brink of a decimating fray, but the many savage gestures before staying to shed blood. So they press together, imprecating furiously, but nursing their private quarrels against a more convenient time of settlement. The vulture has not a surer, quicker scent for carrion than the Bedouin for the property of the fallen or the unfortunate. From all points the chilpicturesque, warlike, cruel, generous, abominable progeny of Ishmael-were luckless Amood Sinn and making desperate haste to divide his possessions. As we drew near our common destina-

tion the company was constantly swellwere bandied as thick as jests at a revel-and it was not ornamental swearing, for the oaths were hissed from between clinched teeth and carried with them the intention of swift death. In the whole tumultuous mob none spoke deadlier words than the band of Suleiman. We were in danger of forgetting our mission and breaking into gory hos-

tilities, when, with the blood-red flush points of clustering minarets. A few minutes later the chimneylike turrets, at sight of which the famished travel-ler blesses himself, and the towers of a castle were drawn clear and firm against the dazzling splendours of the west. Then the children of the desert, with such whoops and howls as no throats on earth but their own can ut-ter, clapped heel to flank, and the race became a mad scramble, with most of the features of a battle and a rout combined. It was as the descent of wolves upon an unprotected sheepfold. Just before the final dash orders were issued by Suleiman that if either

Tabal or myself showed the least sign of disloyalty we were to be speared without question or ceremony, the a fox's trail running a devious and dizzy course round the base of great rocks and along the brow of beetling the first order was given we were in a legality of the deed to be considered afterward. With the knowledge of these heartening instructions safely lodged in our minds Tabal and Lexlodged in our minds, Tabal and I exriders had to dismount and almost hoist their horses by the bridle reins.

Then suddenly the aspect of the place changed, and we found ourselves in a dated by the prince of a sack and long that the rider of the long that the rider of t dated by the rein of Abd el Mahsin. | town was in the paint of a growling | the company plied their spurs, growling | nels of streets overflowed with shrick venge in the open. Their cries to heaven and the prophet were pitiable.

The gloom of night had fallen when in the midst of a howling and riotous press we clattered under its frowning bastions. There was difficulty in finding a gate, and when discovered i was only by using our spears, butt and point, as was handiest, that we managed to reach it. It was closed, bu burst it as at a touch, and the surging mass poured in with hideous noises. fancied it was not properly fastened Before our arrival the guards had been killed or overcome, or, what is perhaps more likely, had joined the lootand narrow defile that issued on a ers at the first chance, and were alpiece of green sloping down to the ready busy with their master's most valuable jewels and his prettiest wives. The outer court was dark and full of maniacal people, who behaved like an enraged menagerie. Dismounting

inside the walls, we gave the horses over to a strong party of the most stalwart of our band, who might be trusted not only to defend, but to refrain from running off with them. Then the rest of us, following the lead of Suleiman, mowed an opening for themselves into another court. An Arab stronghold, as the reader may by this time be aware, is a place of vexaticus courts and passages spe-At starting we divided, Abd el Mah- cially designed to beguile and consin, with Ahmed and the necessary found. Amood Sinn's palace was unusually rich in deceptive retreats, and now every one of them was blocked by booty, and Suleiman and the rest of a mob that was self-destroying be cause it could neither go on nor turn back, and was frantic for plunder. The living trampled furiously on the dead

and dying, and the din was as the up-

in the night. In the brief lulls of the delirium wild sounds swooped from above, and the tumbling bodies, cast riven and bleeding out of windows, told that work was vigorously proceeding where we particularly wished to be. Once the sharp scream of a woman rang out directly over our heads, like a shrill bugle note in the clamour of battle, thou fall in with the man on the black | telling that the pillagers were already in Amood's holy of holies. Suleiman made a remark about the harem being cleared before we could reach it, adding comments which it would be

unwise to repeat. It got horribly dark, with a thick, stifling darkness that you tried to ward off with your hand because it was choking the breath out of you. No man knew how or where to get a light, which there appeared to be no escape, we slew each other in utter horror and confusion to no purpose whatever. If the abattoir were not burst somehow, none would be left to enjoy the good things that had brought us

At last someone got hold of a torch, and kicking open a stove that smouldered in a corner, lighted it. Another and another followed suit, till twenty brands were shedding a red glare on the ghastly scene. In a swift glance we reckoned the multitude of demons against us; then, clustering once more about Suleiman, we reaped a path inward till we came to a battered staircase. Somewhere at the top of it were the secret apartments in which Amood Sinn's most precious possessions were kept, and we made haste to ascend, stabbing and tearing down all that blocked or barred the way. It would have saved much life and considerable trouble had the several bands agreed to combine and distribute the booty share and share alike. But no man thought of that, and probably would not have entertained the idea had it

For why? Because the good old rule Sufficeth them; the simple plan, That they should take who have the power, And they should keep who can.

occurred to him.

So every ruffian did that which promised the best and speediest return We gained the top with the loss of only one man, who went down clutching his slaver and bellowing frightfully. Remarking that, everything considered, we had done very well. Suleiman paused a moment, trying to decide which way to turn. Labyrinths of passages ran like an intricate network in all directions. Any one of them might be right, but the probability was that most of them were wrong, and it was important to make the proper choice. As we were debating in our own minds which corridor to take, and with the aid of our weapons endeavouring to maintain our fcoting, Suleiman caught a man who seemed anxious to escape and punched him under the fifth rib till he yelled. "Have a little forbearance, friend," said Suleiman, "what do they call

"Baruk," answered the man, ready to fall in terror. "And thy office, gentle Baruk ?" "Chamberlain of the harem." "By my faith, heaven is gracious," remarked Suleiman, softly. "Thou seest this dagger," drawing a crimson blade slowly before the man's eyes. "Take note of its colour. It is sharp and cruel, and will be on thy heart if we are not in Amood's most

secret chamber within three minutes.' "How can it be ?" asked Baruk, with a livid face. "That is for thee to devise," answered Suleiman, quietly. "Thou art at home, and shouldst know thy way about. And I pray thee make haste,

lest I be temped to fall on thee where thou standest." "My lord would go to the harem?" said Baruk. 'Thou art a magician," returned Suleiman. "It is even so. The man turned, making an effort to get on, but could not force his way. "It is better to kill me," he moan-

ed. "My ribs crack as dry twigs under the hunter's tread. Never have mine eyes looked on so woeful a srectacle as this." He wrung his hands, and would have wept but that the point of a dagger made him leap in the air. "Thou hast forgotten that we are in hurry," said Suleiman. "Go on." He made another effort, and failed

as before. "The thing cannot be done, my lord," he gibbered, in despair. "We will see," replied Suleiman. The dagger pricked and Baruk screamed. Like a plunging horse, he sprang at the solid mass, and came back like water from a rock.
"Thou art of no avail in thy own house," said Suleiman. "Do thou guide, and I will make a way for

Keeping his dagger on a level with

the small of a man's back, Suleiman

drove ahead, the other cowering close behind him for protection, and we resolutely supporting. Progress, however, was slow, for the light was bad, the Bedouin, with booty in his eye, will len were troublesome under foot. But use much un-Christian language and Suleiman's dagger was very busy block exceedingly great, and the falquietly busy, dealing blows that were unfailingly effective, and we made steady way. Baruk wept hysterically at intervals, declaring his master would have him beheaded, and leaped like a roe at every prod from behind. Back, far back, we went, along such a course as I hope never to travel again. At last Baruk, writhing as if dren of the desert-the dirty, tawny, the death agony were upon him, touched with the tip of his finger what seemed to be a panel in the wall. The converging upon the capital of the next instant there was a crash of splintering wood and rending iron, and through the broken door came a gush of varm perfume. "The houris, my dove," said Suleiman. "The houris." ing, and so was the tumult. Curses The men at his back, shouting, wildly strained for paradise, all except the guide, who groaned dismally as if he were on the brink of the pit. Surging forward, we entered a narrow passage heavy with incense and darkened by massy curtains. Then, bursting another door, we came to a tapestried chamber. Suleiman growled at finding it empty and was turning to have satisfaction out of Baruk when a chorus of screams came ringing out of of the sunset upon them, we descried the remote darkness beyond. Baruk was let alone. There was fun ahead that prohibited dallying.

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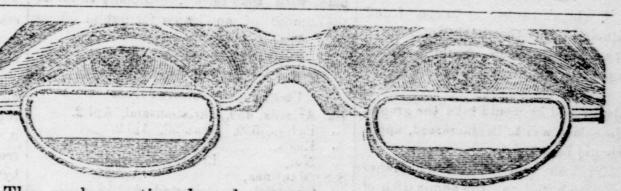
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