

It is a good plan to keep a doubtful

guest always in front of you. As we made our examination, coming on pile upon pile of stuffs from the looms of India, he was ready to burst in sheer covetousness, though striving to hide it. He had never known a man to take such a prize, and he would be happy if I only al-lowed him to be my slave, that he might learn from me the secrets of successful piracy.

"You are greater than Ran Dahid, whose prizes made him so rich and powerful that he married a prince's daughter, for he had his crew, and you are alone and but a youth. It is a great day for me when I am permit-ted to know you and be near you." Again I made light of my achieve-Main I made light of my achieve-ment, treating the taking of a ship as if it were but the amusement of an idle hour. I swaggered a good deal, but I am sure that in spite of all my bravado I looked but an indiffer-

steel.

servant's blood."

ent pirate.

When we returned on deck, the wreckage, which he had not noticed at his first coming on board, caught his attention.

"You have been amid the terrors of the deep," he remarked, "and yet perchance the tempest has favoured

"You speak like a magician," I re-

plied. "Nay, by the prophet's beard, you are the magician," he said, quickly. "You ride the storm to fortune; the "You ride the storm to fortune; the very elements are your slaves. A ma-gician indeed you are. Yet the ship is hurt. The helm hangs uncless as a broken bough, nothing to guide the ship, and over yonder is the Persian gulf," he added, significantly. "I know it," I answered, carelessly. "There you may be among friends," he ventured, with a look of intelli-

sence. "If I am among foes, the worse for them," I responded. "Verily, I believe it," he said, with

Thoroughly confirmed in the belief that I was a man of desperate and bloody deeds, he grew confidential, entertaining me with an account of some of his own exploits as freebooter and

corsair, and dwelling with the relish of a devil on scenes of cruelty and death.

"Then you lied when I took you on have said the fencing was lively. For board," I said, sternly, interrupting him in the midst of his narrative. an hour each day we exercised thus, Even a sea-robber may have his code of honour, and for the present my and my companion's good humour continued unabated.

foible was to hate lying. "Could I guess your trade from that girlish face?" he asked, with an impudent grin. "You might be a missionary ship."

"I am no liar," I said, severely, while conscience whispered "Impos-

"And I swear by the rover's flag I will follow truth," said the rogue, with a broader grin than ever. "Are we not brothers, and should not our souls be as dials in the sunlight? Yea, and I love the brave Englishman. In Egypt and Africa have I not known him, and in the Persian gulf have I not seen with joy his skill in slashing off heads? He is the angel demon of the world. He will make good the

the third week I was reciting myself. fact that a hard Arabian moon will Abram ben Aden was delighted with drive a strong man stark mad in a his success. single night if he lie unprotected from

"By the prophet's mantle," he said, "I will have you in paradise yet. Your her light. Even with me under my covering she seemed to be sucking at speech already is as of one bred in the my vitals. desert. You have the Arab's tongue, Weary with watching, and, to say the and next will come the Arab's faith. truth, more than a trifle worried, I fed And all thy brave deeds will be for-And all thy brave deeds will be for-given. Why should not the bold cor-sair have happiness at last ?" As a diversion to our studies, he lured me, rather against my judgment, into a daily bout with the sword. "It my rats and went to bed. I lay long

awake in spite of fatigue, and the soothing lullaby of lapping waters. At length I began to doze, frequently starting up, however, with a vivid will keep your hand and eye true," he said, insinuatingly. "Let the master practise on his slave. Methinks you take joy in the flash and ring of the take joy in the flash and ring of the All brave men do. By the ing unbroken, save by the low, sweetsword of Sikandar el Rumi, there is ly blended voices of wind and water, the stuff of a fighter in you. This I would lie down again-to be honest, ship with all its plunder shows it. Yet with something of the nervous shiv-you will not let your blade drink your ering of a frightened child.

offront thee," I said, "name it." Once I was constrained to get up and look out, first on one side, then It was not likely I would, but there a little; then, thinking to rush in and was no assurance that my servant on the other. But the deep serenity end the encounter at a blow, he would exercise a like restraint over his of nature was undisturbed. The moon sprang upon me with the headlong blade. Indeed, on second thoughts, shone resplendently, and the sea, gent-his proposition seemed to me a ruse to ly crisped by the breeze, sparkled like try my mettle and wheedle me into fretted silver or glowed with phosan overweening conceit with myself that would give him his opportunity. Happily, I was not entirely ignorant in the use of the sword, for my graver studies had been interrupted, perhaps too often, by prolonged fencing bouts. But then I was far from thinking my-self an event. So that it was no light self an expert. So that it was no light | tender compassion.

matter to stand up before a man of matter to stand up before a man of unknown skill and suspicious motive, whose greatest delight it might be to spit me at the very first go off. Never-theless I had given my consent, and it would have been both folly and cowardice to go back. So I put on my stoutest front, though, to be can-did, the naked, wicked flash of our weapons in the sun caused me a nasty Ah, mystery of mysteries, how weapons in the sun caused me a nasty sensation. It was but momentary, lier Ishmael, to be humbled and corhowever, for the demand of every fac- rected ? If the sins were many, truly ulty of mind and body was too keen the punishment was sore. Faint and to leave me time to be afraid. I soon discovered that Abram ben quivering, I leaned against the side for support, and as I rubbed a clammy Aden was a skilful swordsman, with a face there was wrung from my heart sure and rapid eye, great length and suppleness of arm, and the confidence Vet

which comes of many triumphs. Yet centrated miserv of a lost race, "My I rung him blow for blow, and ended God. my God, why hast thou forsaken the first encounter in a glow of satis-

faction. We were both nimble as goats, and I believe a spectator would And immediately, as if by celestial impulse, my mind flew back to a heathery braeside, and I was nestling from threatening perils in arms that compassed me safely about-as one whom his mother comforteth. The We lived this life for a month. Durwounded animal seeks its lair that it ing all that time the weather was

glorious, and we enjoyed it undisturb-ed. The brig floated lazily along, may die in peace; the wounded spirit turns home that it may be strengthened and solaced, were it only by mere whatever wind there was being mostly steady in the same quarter. Nor a sail nor a soul did we see, and I had recollection. But for that Divine memory, that swift flight through space but the haziest notion of our whereand time, I might have gone that inabouts. If Abram ben Aden was bet-ter informed, he kept his knowledge sedulously to himself. He seemed in-deed too intent on providing entertain-you like, but let those who have been ment to give a thought either to our similarly tried say if their hearts have course or our destination. We told never failed them. And let those who

tales and sang songs, and ate and drank and fenced and studied, and all alone on a derelict, waterlogged ship led the most delectable existence imagina-I returned to bed by and by, failing

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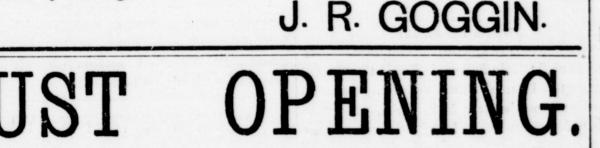
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Chatham N. B., Sept 24, 1895.



clutching the handle of his sword. On

the other was I, motionless, deadly

white, I am sure, but with a fixed de

termination to die or have vengeance.

I was perfectly calm, probably be-

cause the hazard was so desperate

The gaze of all those alien eyes was

as nothing; as nothing, too, was the

chance of being killed. Thought and

purpose and feeling were concentrated

I made a movement forward, and

Abram ben Aden tried to squeeze

back, saving it was of more conse-

quence to secure the booty than to

turn aside to put a toad out of ex-

stence. But the circular human wall

was solid, and he could not get away

As he struggled ignominiously I ad-

vanced and struck him on the cheek

"If there be aught else I can do to

He glared madly as I stepped back

with the flat of my sword.

on the man opposite

He sprang upon me with the headlong ferocity of a tiger.

ferocity of a tiger. But he had miscalculated. Swerving slightly to the side, I caught his blade on mine, and the sharp, fell ringing of steel announced to the remotest of the specta-tors that two men were fighting for

ence, showing no disposition to interfere. There was no commotion; the drama of death went on without a sound save what was made by the whistling, clashing swords of the combetants, for, the Arabs being undemonstrative, take the sight of blood and the issues of life and death with-

out excitement or horror or pity. I have no recollection of the par-ticulars of the fight. I only know that for my part I went at it with a single, simple purpose, that I had no thought of fancy swordsmanship, nor indeed of anything else save not to yield while I could draw breath. My opponent had the first blood. By some accident or clumsiness on my part his sword in glancing off mine

struck my shoulder, peeling it. But

the wound, though it bled freely, was

& flea bite, and if it had any effect

The fought like a beast of prey, but in spite of his fury, or perhaps be-cause of it, I kept pushing him stead-ily before me till at last his heel was against the vessel's side. Finding himself at the wall, he uttered a great oath, the first word he had spoken since we engaged, and plied his wedpon with such swiftness and force

that it was a marvel I escaped being slain on the spot. No doubt it was my reckless calm that saved me. At

their lives. The crowd preserved complete sil-

black Ethiopian, and sell rum and take ships and make himself rich with what others have gathered. I love him as a brother.'

Naturally I was gratified by this high and impartial testimony to the noble qualities of my countrymen. In his rummaging Abram ben Aden came upon my armoury.

"What a man of arms you are to be a boy in years !" he exclaimed, with some excitement. "Here are weapons for a whole ship's crew !" And select-ing a sword he drew it from the scab-

ing a sword he drew it from the scab-bard and began to feel its edge. "Not so fast," I said, stepping up to him. "These are dangerous. You talk of magic; let me warn you of the magic there is in these weapons." "Yea, I believe in their magic," he answered, complacently, "but is it not the magic of the arm that wields them? I know a good blade when I see it. Choose ye one, and we will have to my will as completely as the most docile and obedient genie in any Arabian tale of wonder. I dare say I plumed myself on my ascendancy, I dare say I put on airs, and I have no see it. Choose ye one, and we will have some sport. May I perish if I am not forgetting the ring and the gleam of steel! See, see how it bends! 'Tis a well-tempered blade. Yea, and it is light in the hand.'' And he made a circle of supheams about his head doubt whatever that Abram ben Aden, of flatterers, saw through me and me. Divining that the rascals were

light in the hand." And he made a circle of sunbeams about his head. I stepped back, my hand instinctively seeking the hilt of my pistol, and said indifferently that I was not in the hu-mour for sport. The truth was I was not in a humour to take any present risks not absolutely necessary. With a shade of disappointment and vexa-tion, he thrust the sword back into its sheath and returned it to its place. tion, he thrust the sword back into its sheath and returned it to its place. We had an early supper, and went early to bed, my guest getting a closed-off berth to himself. I lay awake un-til I heard his stertorous snore; then I crept softly upstairs, and gathering all the weapons toegther, carried them down and hid them in my cabin. It was better that Abram ben Aden ehould not be tempted to do mischief you are a gallant swordsman !" he cried, recovering his breath. "Your should not be tempted to do mischief eye is the sun and your stroke a flash of lightning. I would not fight you for ten shiploads of gold. The man who fights you puts his life on your sword point. As a jest you have taken my wind away, and by the breath of the desert I am hot. Come, thou champion brandisher of steel and let while I slept.

----CHAPTER X.

ALONE ONCE MORE.

Whatever evil Abram ben Aden may have harbored in the secret chambers champion brandisher of steel, and let of his heart, his bearing toward me us refresh ourselves." was the essence of courtliness and friendship. My own brother could not have been more solicitous for my hapas soon as our exercise was done, but this evening we took them with us, piness and welfare, nor the most loyal of henchmen readier to do me service. and they lay across our knees as we of henchmen readier to do me service. When, from some chance expressions of mine, he discovered that I was just recovering from a mortal illness, he broke into fresh chantings of my val-our and fortitude, and insisted on tak-ing on himself the duties of cook and general personal attendant. ate and drank. "Are we enemies ?" cried Adam ben Aden, laughing immoderately at the we went to bed we still had them.

'It is not meet that heroes should do the work of slaves," he said. " Leave it to me, who am but a common mor-tal. I am happy in serving so valiant a master and so generous a benefac-tor, one whose deeds should have been the inspiring theme of the peerless Kaahel Albar (a famous Arabian poet) himself." himself."

A blunt man like myself is at a ly to myself, then going quickly on grave disadvantage in dealing with a deck looked for his boat. But it, too, courtier. In spite of his fine words, I | was gone. mistrusted my guest as much as ever. That he coveted my possessions I knew, and that he had designs on my throat

non rairly adored ma Me anticipated my wishes, spoke un-ceasingly of the unequalled deeds I had done, and more than once showed asleep at length on a resolution to be up next morning with the sun. As it turned out, I was astir in advance of a strong disposition to fall down and my time. Just as the first glimmer of worship me. dawn flickered on the sea I was start-

Ordinarily we put away cur weapons

I slept soundly that night, and was

empty bunk, made up as it had been

left the day before. I whistled soft-

CHAPTER XI.

"I have been a rover," he would led by a noise of ropes upon the ship's declare, with the unction of a man sides, a scurrying of feet on the deck saying his prayers, "but may Azrael and a tumult of contending voices in seize me this moment if I speak not shrill confusion all round. Quick as the truth in saving that never have my eyes seen a man who matches you thought I tumbled out of bed, threw on my clothes, stuck a brace of rein bravery and good fortune. And volvers in my belt, grasped my sword and bounded up the companionway. At the head there was an abrupt and you are but a youth," he would add, in a most engaging tone. This continued till I began to fancy uncomfortable stoppage, for no sooner did my foot touch deck than a score of had enchanted the man, that he was

ing.'

verily my slave, and I had only to ex-ercise my magical power to bend him my throat, preventing the slightest chance of defence.

pray you let me keep them."

called out, "It is so."

hand that helps it. By your love of

any rate, by driving in and slashing and guarding and thrusting as if I had the eyes of Argus and the hands A throng of swarthy, fierce-eyed, vociferating villains pressed and bran-dished their weapons so truculently of Briaseus I was able to maintain that I could have sworn to a chilly sen-sation of steel in my windpipe, though as yet no one had actually touched my ground; nay, was able to keep his back glued to the brig's side. Blood flowed pretty freely on both sides, yet the sight of it did not relax my resolution, if resolution it can Arabs, I demanded in the Arab tongue, and in rather gasping accents, what be called, which was a blind decision to this sudden invasion and hostile dis-

have my sword in my opponent's vitals I thought he pressed harder on me play meant. At this a familiar voice or his in mine. One of us two must than ever before, and that his blade called out, "Enlarge thy turban, friend; rang with unaccustomed sharpness. great is the bountifulness of fortune to die. That was the fell verdict. So we fought not to show our science, her favourites !" There was a sardonic but as men fight who are bent on killing laugh from those whose blades were each other in the shortest possible closest about my neck. Then one who space of time. I had but to look into seemed to be the leader, pushing a lithis eyes to see the fate intended for tle forward, said, sternly:-" The ship me. and I daresay he looker into mine is ours. If thou art in love with thy and read with equal clearness that meant for him.

There was no device known to either of us-and Abram ben Aden must have cursed himself for my dexterity-to which we did not resort. Yet the advantage hung in the balance. Terrific as the blades rang and glanced, they somehow failed to find their point on either side.

The breathing was becoming hard When thou hast given up thy wea and fast, and there was some risk we pons," said the spokesman, curtly. might be deprived of the satisfaction for which both of us panted by our very eagerness and violence in trying to get it. That some such thought must have flashed across Abram ben "They who do me the honour of this visit belong to a brave and chivalrous people," I rejoined, remembering sian manners. "I know their history, and the songs of their poets, and Aden's mind was quickly made manithe valour of their deeds I am a fest by the manoeuvring Blowing stranger, alone and at your mercy. and staggering, as if in the last stage of exhaustion, he suddenly swerved, My arn:s are my sole possession. apparently with the intention of flight, "May, by Fatima's eyelash, arms in at the same time making a very feeble thy hands are as poison in the adder's defence. tongue !" cried Abram ben Aden, com-

The ruse nearly gave him my life. For an instant I thought I had him, ing forward so that I now caught sight Aden, laughing immoderately at the idea of two peaceable and friendly men sitting down to meat armed as for a battle. Yet somehow we did tot lay the swords aside, and when we went to hed we still had them and my whole being thrilled with unholy glee. But the light in his eyes and my knowledge of his crafty ways speedily put me on my guard again, and restrained my ill-timed exultadesire to be revenged. "That man," I said, pointing in scorn and anger at him and forgetting the Well for me that they did. tion. late in awakening next morning. On reaching the cabin I found that Abram ben Aden had not yet risen, and thinking to surprise him, I crept to his door. It stood ajar, showing an Scarcely had I recovered myself when Abram ben Aden, with a great roar and strokes that fell ike lightning, charged upon me, pushing me back and nearly running in under my sword. But he had delayed the onset lacity of my mien and question that just a second too long. Had he made made them answer so promptly and his rush immediately on the heels of ly to myself, then going quickly on frankly, but instantly a dozen of them his retreat, I had been a dead man. But he took too much pains to mis-"I have taken this viper to my breast," I cried, "and he has stung lead me, Deception had o'erleaped itme. It is a base thing that stings the solf and opened my eyes,

To be Continued.

at all it was to spur me on. I pressed hard, forcing my antagonist back inch by inch to larboard, the crowd giv-**UUST OPENING** ing way in that direction. He fought like a beast of prey, but

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