

# MANN OF THE BORDER

BY

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# MANN OF THE BORDER



## CHAPTER I

*“There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet!”*

For the third time within half an hour, this invariable creed of “the Faithful” had run like an under-current, with ever-increasing volume, through the restless throng massed together in the Singhpur Bazaar. Attracted by it, many had deserted the open shops to join the crowd which had formed in one corner.

A colorful, motley crowd it was. In it, as all through this northwest frontier province, the Mohammedans outnumbered the Hindus ten to one. There were Moslem farmers, whose lives had made them old at forty. There were trans-border men, of independent tribal territory, equipped with heavy sandals for long-distance travel, their heads adorned with knotted, sweat-stained caps, in place of the usual *pagrie*. On their backs were goat-skins tied at the four legs and filled with coarse flour, salt, or some other provision. Shifting their burdens a bit these rugged, outdoor men had paused on the outskirts of the crowd for a few moments of curious watching.

In the crowd too were coolies, half-fed, half-clad, watching for a chance to earn an *anna* or *pices* by carrying the purchases of some well-to-do-shopper,

some Khan or Pathan "gentleman" of large landed estate and larger debts. For there were several Khans in the crowd, clad in immaculate pajamas and coats of fine cloth, their brilliant *pagries* standing up fan-wise above gold-embroidered skull caps, their faces expressing their contemptuous indifference to the common crowd.

Even the Khans were not as picturesque as the Maulvies and Mullahs, whose professional duty it is to defend the faith of the Prophet, to protect the ignorant from error, and incidentally, to safeguard their own source of revenue. An unfailing mark of recognition is their long beards, required of all true Moslems of exceptional piety, as a sign of honorable old age dyed a brick red or sometimes an amazing purple.

The few Hindus who were in the crowd knew that they were tolerated merely for the sake of trade. Avaricious shopkeepers and moneylenders, they were, as always, in dread of reprisals and depredations from their improvident Moslem debtors. They were dressed in coarse, cheap clothes, possibly to deceive their enemies with an assumed poverty, though a few of the modern youths were dressed in Western style.

The most impressive group of all was the Sikhs, ordinarily classed as Hindus, but scarcely related. Warlike and stalwart in religious principles and practice, they had once ruled the Punjab before the British subdued them. Their own ancient fort at the edge of

town commemorated their former glory. Tall and straight, these soldiers moved fearlessly about in the bazaar, their long hair, uncut from birth, twisted in a knot under their *pagries*, and their beards held in place by a net over their chins. A few of them lounged on the edge of the throng, through which again ran the refrain, "*There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet!*"

The team of evangelists present were prepared for any reaction to their gospel message, accustomed as they were to the derision of the mob and interruption for the purpose of confusion. Nevertheless, they had been puzzled as they noted an unusual spirit of antagonism awakened by this reiterated creed. While the young missionary, George Wallace, with a foreigner's use of the Urdu, sought to make clear the deity of Christ as a necessity for any plan of salvation, the elder native pastor was searching for a single face. Alert, this Christian champion, Faqir Masih, watched for the source of this disturbing influence, when, for the fourth time, at the mention of the Son of God, this Moslem challenge lashed forth. The quarter from which it came was quickly noted, and the man, under the violence of his emotion, took a step forward into view.

He was a Maulvie indeed, of splendid physique, with the dignified bearing of conscious superiority, his features and complexion marking him a Pathan and a descendant, according to his own lineal tracings, of

the lost tribe of Israel. His dress indicated that he belonged far across the border. He stood out now in the open, his aspect revealing the fires of passion that burned within. Clenched in one hand was a mighty staff, measured, as had been the "*Asa*" of Mohammed, reaching from the ground to the height of the ear.

Faqir Masih gathered at a glance that this stranger was a man of power, both in personality and position. What ultimate mischief he purposed was about to be revealed. The divine Sonship of Christ had been proclaimed by the missionary to this Moslem audience. To them it would imply but a carnal significance, so blinded are their minds to any real spiritual conception. It is better for those with a limited use of the Urdu to leave this vital subject untouched; but George Wallace, absorbed in his endeavor to express his thought clearly, had become oblivious to its effect on his audience, when, with a savage roar, there rushed before him this apparition of wrath, with bristling beard and flaming eye.

The missionary, caught in mid-sentence, stood dumb in amazement at the sudden fury of this onslaught.

"Ye *kafirs*, ye sons-of-swine, ye false teachers of the ignorant, ye destroyers of the Faith of the faithful — I spit on thee" — and the infuriated defender of the Faith made good his words, continuing his impassioned harangue.



“Ye would come to teach us that God is married and has a Son. Ye make Jesus Christ as God, who is only one. Away with you and your blasphemies! There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet! Would that I had you where the British Raj does not reach, or back at Kabul — you, and all *kafirs* of your kind — that we might bury you under heaps of stones cast by the true and faithful!”

He paused for breath, then turned to his co-religionists, most of whom stood aghast at the fury of this outburst of their champion. What might become of this uproar? Were they not still under the British Raj? Was not this a European who was being so grossly insulted? His own he spared not, but hurled at them his scornful denunciation.

“How long stand ye here, dallying with the blasphemies of the Christians? Have ye become women and children, that ye can do nothing to stop this pollution? Long have I heard of this *Padri Log*, but never had I thought to see full three hundred Moslems stand meekly by while he pours forth his damning heresies! Away from here, every one of you who calls himself a follower of the faithful, and cursed be he that remains!”

Again he threw at the Christians the venom of the Oriental, and, dispersing the crowd, he drew away with him a large following, some in a half-hearted way showing they had no sympathy with the *Kafirs*.

The most difficult thing to do gracefully had been done — withdrawal from the field of battle, which had become a scene of temporary defeat. Not long did the little missionary party linger in the bazaar, with no opportunity for conversation with those who remained, for none dared show favor to them. Unattended, even by the usual rabble, they reached the waiting motor, and passing swiftly the bounds of the town, they whirled homeward.

First, through the fertile, gradually rising valley; then, as they reached the winding mountain road, the pent-up feelings of the young native Christian helpers in the rear seat burst forth, and the astounding event of the afternoon was relived, with various conjectures as to the identity of their fiery opponent. The top curve of the road gained, they could look down on Eliotsharar, civil headquarters of the military cantonment on the Indian frontier. Their own home station lay two miles distant, nestled in a small pocket, or plain, among the foothills of the Himalayas.

It was then Padri Masih turned to the questioning youths.

“O, young men: this day has been unique in your experience, but years ago, in the beginning of my work in the Rawalpindi district, our meetings were often broken up in some such way, and even here in the frontier we have had little disturbances; but somehow I feel that we shall again feel the force of this

whirlwind, for he is a fighting Maulvie fanatic, and comes from a land where they will not tolerate our preaching. Now he is aiming to crush it out in this district. Let us pray that this seeming defeat may be but a stage in the ultimate victory of our Lord!"

## CHAPTER II

Tuesday it had been when the little Christian band had, according to schedule, preached in the Singhpur Bazaar.

It was Wednesday now, and tomorrow, and every Thursday through the year, there would come the weekly frontier mail train, the pride and boast of the North Western Railway, on its way to Bombay fifteen hundred miles distant, there to unload its piles of mail on the boat, waiting at the dock. The closed doors of Afghanistan had opened to give this train right of way through the Khyber Pass. So, commercial civilization, in its aggressive advance, was forcing the door from without, yielding to a half-realized desire of the people within, to take their place as a nation among nations.

In its southward course, this agent of modern civilization, with its far-flung smoking banner, followed the trail of untold ages. The Aryan conquerors of prehistoric times had swarmed across this northwestern barrier, pushing onward and outward over the fertile plains of Hindustan. Raiding invaders from many lands had deepened that trail. Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan had traveled that road, and in the last millennium recurring hordes of

Moslem tyrants, whose swords had made mass conversions, or were splashed with the blood of "infidels."

At Taxila, on the site of which seven dynasties of kings had successively set up powerful realms, the director of archaeology in India is resurrecting, out of the dust of barren hills, the ruins and relics of those conflicting religions and customs of two thousand years ago. Here the train pauses—not at the bidding of a mighty monarch — but to take aboard homebound mail from Abbottabad; then, on to Rawalpindi, headquarters of the northern army cantonment — the largest in Northern India. Still onward it crosses the Jhelum River, and four of the "Five Waters" from which the province of the Punjab gains its name — through Lahore, the Punjab's romantic capital, straight south to Delhi, the capital of all India — and on to Bombay, a full two days-and-nights' trip from its starting-point on the north-western frontier.

So, in Eliotsharar, Wednesday was sacred to the home mail. At the cantonment post office, the bags would be kept open until five-thirty, then closed to wait another seven days.

George Wallace had a number of important letters: his weekly Round-Robin to his mother; reports to the mission board in New York; private business awaiting his instruction; besides office work piled up while he was absent, out in the district.

He would begin early. If only he could lock his *daftar* door and retire to the privacy of an inner room; but that might be an occasion for stumbling with one of these little ones. How would some timid, inquiring soul understand that the missionary within was tremendously busy? His only interpretation of such a situation would be lack of love and interest on the part of the *Sahib*. From Faqir Masih he had learned what might be the consequence of such an act. Letters or no letters, his door must remain open to all comers whenever possible. So, write he would; and still be accessible to the people for whom he had come to India. His fingers, with a trained touch, raced against the fear of impending interruption.

There! . . . the report to his board off the typewriter; an article for publication polished and ready for despatch; a message to "Beloved All," sealed in the name of his mother, for circulation among the scattered family-members in America. Then, the rattle of the chain on the outside of the door . . . His first caller. After a short interview, tactfully and without offence, he would excuse this visitor.

But now came a familiar, gentle tapping; so, with a half-drawn sigh, and a regretful glance at his typewriter, he called in a cordial tone: "Enter, *Padri Sahib Ji!*" Something of importance would bring the native pastor at this hour. Faqir Masih had never acquired a conversational use of the English, so they talked in the Urdu.

“Well, Padri — any news of our friend, ‘the Whirlwind’? He almost blew us out of the Bazaar yesterday with his invectives against the disciples of the Lord.”

In quiet, measured tones the Padri replied, “It seems this defender of the faithful has assumed as his contract the defense of the people in this district against what he regards as our blasphemous attacks — which rather honors our efforts, showing the devil is getting worried. Just what his plan of attack will be, no one can foresee; but the violence of his threats has been rumored abroad. I hear he is not only a Maulvie, but a Mufti (one entitled to make weighty decisions in the matter of Mohammedan law and religion). Back in his home in Kabul, his father is one of the chief counsellors of the Amir, and was largely responsible for that barbarous crime of stoning to death those Mirzai followers a year past. While his home is far over the border, he is taking up his abode nearby for the present.”

After another brief interruption, Wallace turned to his colleague and asked: “Well, Padri Sahib, what do you think we had better do? You have had more experience in such affairs, and are well qualified to counsel.”

The elder man replied: “Never yet have we run away from threatened danger, and the Lord has always protected us.”

“Well said, old veteran! Young and old, we will stand together under the banner of our Lord. I could wish, though, that Dr. Mann were here for counsel. No one knows better than he the temper of the frontier people.”

For another half-hour they talked; then came another jangle at the chain, and the familiar, “*Dakwala Hazur*” — and at the door stood the postman, his official red *pagrie* piled carelessly on his head, brass buttons adorning his soiled khaki coat above baggy-kneed khaki trousers, and sockless feet thrust into native sandals. Over one shoulder was slung an ancient leather bag, and behind his ear, the unfailing pencil.

With a friendly smile and *salaam*, he held forth a handful of papers and letters.

Nothing of special importance noted, until — “What, another letter from my sister!” — which caused a shade of anxiety. When one lives half the world away from home and a full month’s journey from his loved ones, an unexpected letter is cause for some apprehension.

“Ah! An air-mail!”

She had caught the air-mail service from England, and so saved ten days’ time.

Now the bell called to eleven-thirty “big breakfast”; and the inside door of the *daftar* opened, and Mrs. Wallace called: “Did you hear the bell, dear?”



His callers departed and George, gathering up his personal mail, followed Edith to the morning meal.

A fine-looking couple they were. Each had volunteered for service in the foreign field independently of the other. This common purpose in life had brought them into an association that later developed into love and union. George was idealistic: he saw things as he thought they should be — a dreamer, whose dreams sometimes came true. Edith, on the other hand, was practical, intensely interested in things as she found them. By association with them, she sought to make them better.

When they reached the table, Edith explained the setting of the extra plate. "I am hoping Dr. Mann will get in soon. You know, he is due here for supplies for his hospital at Sarhad. He certainly needs a little change now and then. Think of his living out there, absolutely alone so far as association with his own kind is concerned."

She was interrupted by George, who had opened his sister's letter.

"Hip hooray! Listen to this! Margaret is coming to see us! She has booked on one of the round-the-world cruisers and is taking a side trip off up here. Now at last you can meet her. She is the best sister a fellow ever had: you know she saw me through college. You and she are going to be fine friends. I've often wished she could be out here to help in this work. I could never quite understand her atti-

tude toward foreign missions — she is of a type one would expect to be keen on missions, if not actually a missionary herself, but I recall she once faced a call to India and turned it down. She would have made good at it, too, just as she has in her art.”

“What a welcome surprise!” exclaimed Edith. “We must plan out her time here, and make it as interesting and enjoyable as possible. Perhaps we can pry Dr. Mann away from his hospital long enough to be sociable for a change. But, George, when is she coming? Where is she landing, and how long can she stay?”

George referred again to the letter. “Let’s see — sailing in August — a month in European ports — a brief stop in Egypt — a run up to Palestine — then straight to Bombay. Due to land there about the middle of October. There is just time to get a letter off to the U. S. A. This trip must have been a very sudden decision, or she would have written earlier. Listen! There is the chug of Mann’s motorcycle coming in the drive now!”

Both the Wallaces left the table and hurried to the door to welcome their guest.

## CHAPTER III

The figure that came up the drive was a bit above average height and powerfully built, yet kept in the trim of an athlete. His hair was dark brown, in its rather unruly waving revealing a tint of auburn. His features were set in a serious mold, indicating a strength of control and inner peace; yet, underlying this, one might trace lines which bespoke a genial humor and good fellowship, yet overlaid by a repression, as though he had passed through some crisis which had stricken out the gaiety, leaving the indelible impression of a struggle that had purified and ennobled his entire being. It was this repression that Edith had noted intuitively, and with sisterly solicitude, was studying to set free again. She had sensed in him a soul that had found peace as the reward of victory, gained only by entire dependence upon his God. The Indian people were drawn to Dr. Mann because he loved them and was giving his life for their betterment, physically and spiritually.

When the three friends were seated at the table, Edith placed before Dr. Mann the *suji* — a sort of cream-of-wheat — while they waited before taking the next course. The conversation turned to the exciting letter and the sister's coming visit. Ernest Mann had taken no part in the discussion, but Edith sought to include him in her plans.

“Dr. Mann, don’t you think you are going to keep in the background on this occasion! You are a member of the family circle and you can just consider this a family matter!”

And Ernest, in his quiet, sincere way, made reply: “Thank you indeed for your hospitality and the privilege of membership in your family circle. I appreciate it deeply. But doings of the nature you are now planning are not in my line. I belong to the hospital — to Sarhad, and to the frontier. I hope, however, during your sister’s month here, to get in and pay my humble respects to her, and, along with that, I extend an invitation for you all to come out for a day at Sarhad. More than this, I cannot promise.”

It was three that afternoon before George was again seated at his typewriter, his sister’s letter before him. His fingers, with the unconscious speed of an expert, raced with his thoughts as he wrote of their excitement and pleasure at the prospect of her coming, and of some plans for her time on the frontier. He gave her suggestions regarding her proposed trip and some instructions for landing and travel up-country. Then came an interruption at the door.

This time it was a man whom he had never seen before. He entered hesitatingly, as if uncertain of a welcome. Carefully closing the door, he came and sat on the floor by the missionary’s desk, instead of on the chair set conveniently for such visitors. He

was not noticeably poor in appearance, but George had seen men before who came from the villages and, for the first time, appeared in the presence of a European. He recognized the humility and diffidence of this lowly seat and divined, from past experience, the probable nature of the request.

Wallace glanced at his watch. He could give this man just twenty minutes, then excuse himself without offence and still rush his letter to the mail.

The stranger, a farmer from a village nearby, owned a small plot of his own, still held in common with his brothers. He began: "Last week, Sahib Ji, I heard you preaching in the bazaar and I thought maybe you could help me. I am all ready to become a Christian."

"Why do you want to become a Christian?" Wallace questioned.

"Oh, they have good teachings, and — well — I just want to become a Christian."

"Yes; that is all right, but by becoming a Christian what do you gain?"

"Oh, it tells you to be good; it's a good religion."

"Yes. True. But what is there good about this that is not in other religions? They all tell you to be good. What is there in Christianity that you want? Do you know anything about Christ?"

"He was a prophet."

"True again: but all Mohammedans believe that about Him. What would it profit you to become a

Christian?" Already, in his short missionary experience, George had met several of this type. Either, in their simplicity, the Spirit was drawing them beyond their understanding, or there was some ulterior motive lurking behind the professed desire. Still, one could not be sure. Better not offend; he might be one of the little ones seeking light, and, if turned away now, be caused to stumble.

George glanced at his watch. He must get this letter off to his sister. "If you wish to learn about Christ and the gospel, come tomorrow and join a class we have here, and, if you will excuse me now, I have some necessary work that I must get off. I'll call my *Babu*, who lives here on the compound, and he will begin your teaching right away."

Wallace rose, but now the look and speech of the man became positive. "Sahib Ji, there is one other little thing, too. My brother has been arrested for killing a man. Of course it is all a false case brought by his enemies. He couldn't harm anyone, let alone kill a man. Please write a letter to the deputy commissioner and persuade him to set my brother free — or, better, if you would go and see the commissioner yourself, he would be sure to let him go."

So, here was the ulterior motive. Not the division of property with his brother, nor the ridding himself of one wife and the getting of another; not the finding of a job, nor "taking a debt" of money. This poor fellow, in his simplicity, had thought that if he

would offer to become a Christian, surely the Sahib would do this little thing for him.

It took another precious ten minutes to convince the man that this was not the missionary's province in India. "I have no right to approach any civil officer with such a request," George said finally. "Come back tomorrow, and we will pray for your brother."

But the man, seeing the hopelessness of his scheme, withdrew, muttering, "The injustice of this *Sahib Log* — who wouldn't do even this much for one. I had even offered to become a *kafir*, and he wouldn't hear. What trouble to have written just a few lines! It doesn't matter that my brother was guilty of killing a man; the commissioner would have believed the Padri and my brother would be set free. Oh, the injustice and hard hearts of these Christians, who preach love and helpfulness, then refuse to get us out of trouble!"

Before the door had closed, George had snatched the paper from the machine, with the last paragraph half written, scrawling across the bottom of the page: "Time up. Interrupted. Love, George."

Sealing, addressing, stamping it, with the timed efficiency of long practice, he gathered all the letters into his coat pocket, seized his *topi*, rushed out of the door, mounted his always-waiting bicycle, and pedaled with an unSahib-like haste toward the office. His watch marked five minutes past the closing time. He rushed to the window, asking if he were on time.

“No. Ten minutes late. Foreign mail closes, you know, at five-thirty.” Having delivered himself of this official declaration, the man on duty reached through the window for Wallace’s letters, with the remark, “But you are a Sahib, so I’ll take them and get them in the bag. No, don’t mention it. It’s nothing — you are a Sahib.”



## CHAPTER IV

The hot season in the semi-hill station at Lashkara was never excessive, and, except for a month's holiday in the higher hills of Kashmir, the Wallaces ceased not their labor of love among the people they sought to win. They were occupied with the routine of busy days, crowded full with the usual duties, and things unexpected as well. Then came the annual fall conventions and conferences, with the business meeting of the mission. So passed the days on that far northern border of British Hindustan, and October was now at hand.

Across the border, too, in independent territory, beyond the ken of the missionaries or the civil and military authorities, time in its passing was bringing to a climax the activities and instigations of a Maulvie — a Maulvie tall, massive, proud, with bristling, black beard. In his hand was clenched a mighty staff, his eyes flashing in bigoted fury, as in secret and cunning wiles, he sought out the ignorant, excitable tribesmen, stirring them to fever heat with a call to "the defense of the faithful."

Dr. Ernest Mann, in the mission hospital at Sarhad, on the farthest north frontier, had finished his program of early morning operative cases in the clinic of the dispensary, and left the remainder to his Indian Christian assistant, Khair Din Khan. This converted Pathan had taken medical training in King Edward

Medical College, and had proved himself a dependable, responsible assistant.

Throwing off his surgeon's gown, Mann followed the winding, flower-bordered path across the hospital compound, and through a high hedge of lime bushes that screened his own bungalow from curious gaze. Entering the *daftar* of his bachelor apartment, he was handed a bunch of mail.

Seated in his much-worn office chair, surrounded by an accumulation of books and medical implements, he selected a letter which he recognized as coming from his nearest missionary associates and closest friends in India. With little thought of impending events, he read:

Dear Solitary Mann:

You will recall being here in June, when that letter was received from George's sister, telling of her side-trip up to the frontier for a month's visit. Well, she actually arrived yesterday and we are both enthusiastic about her and planning a little celebration in her honor. We simply must have 'our Hermit' here, and don't forget that you have promised to come in for at least one formal occasion. Now do be human and sociable for a change, and as a special favor to myself, won't you come in next Thursday night for dinner? Then, remember, too, you have promised us a

day at Sarhad. Could we come out for a sight of your work and a picnic in your 'Spot' above the compound? Please come along.

Yours,

Edith Wallace.

The solitary man read and reflected on his shortcomings since devoting himself to the Lashkara Frontier. He *had* been of a rather unsociable character. He *did* owe it to Edith and George to be decent and go Thursday night. Well, a card would reach them in time. This was only Monday. Across the card he scrawled only — "The Mann is coming (D. V.) on his faithful iron donkey, about tea-time Thursday."

Thursday noon came, after a hard morning's round of clinic work. Ernest finished his simple lunch, changed to a khaki suit for the dusty ride, called his house-servant to roll up his bedding — for in India the European custom is to carry with you your own *bistar*, even to your best friend's home. Then, packing his case with a change of clothes and overnight things, he saw them stored in the side-car of his faithful motorcycle machine. It was his only steed, this machine, and scarcely the height of a donkey, but capable of great power and speed, for, as a doctor and a lone European, in an outpost some forty miles beyond the northernmost cantonment, he must count on this iron donkey to carry him with the greatest despatch wherever wheels could find a path.

Already he was astride, with foot on the kick-starter, when the voice of his assistant from the dispensary steps hailed him. "Dr. Sahib! Just now a Khan from across the border has been brought in, shot in the back by his life enemy. He's in bad shape. Can you wait and operate on him before you go?"

He would be late at the Wallaces, but a man suffering and in need must be cared for. An hour of concentrated skill and effort, and the bullet was defeated of its purpose, and this strange Khan was resting for the first time under the care and protection of a Christ-induced love, where, in the days to come, he would hear the strangest and most unPathan-like teaching, couched in the phrase, "Love your enemies."

Then the doctor's professional absorption gave way to the social call of his friends. With the satisfaction of service well performed, at last he was off. Through the sunset glow and the early dusk he sped along, sensitive to the familiar beauties of the way, over mountain and valley and mountain again. An unusual exhilaration filled his soul, and he sang as he had once sung in lighter, freer days.

Through the cantonment, under the oil lamps, shining like huge glowworms, he followed the beam of his own headlight, until it brought out in blank brightness the mission church at the foot of the hill. Here, under the care of the church watchman, he left his machine, and changed to his good black suit dating back to his graduation from medical school.

Leaving an order to fetch up his bag and bedding, he struck off in advance. The swing and elation of the song and ride still pulsing through his being, he turned in through the gateway, silently following the curving line of the driveway. Then, from behind the bordering trees and shrubbery, he came into full view of the bungalow, a home such as he had once hoped for.

In his jungle bachelor quarters, and in the absorption of his chosen work, this home-instinct had long been suppressed, but tonight the sight of the brightness and cheer of his friends' fireside, radiant even through the half-drawn curtains, strangely affected him. He, Ernest Mann, the bachelor doctor and frontier missionary, was experiencing a homesick longing for a home. Edith, had she known of his sudden change in sentiment, would have said that he was now a normal human being. Suddenly he started, and took a step nearer the light.

Seated within, he could discern the form of one who had pervaded his whole life ten years before. No! It could not be! This must be that visiting sister! Just then George came into the room and spoke to her, and, as she replied, the lift of her head, the gesture of her hand, stabbed the heart of the silent watcher. He called himself a sentimental fool to become so excited over a chance resemblance of this stranger to the one he had loved and lost.

George turned and came to the casement windows that framed the great double doors, and looked out

across the shaded light of the deep verandah. He was watching for his belated guest. Then, as Ernest came into the full light of the hanging lamps, George threw wide the doors in hearty welcome.

“Come in, old man! Late, but not too late for dinner. Here we are, Margaret. Here is the hero of our missionary tales. Let me present him in his own magnificent person!”

Margaret turned deliberately, with the determined manner of one about to come unavoidably in contact with the shock of a live wire, for she had been warned and was prepared to face the ordeal. But Ernest, his face suddenly white under the strain of conflicting emotions, could only gasp — “Why — why — I thought you said your *sister!* How can this be Margaret McCune?”

George, his light, bantering manner checked for the moment, could only stare in amazement from one to the other. “What’s this! You two already know each other? I thought I was going to be stage-director in this introduction. Wherever have you met? Ernest, Margaret *is* my sister, the daughter of my own mother — but I came along in the family after her father died and our mother had married my father.”

The dinner table was beautiful and artistic, for Edith had that magic touch in producing effects pleasing to the eye. The polished, oval *shisham*-wood table, its deep-red, shining surface laid out with Kashmiri embroidered doilies and Irish linen napkins, was set in the midst of a room that in an ordinary

American home would be of gigantic proportions. The glistening silver, the high-branching candlesticks and a great, overflowing bowl of home-grown roses, gave a finishing touch to the whole. An Indian bearer, white-coated, white-pagried, black-bearded, but bare-footed, served with silent efficiency dishes prepared by the *consoma* who himself would not know the taste of this American cooking.

But this dinner hour was a disappointment to Edith. Ernest, after the first unguarded and betrayed emotion, strove to maintain a normal part in the conversation. Margaret, too, was reserved, adding but little to the mutual enjoyment of this dinner party. Neither Edith nor George could account for this formal, dignified attitude of their guests.

Following the after-dinner coffee, served in European style in the drawing room, and when the minimum requirements of courtesy could release him without offence, Ernest, pleading the heavy past day with its unusual round of activities, withdrew, reminding them of their promise to spend the next day with him at Sarhad. He must get alone to think through this unexpected turn of affairs.

## CHAPTER V

Not even the quiet of his room was sufficient for the ordeal through which Ernest must pass that night; so, when the house had become quiet, he drew on a heavy roll-back sweater, anticipating the chill of this October night — but the sight of this garment brought another stab of memory. In his finishing year at medical school he had worn it proudly because of its insignia of athletic supremacy, with Margaret's glowing face bespeaking her pride in his double achievement. Catching up his powerful surgeon's flashlight, he quietly withdrew into the night.

Dr. Mann had developed lonely social habits not in keeping with his natural temperament, but which had brought him nearer to the One for Whom he had sacrificed selfish desires and ambitions — the One for Whom he had enlisted in this service, in which he had attained and experienced a peace and poise, a conscious sense of joy and satisfaction, knowing that he was in the line of God's will and favor. Now, with this impending crisis before him, he knew only one source of strength and timely aid. To that aid he must go.

He had spent a year here at Eliotsharar, at the beginning of his missionary career, when planning the opening at Sarhad, and knew a retreat several



hundred feet farther up the hills. With the untiring stride of an athlete in good training, he climbed, passing first through a group of dark-green pines, then still upward by a steeper, rockier path, to a long ridge of the fortifying hills, where, from one of the lonely peaks, he could look down, a thousand feet below, upon the darkened, sleeping city, nestled in the foothills. At the entrance to a cave-like opening in the rocks was a stone bench. Here he had often come to think and pray over plans, now happily realized in the building and organization of the work to which he had dedicated his life.

Tonight, however, his thoughts were in the past, and he reviewed the years which this night's events brought back so vividly before him. Ten years, now, had passed since he had parted from Margaret McCune, following his decision for medical work in India. He had answered the call. She, with ability and perhaps a touch of genius, felt her call to an individual, active expression in the home land. The wild frontiers of India voiced no appeal to her; so, with breaking hearts, there had come the parting of the paths. Once only, when home on furlough, he had seen her seated in the rear of the hall, but she had left immediately after his address. He had heard of her achievement and success in her chosen career. Apparently absorbed in her profession, she had spoken at the dinner-table of her work, with no visible regrets that their paths had been so widely separated.

Once she had loved him, and before his call to India they had planned home and life together. After these years he had hoped the heart wounds were healed and was rejoicing in a sacrificial service for his Lord and Master, counting the renunciation no longer a sacrifice. But tonight these wounds had opened afresh, and a second time he was called to face a temptation that was bringing extreme anguish of soul. It might not be too late to resign his work here and return with her to America. The passage of time had but increased the yearning of his lonely soul for that companionship they had once planned together. Might he not find joy in Christian service in the home land?

For an hour he agonized in prayer for strength to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit; then, stretching upon the cold stone bench, he slept from sheer exhaustion, only to awaken and renew the battle — for out of the unconscious depths of sleep had come visions of home and joy with her.

Never again could he relegate, even to his subconscious mind, the memory of her. He looked out over the moonlit valley upon familiar objects — his adventure, for which he had spent long hours in supplication at this same retreat. Slowly their significance penetrated his heart. He was here at the call of his Lord, to a people suffering and dying without a knowledge of eternal life — a people in hopeless darkness, and he, the sole messenger of the light.

Then, with a steadiness of determined purpose, and a calm in his heart, as the result of his whole-hearted surrender, this crushing problem now solved, he descended the mountain and reached the bungalow before the moon had lost its radiance in the coming dawn.

Only the cook was stirring sleepily in the preparation of the "little breakfast" of tea and toast, to be served to his mistress and her guests when they would awaken. Slipping in quietly, Ernest threw himself on the bed for a half-hour's relaxation. Then, up — a hot bath and cold splash in the open-drained corner of the bathroom, after which he joined the family at its first morning meal.

## CHAPTER VI

Mann's splendid, powerful body, physically fit, trained in a doctor's practice to short and broken hours of rest, had absorbed, without apparent trace, the strain and tension of the past night. He had found rest in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and now, with the uncertainty of conflicting emotions removed, he could meet and talk with Margaret in terms of friendly fellowship. He could not again ask her to become one with him, but God, in His love, and in answer to his wrestling prayer, would enable him to keep, in the secret recesses of his heart, this conscious, recognized love for her — a purified, sacred love.

George and Edith marvelled at the sudden transformation of this strong man of silent ways and devoted service, who had developed overnight a characteristic entirely new to them, which Edith was quick to notice.

“You must have had a good rest last night, Dr. Mann. I thought last night you looked tired and worn. We must not allow our one doctor — our ‘Honorable One’ — to wear himself out. Come along with us, these days when Margaret is here, and let's recreate a bit. You haven't taken a vacation since we first came — let's see, two years ago, isn't it? Today,

at least, you have promised to take us for a visit and picnic to your 'Spot' above your hospital."

Oh, "these days when Margaret is here," looked very glorious! Margaret would never know the joy and blessing her presence brought him, though evidently she had not retained her love for him. So, this morning, he looked into her eyes untroubled by doubt or question, with a gaze unbetrayed in its frankness.

"Margaret," he said, "Edith here has been a good little sister to me, and I have been rather unresponsive to her concern. She is right. According to mission ruling, a vacation is due me." Then, raising his hand in half-salute, the Eastern gesture of courtly obeisance, "In honor of your visit, and for old times' sake, I shall put myself entirely under Edith's orders."

Margaret, from behind her own impersonal, friendly attitude, was thinking, "He is just the same, with his gallantry and humor, his earnestness of purpose—but is he the same? — the same toward me? I believe he sees me only as an old friend. The very unaffectedness of his manner means a lack of his former love. I have been drawn to India because he still holds supreme place in my heart, although I did not, would not, recognize it in my foolish ambition. Dear God, if it be Thy plan and purpose to bring us together again as one, Thy will be done!"

So she replied, as if in mutual agreement with his own humor: "Now you are more like the Mann I used to know. Surely, I second Edith's motion. Let us all vacation a bit this month. Besides, I want to see this wonderful work you are doing in this remote frontier. When I return home, I shall want to be able to tell at first hand what I have learned of your project."

So she spoke, and Ernest could not discern that Margaret, sitting there by his side, was thinking, thinking only of him.

The old Ford car was ready, the lunch packed, and they were off, with a freedom and wholesome pleasure such as can be seldom found.

Mann left his "iron donkey" in its stall, and sat with George in the front seat, as guide and announcer to the party, pointing out objects of interest, and recounting the tales and legends of the district as he had heard them told by the people. The snow peaks in the distance, one of them with a gently sloping roof ("The Carpet of Moses," it was called); a horse-shoe, loop on loop, as it wound down before them, and again up to the top of the steep grade; a picturesque bridge far down in the valley; an old, stupa-shaped object, the boundary-pillar of some long-forgotten ruler of this region; a village, nestled in a bend of the hills, where Dr. Mann had been entertained most lavishly by the Khan who was practical owner of the entire mountainside.

This Khan had confessed to Dr. Mann a secret belief in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Then followed the story of how he had seen and experienced the love of Christ exemplified in an unknown Englishman.

When motors were still a rarity on this frontier, the Khan had bought one, and, not familiar with its requirements, he had found himself stranded far out from any source of supplies, with an empty tank. Stranded, he waited for relief. A magnificent, high-priced car was approaching and he recognized in it a noted religious and political leader, one with whom he had personal acquaintance. The Khan stepped forward and signalled for help, but this priest, this Levite, turned with affected indifference, and passed by in a whirling blanket of dust.

Again the man in need at the side of the road lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, from another direction came a car, not so fine; and as it came closer, the Khan saw an Englishman sitting at the wheel. "So," he said, "I stepped back, for, as an Indian, I didn't even consider the presumption of asking for help." But the car drew up beside him and a friendly voice called out, "Can I do anything for you? A gallon of petrol? Here you are; I have an extra tin. You are welcome," and the Englishman slid in the clutch of his car and moved off, calling as he went: "Nothing at all! Some day I may have the same need, so I do it now for you."

Unforgettably, the kindness of this deed had lived, taken root in the man's memory, and had borne fruit, for he said, "Only the love of Jesus Christ could make an unknown Englishman stop on his journey and give so freely and graciously a gallon of petrol to an Indian."

The guide continued his sight-seeing narration of the moving panorama before them.

"There. See that promontory of high, level ground? It is protected on both sides by those steep-dropping sides of the rugged ravine. There are the ruins of an old Sikh fortress, reminiscent of the times, a hundred years ago, when these war-like followers of the ten Gurus drove the Pathan lords of this land across the border into strange territory. Many of these powerful, feudal-like Moslem chiefs were again restored, with restricted rights, to their possessions, after the occupation by the British some thirty or forty years later. This particular piece of land, with the ruins of the old fort on it, is now part of the inheritance of the great-grandson of the Khan who claimed possession, in those former days, of a large stretch of this country through which we are now so peacefully passing. This great-grandson, Aziz Khan, got interested through hearing some 'bazaar preaching', and spent a whole decade in private reading of the Bible. At last, about eight years ago now, he went down to the Punjab and made his profession and was baptized. On his first return to his home — there you can see



his village now, right over there, that large one, do you see it? — up on the far slope, close in to the steep, rising hills? Well, on his first return home, his own brother attacked him, his mother cursed him and called his servants to take the axe and chop him down. But the servants had an inbred awe and respect for their Khan, even if he had become a ‘blasphemer’. Besides, they had eaten his salt, and so they refused. The old mother, in her unnatural rage, then commanded Aziz Khan’s own son, almost a grown man then, to use the axe on his father. He took it, but struck gently, with the blunt end of the axe. The old lady then cursed the boy, too, until he turned the sharp edge, and with a heavy blow across the small of the back struck down his father. Brought to her senses and a more natural mother’s affections by the Khan’s fall and the sight of her son’s blood, she gathered him up and they tended him tenderly until he was well. Thus, by this scar, some six inches in length, branding him as Jesus’, Aziz Khan won the freedom of his own house as a Christian. And now, the most recent development after all these years — just this last spring — this son, at first with a shame that hardly allowed him to speak in the presence of his father, stood up to share with him the reproach of the Christian profession.”

## CHAPTER VII

Two-thirds or more of the road to Sarhad had rolled past and had thus been characterized, when Ernest turned to George with the suggestion, "Take us over for a few minutes to our 'view' — it's not much out of our way, and we can see Sarhad from a distance and get a good idea of the surrounding country."

A side road led off through a maze of great, rough boulders, many the size of a room, or some even of a whole house — boulders piled high in confusion and disorder as might be a handful of gravel tossed carelessly over an uneven surface. Leaving the car guarded between two of these immovable giants, they advanced on foot out to the very edge of a precipitous hill, and there, as from the rim of a crater, they looked down and over and across what from this height seemed but a level plain some twenty miles in length and ten in width.

At first glance, as with an instantaneous exposure, the picture impressed itself on their vision, only its magnificence registering on their consciousness without the close focus of detail. The beauty and grandeur of it and its setting rarely failed to hold all observers, whether old or new, in awed silence for a while. Only involuntary ejaculations gave audible expression to their appreciation.

Evidently the bed of a great mountain lake of pre-historic times, it was walled all around by hills, with only a narrow gorge cut through, off far to the left, where the river Darya now drains its waters to the Indus. Hills there were — on this side, comparatively low, barren, brown, and rock-strewn; far to the right, a double pine-clad ridge hemming in the plain and forming the water-shed between the Indus and the Jhelum; then opposite and semi-circling the plain, a long line, range behind range, climbing in terraces, thousands of feet from one height to another, from low brown through dark green, on up to the dazzling whiteness of snows that never melt.

In appreciation of this view, Margaret and Ernest were as one, for even more than the younger companions, the souls of these two were exalted with nature's beauty — God's beauty — so lavishly bestowed. None spoke.

After a while, however, George's ever-urgent dramatic instinct broke through their reverie. With an oratorical gesture, he announced: "Behold, Margaret — The Field of Mann! There is the scene of the services of our hero. What now lies within the vision of your eyes is his domain for the Lord's service. From here come the sick, the maimed, the lame, the blind — and also from here, but more especially from over there amongst those foothills of that grandeur, come the wounded — men shot unto death by their fellow-men. Why is it that in the midst of the marvels and

beauty of nature, the grandest God has ever made, we find the worst traits of human character? Kashmir, lying just across that snow-range to the right — Kashmir, that beautiful vale of the poets, and the ultimate goal of all tourists, is noted even amongst its neighbors, who themselves have little reputation, as the land of lying, cheating, every kind of meanness and petty crime. These barren, brown frontier hills off this other way, hide century-old feuds of hate, murder, and rapine — every kind of crime of violence.

“So here we have, in this Field of Mann, a little Kashmir closely surrounded by the grimmer, bloodier aspects of crime. Is there any place more devoid of beauty of the soul — any place more needful of the love and teachings of Christ? Here serves our Mann, healing their bodies and setting before them the way of life. What a field!

“Ernest — ” George continued, “point out to us the objects of special interest, and then — ” with a thought for the day and its further program, “for the present we must be on our way.”

Under the index finger of this doctor of bodies and souls, the map-like expanse before them, which had been only plain and valley and mountain, now became vitalized in its human significance. Over one hundred thousand people lived and labored before them, for this plain, though at an elevation of some three thousand feet, was one of the most fertile and tillable and densely-populated sections of the whole

province. Villages, small and large, became real places of habitation of people on this map, unreduced in size except by the perspective of distance. Twenty-three villages could be discerned with the unaided eye, and many more were hidden from sight.

But straight across was *the* village of villages — Sarhad. Yes, it was of pre-eminence because of its importance as the center of his field; also because, though with its ten thousand inhabitants it rivalled in size any city in the district, in manners and customs and lack of sanitation and modern improvements it was still really only a village. There it spread out, ten miles away, along the far bank of the river, narrowed into a long line by the close-crowding hills.

“Here, Margaret, take my glasses,” offered Ernest, “and you can see the hospital itself — set there above the dirt and smells and noises. There, you see? — in that clump of green, off a bit to the left of the center . . . But come — George is right — we must be going.”

They swooped down from their height and out along the ribbon of a road, bordered here and there by trees — the thorny *kikar*, the Punjabi *shisham*, the mulberry, and now and then the tall, straight poplar, or even the eucalyptus. Through fields on fields, crazy-quilt in their small size and irregular patchwork, and at this season lying mostly barren, newly-ploughed for the wheat, except that here and there still stood rather stunted varieties of corn in shocks —

down they swooped and across a tributary stream draining the upper levels to the river Darya. Then up they soared onto a more gently-sloping plateau level, where the fields were terraced and enclosed with a low "band" to maintain a water-level. Across, and down, and up: three such *nullahs* were thus crossed where, in the hill-top view, all had looked as level as a floor.

At last their motor course was stopped by the unbridged, turbulent waters of the Darya. Here, on its nearer bank, an empty room in a small line of shops served as a garage.

## CHAPTER VIII

From here on Ernest became complete master-of-ceremonies. He turned to his guest-of-honor, and with a boyishness such as certainly he had never displayed in this locality before, he offered her her choice .

“Margaret, how will you navigate this stream? There are many ways; you may choose whichever you wish. The usual plebeian manner you may see even now in common use . . . just slip off your shoes and stockings, and then with carefully venturesome feet, slipping and catching, you feel your way across the boulders, two feet under that foaming surface. Or, if you are an aristocrat, like that Khan out there half-way across, or even if you think you are, you get one of these washboard-ribbed, pony-sized horses, such as these men are pressing you to take. Or, if you are a bride, or old, or sick, or otherwise greatly enfeebled or incompetent, you ride in a rude palanquin, or on top of a *charpai*, like the palsied man that was borne by four before Jesus. So now, my lady, what will you have?”

“Of all you have mentioned, that of bride sounds best to me, but since I don't know of anybody that will take me that way, and since to be 'common' in this manner might not be decent for a 'European

lady', I suppose I had best consider myself an aristocrat and mount one of these raw-boned steeds. But tell me, what do you do when you get out there in the middle and the horse itself plunges for a foothold — how do you hold on? Ernest, you'll have to come by my side and give me a hand."

And so it was arranged. All plans seemed predestined to throw him into close personal contact with her. But the thrill that pulsed through him at thus being again her close escort was unobserved in either his manner or expression.

Across the river, they climbed a steep, stair-like roadway into the lower, and accordingly poorer, section of the town. Ernest had purposely chosen this shorter way at Margaret's request to "see the town", instead of leading them by the circuitous route outside the edge of the village, which always he took with his cycle. This *mohalla* of Sarhad was set on one great outcropping of rock — acres in extent — so that the streets here, though rough, had a natural paving of stone, and the mud-walled, mud-plastered buildings on both sides had a more substantial appearance than is usual in a village. This paving of stone, however, was unappreciated by the human dwellers on either side, and its natural advantages were wasted.

The passages were twisting and narrow, and these four travellers had to pick their steps carefully to avoid the filth of the household drains that collected in green-scummed, slimy, bubbly puddles, or seeped



its slippery, smeary way from side to side along this common passageway and made of it an open sewer. In the midst of it all, children playing — children of human beings; mangy, starving dogs, slinking about in search of a morsel of foul food with some nourishment in it, or, infested with sores, lying as dead and indifferent in the public way; at times cattle and laden donkeys crowding other traffic close to a protecting wall; men sitting, unkempt and uncaring, staring from a doorway or recess of a wall; women, of the lower class, with *chadar* pulled modestly over the face, or more brazenly exposing their features to the unclean gaze of the men. Once a woman passed, closely shrouded from top of head to feet, trailing filth but covering her skirts in the *burkha* of the higher class Moslem women — the wife of some Khan. Such were the sights, accompanied by a mixture of indescribable smells, which only the East can produce. These introduced Margaret to village life, which was as yet unaffected by European contact.

Nauseated, she forced a control of her physical reflexes and her soul cried out within her, “Oh God, can these be my fellow men, and these their habitations? Is this the need that ‘my Mann’ has seen? Is this the call that has held him true to India, and for which he would give his service in life unto death?”

Ernest, seeing the whiteness of her face and sensing the revulsion of her being, fended off to the other side a procession of oxen laden with firewood, and spoke reassuringly, “Steady now, my friend; hold

tight, and we'll pull through this and up into God's own free air again."

A little higher up, their way opened out into the slightly wider passage through the bazaar. The shops, uneven in height, and irregular in frontage, crowded so close one upon the other that each had scarcely the space of a cubby-hole. Here, traffic conditions were complicated even more by the usual crowd of buyers and hangers-around, while under foot the obnoxious lack of sanitation became more revolting because of its proximity to the food supplies of the town. But most distressing of all was the complete indifference of the people themselves to this which meant their sickness and death.

Many shops there were, displaying the necessities of Indian life. From the floor-level at the door, inclining steeply to the wall at the back, such wares were displayed, tier on tier, with only a narrow passageway kept partially clear in the midst. *Ata*, the coarse, whole-wheat flour, the staple food of the Punjab, was heaped in a smooth-surfaced, high cone, with its base in an open, shallow, native-woven basket; rice, also in great quantities, grown locally, down by the river-side, down in those hundreds and thousands of little inundated fields; *dal*, a pulse of different kinds, lay rounded out in great basketsful, yellow, reddish, and deep-red; salt, piled in one corner in great, pinkish rocks, just as it had been mined in the salt range in Jhelum District, and distributed throughout the country; vegetables, however, except

the onion, turnip, and greens of some kinds, were scarcely to be found.

Other shops showed walls on three sides, lined with rough shelves, piled high with cloths and bright colors — the plain white *khaddar*, a coarse-texture home-spun of Gandhi fame; more evident, the high-piled bolts on bolts of manufactured materials — cotton from Indian, English, and Japanese mills; silks and imitation silks from Kashmir, or *walayats*, gaudy in their brightness; also, woollens from the great mills at Cawnpore or Dhariwal.

Toward the center of the bazaar was a series of three or four shops with a sort of enlarged shelf in each, extending out from the room itself — out over the right-of-way and elevated a bit over the stench of the drain. Arrays of cups and saucers, wonderful in their variety of shapes, sizes, and conditions, indicated “tea-shops” or restaurants. The guests sat squatted in informal and disorderly fashion on the floor, supping with vacuous, guzzling noises the hot liquid, and slopping it with lack of all concern on the planks of their platform. The proprietors, within the dark, smoke-filled room, also squatted, flat-footed, at their work over the *chulas* — fireplaces composed of but a U-shaped formation of stone and dried mud, lying flat on the floor and only some eight or nine inches in height. There was no sign of a chair or table in the place. Here could be bought a full meal for only two *annas*.

The whirr of sewing-machines caught the attention of the stranger, and a hasty glance snatched from the uneven passage before her, revealed men, some four or five of them crowded in side by side, squatting in the universal fashion, each plying with one fast, whirling hand the wheel of a hand-driven machine, while the other guided with incredible dexterity yards upon yards of billowing material beneath the almost invisible needle.

But the agglomeration of shops was incomprehensible to her who had so shortly come from the great stores of New York. Ernest, however, seemed to her to be immune, by long association, to these soul-disgusting conditions, for he picked his way with apparent inattention and with a quiet smile, a *salaam*, and maybe an exchange of remarks in the "unintelligible language". He greeted many who were friends — many who had reason to be friends — for they owed their own health and their lives or that of their families to his skill. But more than that, these friends had come to appreciate the character of him who practiced daily before them the observance of the First and Second Commandments, the summary of the whole law. They had come to love him because he had first loved them. Many also, however, were the hostile glares that were flung toward the doctor. This frontier, fanatic population had gradually become reconciled to the presence of this tall, kindly, yet powerful *hakim*, who after all did no one any harm but went about doing good. But what did

this mean — bringing a whole party of these “blasphemous” foreigners in with him through their bazaar?

George and Edith followed behind, still sensitive to the degradation of their surroundings, but enough inured in their three years’ service that it no longer threatened to upset their constitutions.

At last they turned off abruptly from the line of the bazaar and again upward, they climbed as at the first, squeezed by close-crowding dwellings. But the passage here, because higher, was also a bit cleaner. The houses, too, were those of the rich and of the official class, who invariably in village life rise as cream to the highest level. Soon, now, they emerged from what seemed to Margaret an untraceable labyrinth, into the open of a public space — the courtyard of the Government Anglo-Vernacular Middle School of Sarhad.

Now Margaret gasped a great, long-drawn breath of clean air to purify her lungs and then looked back and down. She saw only the roofs, low and flat and mud-plastered, of innumerable houses, rising in irregular series from the river bank, to end in near perspective at her feet. Only here and there in the upper tier was a house more pretentious and more modern, rising an extra story above the common level and topped with a ridge roof of galvanized iron.

At her gasp, Ernest turned to her with his meaningful, comradely smile and twinkling eyes that spoke

without words his sympathy with her feelings and encouragement for the future.

“That’s ‘the worst done at first’ — now let us leave it all below. Turn around, now, and tell me what you see. There, that plot of green trees and hedges and flowers — that oasis on the side of these barren, rocky hills. There’s the dearest place in all the wide world to me. That, by the Grace of God, has been the material evidence of my work these past seven years. That is home to me. Come, let us see it.”

## CHAPTER IX

Lying above other buildings, and far enough above to be clean and quiet, yet close enough that even the worst sick could be brought to the door for treatment, was set the mission hospital of Sarhad, The Good Samaritan.

As the missionary party came near, walking slowly, looking, and talking, a small procession came to meet them. With a consciousness of its numerical insignificance, and yet with a certain degree of pride, the doctor made introductions to his guest.

“Miss McCune, here come my staff to offer you the freedom of our institution — the key, so to speak — and to pledge themselves in Oriental style to your service and the doing of your will. This fine man, leading, is my assistant, Dr. Khair Din Khan, on whom will fall the heavier burden these next days because of my promise to Edith.”

With a grace and courtesy, inbred by centuries of proud ancestors who excelled all others in their protestations of humility and subjection in the presence of an honored guest, this Pathan, with the added grace of the love of Christ and a genuine humility, offered a dignified but heart-touching expression, in Oriental *salaam* and English words, of his welcome.

“And here,” Ernest continued, “is my man of all jobs, nurse, orderly, hospital bearer, doer of whatever untrained work may be required within the bounds of the hospital. We just call him ‘bearer’, no matter what job we want him for . . . Next is Alladin (pronounced properly, *Allah Din* — not *Aladdin* as in the English *Arabian Nights*). He is my *chaukidar-chapراسي-mali*. Excuse our using so many words you don’t understand, but we get in the habit out here of mixing our languages pretty badly, and adopt a great many Indian words as auxiliary to our English vocabulary. It’s a hard habit to break, and you’ll just have to ask us over again if we are unintelligible. You can call this fellow just my ‘three-in-one’, if you don’t remember all these other words. They mean, though: *Chaukidar*, watchman, the guard of the property; *Chapراسي*: messenger, or errand boy; and *Mali*: the gardener. He has all of these responsibilities. He is not a Christian, but is native to this district and a faithful and reliable servant. . . This fourth chap, here, is the sweeper. He is not native to this province at all, for on the frontier that whole caste — rather, the outcaste — was non-existent in pre-English days. It is only for sanitary purposes, required by European manner of life and European standards of cleanliness, that such as this one have been imported from the Punjab districts. This man is a Christian. His father first came to the frontier from Sialkot thirty-five years ago . . . There, then, you see and know us — these four — and myself, the foreigner, the fifth.”



They had reached the gateway, and as they entered under its simple arch of painted iron-sheeting, which bore the legend

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

they instinctively stopped, and the animated scene before them held them a moment in silence. The buildings, the shrubbery, and the people, who were scattered about over the compound in groups of various sizes, positions and colorings, all together formed, to the uninitiated eyes of the visitor from the West, a blurred, unfocussed picture.

Here, as they stood at the gateway, however, George's oratory, which had been prohibited by the close confines of the streets through which they had passed, now again found scope and with an inclusive flourish of his arm, he began a description.

“Behold, my dear sister, the work of Mann. Seven years ago, this space was as barren as that; but seven years ago our Dr. Mann had a vision. And, lo! he has rubbed the magic of time and hard work, as Aladdin rubbed his lamp, and with his faith in God instead of a *jinni*, those buildings and these beautiful grounds have appeared. To you, from New York, knowing hospitals only in their grimness of six or seven or more stone-fronted stories; with white tiles and great windows, with elevators and rubber-tired wheels; with doctors big and doctors little; with nurses-in-charge and nurses-under-charge; with orderlies and servants; with lands and endowments — to

you, then, this may all seem as child's play. Why, this main building here could be set, with all its native-quarried, coarse-grained, grey granite walls, right into the midst of the forum of some hospitals I have seen. Yet this building contains here the dispensary, consulting room, operating room, drug rooms, store rooms, and all else that is essential to the famous hospital of Sarhad.

“Over there, walling the left side of the compound, that long line of low-roofed rooms, with the verandah stretching all along the front, are the wards. You see the patients on their *charpaies* set out on the verandah, or even strayed clear to the open compound for the air and the sun. Normal capacity says only fifteen beds in the general ward, besides those in the three private quarters up there beyond the end of the line, those encircled with a *pardah* wall, for paying patients. But capacity out here is a most elastic measure. Two years ago, when there was an epidemic of fevers, I counted, inside and out on the verandah, over twice the fifteen . . . Then clear on up there at the far end, above the wards, lives Khair Din, whom you have just met — the doctor's assistant . . . There, now, you have it, then — the whole layout; and do you think it insignificant? Are you saying in your heart, ‘Can this be the hospital, the famous hospital of Sarhad? Is this all there is to it?’ Don't be too quick to set down your measure, for this that you have seen is but the nucleus, the part of the institu-

tion that is apparent to the physical eye. We shall see more.”

By this time, they had approached and ascended the broad stone steps onto the deep, cool verandah, and George, without a hesitation in his enthusiasm, continued, “See — back through these double-doors, back on the far wall of this reception-room, with the light of the *roshandan* falling full on it — there is a picture, almost life-sized, of the ‘Good Samaritan’ performing his ministrations upon the Jewish stranger. That is supposed to represent the spirit of this institution. But the real Good Samaritan that the people of this place know and recognize — (no, Ernest, you keep quiet a while yet and let me get all this out of my system, then I’ll let you lead; but it’s my turn now) — there, then, personified at your side, is the real Good Samaritan of Sarhad. Despised and reviled as a *kafir*, he has come to the aid of those who had persecuted him.

“Sister, you thought you measured with your eyes the short bounds of this hospital? You are mightily mistaken; its bounds are not of stone or of hedge. Its bounds are set in the hearts of men and women and children. Its bounds reach away out along that winding trail over the shoulder of that hill; out across the border into *gair-ilaga*, for many are the suffering ones that find their way down here from independent tribal territory and go back to enlarge the scope of this hospital. Our doctor, here, could pick out for

you in these groups, scattered around just now, those who have come from beyond the reach of the British Raj, and even I could make a pretty good guess at it, according to types of faces, manners, and dress . . . Or look back over this way — there, with the great, overgrown village of Sarhad in the foreground, with the Darya tracing its border, and behold the inverse of the view you had from the hilltop. With the general slope of the fields in this direction, you see more clearly the villages of the plain. And those pine-clad hills, in the background, over which we passed this morning in the motor, form the bounds of this hospital to the southward.

“Survey again all this — these physical means to the ministry of love, the majesty of this view, the place won in the hearts of men — and then tell me, is it little? Is it insignificant? Is it not infinite, and its work eternal?

“But tell me this, also. What in all this is lacking? Ernest lives here alone. Do you think it is right? Is it normal? This Mann of ours thinks he is enough of a man by himself not to need any companion. But in all this institution there is no touch of a woman’s hand, and what a place of service it would be for any woman, by his side! He’s really not a woman-hater — nor even woman-shy — only, it seems that woman, as woman, has never entered and affected his life.”

At this last remark the doctor finally broke in with a retort, and there was in his eye a gleam of mingled

annoyance and amusement. "Now, you impudent young upstart, it's time for you to ring off your oratory, or if you go further into the private affairs of my life, I'll have to wring off your neck, and don't forget that I can do it, too! What do you know of the needs of your elders? What do you know of my personal life? You've let off enough steam now to be quiet for the rest of the day and let us enjoy this day without any more such breaks.

"Margaret," he said, turning particularly to his guest, "there doesn't seem much left to tell after this brother of yours has got done with his *spiel*. But would you like to go the rounds with me and see the plant and some of the patients? I suggest that since it's already midday, and we are hungry, that you two young folks tend to the lunch, and don't eat it all up before we get back. Have the coolie take the *tiffin*-basket up to the bungalow there and set things out on the verandah, for there is no prettier view to be had anywhere. Then, when we get back from this inspection we'll eat. After that we'll strike on up to the 'Spot', and have tea out there. Come on, Margaret."

## CHAPTER X

Ernest and Margaret, together then, passed first through the little reception hall, with its picture of the Master's own illustration, the undying symbol of unselfish love, into the clinic room, where Khair Din was again on duty examining the motley procession of out-patients. And such a conglomeration as there was presented, Margaret had never before imagined — eye troubles, loathsome skin diseases, internal disturbances, and other things more indescribable — all these were come to the Good Samaritan, who gave freely of his healing power.

Some had been carried in on *charpaies*, as was the palsied man to Jesus; some had been supported; some had come alone. Mostly, there were men — only a few women and children, for there was no woman on this hospital staff. There were the poor, ragged, and gaunt from constant undernourishment; and there were the rich, in their finery and selfish pride. Most of them were poor — the poor farm-tenant and coolie class from the city. But a few, also, there were of the Hindus from the bazaar, and a Khan or two from the territory of the Government, and one, even, who had come from forty miles over the border.

Through the drug-room, with its shelves lined with orderly arrays of bottles and with mysterious containers of larger size, standing on the floor, they passed to the operating room. It was unoccupied and still. It lacked much of the modern conveniences — yet was equipped with the essentials for multifarious operations, both minor and major. Here, it seemed to Margaret, was a Holy Place. As she stood there with only this Mann beside her, she seemed conscious that here dwelt the spirit of the Great Good Samaritan, in special presence, and that here was yet the pervading presence of many — not as pen-portraits might have hung on the walls — but as the evident gratitude of those who had passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and had found renewed physical life in this place. Here a skill, that at home could have been bought only at a great price, had been lavished on the needy and suffering.

Margaret stood still with a sense of reverence, for it seemed a place of prayer — the prayers that this doctor had offered to the Great Healer for physical and spiritual regeneration. A wave of deep emotion passed over her and she cried out in her spirit: “O, God! give me of this love for others and make me worthy to be a companion for him.”

They crossed the compound, over to the line of the wards, and here each bed with its human occupant became the center of a tale of personal interest. With each one, this big, cheery doctor of hers stopped to

be friendly and to chat in that unintelligible language, which was yet so rich in its cadences and inflections.

Along this line they passed, with an interjected description or interpretation now and then, in the language of the West. Bandaged eyes, after the removal of the cataract; a leg amputated above the knee, that the life of the man might be saved from the spreading gangrene; an old man, with a fringe of his red dye bordering the newly-grown grey of his beard, whose life had been saved by the cutting away of the infected part of an intestine, which had been caught in a strangulated hernia. And so, a full dozen cases, each of which had been serious, were reviewed in this common ward.

They came, then, to the door in the *purdah* wall of the courtyard of the first of the private quarters. The doctor pulled aside the rough, hanging burlap-curtain and called first before entering, the familiar Urdu, "*Koi hai?*" ("Is Anyone?") — for the women-folk of the household often came to care for these private-ward patients. He received the equally familiar response, but in trans-border Pushtu, "*Dinana rashah!*" ("Come in!"). He stepped through, and beckoned to Margaret to follow, for where women were, women might enter.

In the little verandah of this private ward, was a great *charpai* of truly frontier proportions. Its four rounded, milled posts, gaudy in a shiny red enamel, were traced with darker lines and figures. On this



wide, light-framed bed, woven with strings of rawhide, lay the form of one sunk deep in a well-padded *lafa*, and covered with the *rasai* (thick cotton comfort) in a case of brilliant colors and startling figures. This patient, Dr. Mann had not seen in this place before.

For a moment he studied the face before him, then he exclaimed in English, "Hello. Here is our friend from across the border, whose arrival yesterday delayed my arrival at your dinner party last night."

Last night! . . . His thoughts carried on a soliloquy which he dared not give voice to. Was it only last night? — only a measure of hours, not yet a day? . . . So long ago it seemed that weeks, or even months, must have passed. Last night! . . .

What was this thing time, anyway? A measure for the changes within God's creation? But our spirits, which partake of the divine, are not so contracted. Not quite can we yet say that one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, but in miniature, a model of that eternal. How true it is with us that one day often records more than the ordinary experiences of a year, and sometimes a whole year passes with little more memory than that of a day. One night has passed with this Khan — one night, as exactly measured in the healing of his body, but a night that has seemed, in his suffering, endless. He is older, much older, than yesterday, when that bullet found its mark in his abdomen. One night has passed,

also, with me, and the habits and inhibitions of ten years have been broken down. Backward in the flight of time I have gone. I feel younger — really much younger — than when I left here only last evening.

These words, and this soliloquy, occupied scarce time enough to make the Khan feel any sense of neglect. He lay still, his mighty frame — the frame of a mountaineer and a warrior, the frame of one who has lived strenuously but lived well — resting and recovering from the injury of the bullet. But as he had lain there throughout the night, unable to find much sleep, he had planned — had planned a Pathan's revenge — had planned how yet he might take the life of him who had sought to take his own. An old feud it had been, and now he must end it, and he could end it only by wiping out entirely the family of his enemy.

Now, however, as Wazir Ali Khan looked on the white face of the doctor and saw in it strength and reserve such as he himself boasted, he saw there also a quality that he could not understand. It was one that reached out through that very strength and in gentleness gripped the soul. He could not know that this superior force was love — for such love, that included all in its bounds and avenged not itself, was absolutely foreign to Pathan nature. With him, hate and revenge, balanced by a family or tribal loyalty, were dominating characteristics. So, he could not understand this exotic force, but himself was gripped

by it. As he gazed into the calm, deep eyes of the doctor, Wazir Ali Khan was knit to him by the strongest bonds. He called him his brother, and would be faithful to him unto death.

He extended to the foreigner, the Christian, the greeting that among Moslems is ordinarily reserved only for the "faithful" — the Arabic salutation used by Mohammed himself, "*Salaam 'alaikum*", ("Peace be unto you").

Experienced in the ways of the men of the frontier, and not needing any one to interpret the underlying significance of this phrase, the Mann of the border returned, in its accepted form, the complementary salutation, "*W' 'alaikum salaam*", ("And unto you, be peace") — and thus cemented their friendship.

Wazir Ali, then, with the accustomed arrogance and authority of the Mohammedan lord of his household, called to his women who, in their curiosity, were standing near. They stood with faces unveiled, for was not this their home, and was not this the "Doctor Sahib", who was not as other men, from whose gaze they must veil their beauty and their jewelry? This was one who had earned the familiarity of their house, and whom, too, they would treat as a brother. And besides, was not this white-faced lady with him his "*Memsahib*"? — his wife? — and therefore they needed not the protection of the veil.

But the Khan called to them, "Go!" Turning their faces, and pulling low their *chadars*, they squatted

in a little group in the far corner of the courtyard, and the murmur of their voices drowned for them what the Khan had to say to the doctor.

Instinctively realizing that there was something of importance to be communicated, Ernest found a chair for Margaret and then seated himself, side-saddle fashion, on the edge of the Khan's bed. Earnestly, and at length, the Khan spoke in low tones in the peculiar accents of his mother-tongue, and the doctor's face became serious as he listened. Only occasionally he interjected a word or two with an expression that, Margaret could tell from the inflection, was a question. At last they seemed to have come to some decision, to some conclusion, and the doctor grasped the other man's hand in a powerful grip — the sign which in the West has the significance of brotherhood.

Putting out of his countenance the expression of concern, he turned to Margaret with an apology for keeping her waiting.

“We must hurry,” he said, “or those young folks will have eaten all the lunch, and then will begin to think of us.”

## CHAPTER XI

The bungalow, the home of Mann, held for Margaret a very special attraction, but just now Edith and George demanded their attention and she postponed its inspection. As the hospital was above the town, so was the bungalow a bit above and overlooking, from a rock-founded promontory, the hospital, and all else that had been in its view. Truly marvelous was the view from this vine-shaded verandah; but lunch so accentuated her healthy appetite that she did not desire to see much else just now.

After a word of gratitude, and a request for blessing, they ate. When they had eaten so that the attention might be divided with other things, Ernest referred to the conversation that he had had with his trans-border guest.

“George,” he said, “you remember your experience down in the Singhpur bazaar last spring, when that whirlwind of a Kabuly Maulvie spit in your face and would like to have buried you under a heap of stones? Well, it seems you got him really stirred up, for he’s still fuming. I think there is no question about his identity — about this being the same man, who is now over across the border, above here a way, back in far enough that the British Raj can’t easily reach him or find out what he is doing. But this

chap here — Wazir Ali Khan — whose life I saved from the bullet yesterday, who himself lives back that way, tells me your friend is hatching trouble. It seems that, though his home is Kabul, he has some relatives settled among the tribes of this border, and for the last month or two he's been visiting them and preaching to all the neighbors a holy war. He's shaming them for allowing the English *kafirs* to hold the lands of the frontier and the Punjab. He's exciting them with prospects of stored wealth, and tells the people that they will be fighting the wars of Allah — that he will give them a charm whereby the English bullets cannot harm them — that even if they should die, they will be taken directly to heaven where they can have the full satisfaction of every lust and passion, with *houris* more beautiful than any maiden on this earth — for is it not so promised in the Holy Koran to the faithful who shall die fighting the wars of Allah?

“Of course, these tribesmen are ignorant and greedy for loot and are possessed of a passionate nature that has known little bridling. They do not know the strength or organization of the English, so they have actually assembled in a great *jirgah*, or council of war, and have decided to send a *lashkar* down to take away this land from British control. You can't tell anything about how big their army will be, for there is of course nothing in the way of formal organization, and a Pathan's estimate of numbers is

always much magnified. But at the best it looks as though you had stirred up a lot when you got that 'whirlwind' going. He's been gathering force these last months and is ready to strike again.

"Our friend, Wazir Ali, would have been in this himself, if he hadn't been shot, but now he's grateful for his saved life, and also this mortal enemy of his has joined the *lashkar*, so he has told me of this affair. So far, they have kept it secret from all friends of the British — that is their strongest weapon. According to Khan's estimate of dates, this *lashkar* will be due at the British border, on the ridge of hills above Qila Ghar, day after tomorrow, ready to pour down across these valleys.

"I'm rather afraid this is going to break up our plans for the next few weeks, and I'll have to get permission from Edith to break my engagement with your party and stay by my hospital here. It might easily be one of the principal objects of attack, if these people really got across."

His expression of face or voice did not betray him in his renunciation of the anticipated joys of this month's fellowship. It had cost him dearly, but he spoke only as though it had been an ordinary pleasure that he gave up. In his heart, however, even as he spoke with his lips these words of little feeling, there was the stab and the pang of unfulfilled desire.

He cried out to the Father: "What of this month I had planned? . . . But, Lord, I trust Thee — O

Thou, Who doest all things well and dost plan and rule my life. Take back, if You will, this one month, this one month that I had thought You had given me. But what of Your promise of a hundredfold to those who shall give up? In all my life can there be a hundred such months as this I had planned? The prospects of ever having even one more such seem utterly improbable. One month of ecstasy! But that, too, is Yours to take away if You will. Your will be done!”

Without any noticeable lapse of time in the interval of speaking, he continued: “I must get in touch at once with Major Patterson, who is in charge of the frontier constabulary force at Qila Ghar. It is ten miles up along the border from here. He is one lone Englishman there, with a force of probably only two hundred. They are a sort of special border police, separate from the regular police department, and separate from the military, and it’s Major Patterson’s job to keep peace — or make peace. He is right on the line — directly below the pass where these fellows must cross over. He’s got a stone fort and well-trained, brave men, but if this *lashkar* should get across the British line and surround him before he was aware of trouble, there might be a lot of bloodshed before it would be finished.

“So we’d better get along with our picnic now — cutting that out will not help any, and maybe we won’t get another chance after this. We can have



our tea at the 'Spot', and still be back in time for me to get up to Qila Ghar before dark. I hardly dare trust a matter of this importance to a messenger, but feel that I must go myself. I can say that I have been called out on a case. It truly is that."

Margaret listened to this revision of plans with a distressing mingling of emotions. A time or two her face blanched at the prospects, but Ernest was not looking and saw it not. She had kept silent during the recital. Little she knew of the actual dangers; often she had heard of the men of the border and of their methods of fighting — of the bravery, the cruelty and cunning, of the Pathan, especially when fanned to a flame by religious zeal. And here was her Mann, planning to stay in the very path of danger — not only to stay, but even to go forward into the very course of that danger. Oh, if only she could stay with him! — But that, naturally, could not be.

But more than the prospects of danger, that which affected her heart was the apparent indifference of him whom she loved — indifference to the breaking up of the plans for their one short month of vacation together. Her month would so shortly be over, and she would have to go on around the world, and possibly never more even see him. Oh, if she could only fling herself again into his arms, and light again to a fierce flame the dead embers of the love that had once burned there! But she had promised her own best self and her God that she would not again

be the cause of injury to this life that was more precious now to her than her own pleasure. Better than again to disrupt his peace of mind, she would quietly efface herself from his view and bury deep her own love.

But — if only there were even a few coals left of the old flame; if any indication at all of warmth — even thus would she give herself, give herself with an abandon and join heart and soul with him in his life service. Unconditionally, she would give herself; shamelessly, she would throw herself into his embrace, if only — ! But he was cold, indifferent — it did not matter to him, even if this one month that they had planned together were erased. It was evident that he no longer had any degree of love for her.

In the midst of these regrets and longings, however, she found the same ray of light and joy that had come to him, and she exulted, “He is *mine*, he is mine, and he shall remain mine forever, in my heart, even though in the flesh I may never claim him again!”

So, when she did speak, her voice expressed only an ordinary interest in these affairs, as of one with whom she had had a day’s casual acquaintance.

## CHAPTER XII

The Wallaces seemed most affected of the party, for they had nothing to hide and were free to allow their feelings of disappointment, and of concern, to be openly expressed. Even as Ernest related the tale of the Khan, and again as he set forth his proposal for action, they had interrupted with exclamations of surprise and with other suggestions as to what should be done. Not easily did they give up their plans for the month that was before them. Surely some other arrangement could be made that would not require Ernest's absence in danger, if danger there was to be. Couldn't he just send word to this Major Patterson, and himself come in with them to the safety of the cantonment, and let the British Raj look out for its own frontier?

Of course — when they thought this out — they agreed that their Mann wouldn't be such a coward as that. Then, why couldn't George come and stay with him out here? He'd like a chance to meet the "Whirlwind" again. No . . . there was no need of anyone else running into danger where it was not his duty, and besides, the ladies could not very well be left alone at such a time.

So all these objections and counter-proposals were ruled out and Ernest remained firm on the course that he had set for himself.

So, off to the picnic they went, but the brightness and light-heartedness of the party was gone. A cloud hung over them, and seemed to darken the very shining of the sun. There was little lightness of heart. Each felt the shadow of the cloud, but each strove the harder to hide from the others his forebodings and concern. So an artificial gaiety clothed them that day, and they laughed and they joked even more than was their wont.

Out from the compound to the east, they circled the bare spur of the mountain and came around above a deep, steep-climbing gorge, whose course could be traced upward by a winding line of verdant foliage against the otherwise barren waste of the lower hill, until it expanded some five hundred feet above into a wild jungle of rock and pine woods. Into the leafy shelter of this ravine they descended and there followed up the course of the stream, which was the source of its life of green. On either flank, in many places, the hillsides hung in cliffs, too precipitous to climb.

Ernest was pushing ahead, sometimes breaking the way through the brush, for this path was not much traveled. It led sometimes on this side, and sometimes on the other, of the splashing, foaming water. The others straggled on behind. Suddenly, a loud hail from Edith to the leader brought him hurrying back.

“Oh, you! Dr. Mann! Come here! — here’s a professional job for you! Margaret has gotten a piece of bark or something in her eye. You’re the doctor, so it’s your job to take it out.”

For a job such as this — especially on a day such as this, which might be his last spent in her presence — he was not prepared. His facial expression he had controlled, his voice he had controlled, but to touch again, in such intimate fashion, and to look so close into her eyes — could he endure it? But do it he must.

George and Edith walked on together, taking with them the coolie carrying the basket. Was this situation accidental — or had the practical mind of Edith seized on this opportunity to the working of her own secret scheme?

Ernest came close to Margaret, who stood with both hands clasping her eye tight shut. His heart was throbbing, his breath with difficulty was scarce regulated to a normal inhalation. A surge of tingling, thrilling sensation, commencing at the vital center of his body, swept through him. He stood over her, so close that he felt even her breath and the warmth of her body reach him.

Ernest reached out. He laid hold of her hands and lowered them. With the palm of his left hand across her forehead, the thumb raising the brow, his strength seemed dissolving away, as though the shock of the contact would cause him to collapse where he stood.

His fingers touched — touched her very face, and were even entwined by her hair.

By a supreme dominance of the will over the flesh, at the very finger tips the tingling impulse was inhibited. The electric current of his passion had been insulated. The contact of his touch became the touch of a professional. With fingers that did not tremble, he caught the lashes, and drew down the upper lid over the lower and released it.

As the eye opened, he stood and found himself gazing into its depths — off his guard in the relief from the tension of the past moments. She blinked experimentally a time or two, and then her eye focused to his own — so close — and for a moment their vision locked and held. He saw not the eye or the pupil, not the shape, or the color, but he was looking through the window into the very privacy of the soul. But still, what he saw there was indecipherable, for he had not the code of her consciousness.

Thus, through the channel of the eye, their inmost beings came together, and before this violation of the entity of her existence, just for the flash of an expression, the features of Margaret's face lost all fixity of muscle. They relaxed and quivered out of control.

Could it be that she cared? Was this fleeting aspect the visible effect of deep-seated emotion? No; that could not be, the watcher warned himself. It must be that this involuntary contortion was only relief from the pain of the object in her eye. So he heard himself say in a professional way: "There now, is it out?"

## CHAPTER XIII

During the course of that picnic, Margaret was silent, unusually silent — silent with the thoughts of a woman. Again and again she relived that breathless instant, that locking of their gaze, that subjection of her separate individuality to the consciousness of trespass by another, that exquisite discovery that she had penetrated also to the central personality of the other: Ernest had looked within, but what he had seen in the other was to him unintelligible. Margaret had looked at that same time, and now, as she called in review what she had seen, intuition that is woman's had deciphered its meaning. She recognized, more than had Ernest, the actualities and potentialities of that brief moment under the leafy canopy of the ravine below. The more she thought the more she was convinced that, unwittingly, she had breached the barriers of reserve that Ernest, for some reason unknown, had erected against her.

Before, she had feared that his indifferent manner was a solid wall of reality. But now she had penetrated, even if only for a moment, this barricade, and she knew of a certainty that behind the calm exterior there was the intense heat of a flame. She had seen the distress of his soul. She had seen and she had gauged aright the passion within. She marveled at

his control, for now she knew the strength of his love for her.

Her heart was glad and it sang as she sat there and thought. For now she was free, free with a clear conscience, free to loose all the forces at her command to break down entirely these obstacles to her love. She must plan well her campaign — a campaign, now, with a definite objective. So, with the thoughts of a woman, she was busy. She must weigh carefully her forces and her opportunities. For today — yes, another hour or two only — and he would leave her; leave her to go into the face of danger. At such a time, she would not handicap him — would not distract his attention from the duty of the day. But some time — some way!

In her exultation, the impulses of a newly-forming habit prompted her, and she gave thanks to her God for the privilege He already had vouchsafed, and the promise of victory that now was hers. With remembrance of Him and the part He had had in the fulfillment of her prayers, there came to her an assurance and a trust for the future. She must not, in impatience, rush ahead and lose the advantage she had gained. She must abide His time and pray; yes, now she had faith in her prayers.

She knew now that she would not go home until she had won complete victory — that she would stay until he again returned to her side, until again she had conquered her Mann. Conquered him, was it? — or was it until she could offer herself in complete sur-



render? In love, who could distinguish? Victory? Surrender? They appeared to her to be but one experience.

She sat, as the guest of honor, on a rock on the "Spot" — a seat Ernest in times past had prepared, and on which he had often sat to commune with his God and meditate on the affairs of the Lord's work. Below her was spread the panorama of plain, mountain, and valley, which already was familiar, which she already loved. From here, from this greater elevation, it appeared in a still more magnificent perspective.

On a knoll, projected out to the side of, and overlooking, a waterfall, was the "Spot." The knoll itself, grass-covered, was unwooded except for two or three pines, larger and better shaped because of their lonely position. These marked, however, the lower edge of a deep forest of the mountain. The little stream, as it came to the edge of the woods, had found a damming wall of rock, so it had spread out and cleared for itself a small glade in the center of which lay a miniature lake. The water of this pool finally found freedom over the top of the wall. First in a long, smooth sheet, it flowed down the rounded, lichen-covered surface of the rock, then dropped a clear cascade some twenty feet or more, to be broken into spray on a tangled mass of stone and wood, and at last, plunging and dashing with torrential force down the steep upper stretch of the ravine, disappeared in the brush below.

What a spot it was! — for its own beauty and the beauty of its view! But Margaret, for once, was scarcely conscious of the glories of nature, and scarcely did she notice the preparations for tea, except that her eyes followed, with a new light, the movements of her Mann. While the Wallaces together spread the cloth on a level ground under the great pine at the center of the “Spot,” and set out the cups and other utensils, Ernest and the coolie started the fire and heated the kettle.

So quietly she sat, and so unnatural was her inactivity, that as Ernest passed he paused, concerned, to ask whether yet there was soreness in her eye, or whether perchance she was over-tired from the journey. Then he passed on, as though he had asked of a stranger. But now she knew his casual manner hid a passionate concern for her.

When tea had been finished, they despatched the coolie with the basket. Then instinctively, each feeling the special burden of need, they gathered at the foot of nature’s stately column, under the green roof of that magnificent cathedral, and prayed to their God concerning the things that lay ahead.

Early, then, they left their “Spot,” and descended to the hospital, for there was nothing to detain them now, and the thoughts of all were on the duties that remained yet for that evening.

Ernest accompanied them again across the river, and this time there was no boyishness or hilarity.

Last, in his farewells, he came to Margaret, and as his hand clasped hers, his eyes, against the will and command of his mind, sought her own with a passionate light and longing, and what he saw set him again in a turmoil. For there in her eyes, set consciously and deliberately, was the yielding, surrendering look of a strong-minded woman to her lover — a look that could be interpreted with only one meaning.

George, however, at the wheel, was no more conscious of this unspoken intercourse than was his unemotional motor, and had started the engine, and with a wave of his hand and a "God bless you!" ruthlessly broke this contact and carried her swiftly out of sight of the Mann at the side of the road.

## CHAPTER XIV

Little conscious of his physical acts, but moving on the volition of previously set plans and orders of his will, Ernest returned to the hospital and prepared for his journey. He would walk, rather than ride horse-back, and he would take the short-cut up and over a thousand-foot pass, for the state of his mind demanded yet the calming effects of strenuous physical exertion.

With only Alladin, the *chaprasi*, to accompany him and carry his doctor's kit and a few necessities for the night, he set off. Still, his mind dwelt not on the road, and little, even, on the object of his present trip. He walked as in sleep, and dreamed of the meaning and future developments of that look.

Twice now he had seen behind the veil that had been drawn over the eyes of the other. But that first time, there in the ravine, had been sudden and surprising. He could not feel certain. By alternating opinions he interpreted its significance, as a startling of herself in a love for him which for some reason she would have kept secret; or, as the mere natural cringing of any human being when exposed by the sting of pain to the gaze of another. No; of that first occasion he could not be sure. But the second! — that was different; she had looked straight into his

own eyes deliberately; had not dropped her eyes, nor shown other signs of confusion. Her sight had held steady and locked, for that instant, with his. This time there was no surprise — no blanching. Oh! — what was to be read there? Surely there could be no doubt of an intentional message of deepest love.

As he strode along he could force his mind to focus on nothing else than just that — she loved him! Surely she loved him yet! All consideration of consequences was excluded . . . of how it would affect his work, or how their ten-year-old problem would be solved. For now, only the vivid memory of that look sufficed him. She loved him! — surely she loved him!

He strode along in this elation, when all at once the question hit him — did she love him? — did her look mean all that? — or was it just the frank, unassumed, un-self-conscious look of casual acquaintances, between whom there is no form of embarrassment? Oh, did she love him? — or had his own longings only read what they themselves had written in on that look? “Oh, God!” he cried, “if it be possible, let us love one another. But no—Your will be done!”

By the time that it had become deep dusk, and he had approached the light of the bungalow at the constabulary post of Qila Ghar, however, Mann’s normal faculties had regained control of his activities, and he answered the challenge of the sentry: “Who goes there?” With the common password: “Friend.”

Major Patterson, with the informality of dress and hour of the man who lives much alone, had just sat down to his evening dinner when he heard this hail and came himself to the door to welcome his guest. Previously Dr. Mann had been called here for his professional services — once for a bad case, the bullet wound of a man who had been brought into the fort, and once for the treatment of the major himself, when down with an extra-serious round of fever. So now he was acquainted, and felt the freedom of an informal guest. They sat at the table and talked until late, as two men of lonely habits are likely to do when for a while they are thrown together.

But of the purpose of his visit Ernest said nothing until the table had been cleared, coffee had been served, and the servant had withdrawn for the night, tightly closing the door after him. Only when he was sure of absolute privacy, he delivered his message.

“Major Patterson,” he began, “pardon me for asking what may seem a prying into political affairs, but it is not from idle curiosity. It is the one object of this unexpected visit. Have you had any word of trouble brewing across the border? Are you expecting an uprising of trans-border tribes?”

The officer listened to this question with anticipation of its meaning, and answered frankly, “No. Everything is quiet. For years there has been no real outbreak in this section. The tribes seem to be settling down to peaceful ways and to consider us their friends. Possibly, for a month or two, there hasn’t

been as much going and coming across this pass as usual, but otherwise all seems normal. But may I ask why you ask? Have you heard some report?"

Ernest then related the circumstances and details of all he had heard from Wazir Ali Khan. This man, responsible for the peace of the border, listened and even while he was talking Ernest could see that his trained mind was sifting, weighing, and sorting the information that had been brought him. His face took on the expression of the soldier — determined and grim. But with only a few direct questions as to place, distance, time, and the force that the enemy had assembled, did he interrupt the recounting.

When the report was finished he had already laid his plans pretty well for his first movement.

He said, "Dr. Mann, this sounds like a straight tale, and with a Pathan's incentives back of it for telling I had heard nothing, not even a rumor of this *lashkar*. Thank you for coming yourself to tell me. If this Khan of yours is right, and is telling the truth, they must have planned well, and there must be a master-mind back of it all, to have kept it so secret. It is fortunate, indeed, that you got hold of this and reported it in time.

"Let's see — your Khan says in two or three days more they will appear on our border. It is now already practically tomorrow, so that maybe by what is now tomorrow they will be near, so there isn't much time to lose. At least, we must be on our guard and endeavor to find out just what is going on over there.

It is evidently some forty miles back from the border that the *lashkar* is being — rather has been — raised, for by now they would be on the move. I think I know the place. In the morning I shall get off a couple of my best scouts, who know that country and the people well, to investigate and report. And I shall have a double platoon of my men, from tomorrow morning on, constantly on the watch, picketing the boundary peaks on both sides of the pass. But what about yourself? — what are your plans? Will you stay here in the fort, or go on into cantonments?”

“I ? . . .” Ernest answered — “well, I’m not in India to carry a gun, nor yet to run away from my post. My job is saving life — not killing . . . life both physical and spiritual. So unless, in my capacity as a doctor, I can be of some real help to you here, if you’ll excuse me, I think I’d better be off — back to my own place — in the morning. There is my responsibility. As yet the people have heard nothing, for Wazir Ali was most secretive, and I’ll not tell anyone nor give them cause to wonder by my running away. I feel that my place is at the hospital in Sarhad for the next few days.”

“Maybe you are right, and I don’t really expect this thing will reach that far anyway. But what could you do, alone there at Sarhad, if a body of these blood-thirsty *dacoits* should suddenly swoop down on you?”

“I would have to look to my Captain for my orders — for I am under authority the same as you and your



men are here. My Commanding Officer wages a different kind of fight, and I am bound to follow His orders.”

“Righto. It’s your own decision, then. I won’t exercise my official authority to order you to evacuate — not yet, anyway. But I shall try to keep in touch with you and keep you posted by messenger if there are any developments. I trust you to be wise. If *dacoits* should get you, a ‘European,’ it would tremendously complicate our whole situation. So do be careful. And, as you said, do keep this all quiet for the present. Now we had better get to sleep, for during these next few days we may need all that we can store up. Come along this way, and I shall show you your room.”

## CHAPTER XV

Sleep and rest! How long since he had experienced such blessings? A day and a night and a day — the experiences of these passed in a hazy review before his yielding consciousness. When he had risen from bed only yesterday morning he had had no idea of Margaret's nearness; for a long period the admitted thought of her had not consciously entered his mind; ten years it had been since he had said that other "Goodbye"; now it seemed to him that he had had her always with him. Last evening's meeting! Last night on the hilltop! The trip out with its many little contacts. The soul-stirring experience in the ravine . . . But above all was that last, revealing, surrendering look from her as she sat in the motor! What did it reveal? . . . Then the Khan and his story — the *lashkar* expected — all of these things since last he had had normal sleep. These events all blurred, and then the Mann of the border slept, and slept without even dream-consciousness.

Shortly before midnight, he had lain down, and when it seemed that he had hardly lost consciousness, he heard the gong from the fort striking the hour. Involuntarily, his mind registered the strokes — three double taps and then one single — not the full quota of twelve that he had expected. He opened his eyes

with a start and the sun, an unfailing timekeeper, added its testimony to that of his watch that it was full seven o'clock. Ashamed he was of his late rising, but he had had the much needed rest. He had now condensed two nights' sleep into one. Again he was ready to face the world for a new day with an even balance on his physical account.

Major Patterson had already risen and departed to the fort to set in motion his program for the day, but he had left word with his servants to provide the Doctor Sahib with *choti-hausri*, furnish him with a saddled horse of his own, and bid him a goodbye. So Ernest departed and came again before noon to his hospital.

The day passed without more than the quiet round of duties. But the morning following that, a letter was handed to him. The servants knew not whence the messenger had come; he would not talk. The doctor recognized it as from Qila Ghar, so without apparent interest he laid it aside until he had withdrawn to the privacy of his *daftar*. It was, as was expected, from the officer in charge of the constabulary post, and it was written personally, in his own hand, and closely sealed. It read:

My Dear Doctor:

My scouts have returned late this evening. They got back in some fifteen miles, far enough to get reliable and definite information regarding the approach of the *lashkar*. Your Khan has

evidently spoken only too truly. There has been a large assembling from several different tribes — mostly young bloods — for many of the elders have tried to restrain them. For the past two months or so, it seems, some outside Maulvie has been stirring them up to this. It is hard, of course, to estimate numbers, but it seems that a moderate estimate would be probably about four thousand, which is enough of a force, if they have been incensed to fanaticism and inoculated with their doctrine of fatalism, to give us all the excitement and activity that any restless, complaining soldier could long for. If they come in force, my small body of men could do no more than defend this fort till help would arrive. So I have wired through to the D. C. and the brigadier at Eliotsharar for considerable military reinforcements. We want, if possible, to keep them from entering British territory. These troops ought to be out some time tomorrow evening or night. If they get here first, we ought to have a warm reception party for our friends from across the border.

I am giving you all this information — which is really official and should be kept strictly private — because you already know much of the condition, and so that you may be on your guard and ready for an emergency. Again I say, be

wise. Take care of yourself, and don't add to our troubles. I shall try to get word through to you after we have met the enemy.

Cheerio,

W. D. PATTERSON.

So! — it was to be war! — real fighting and the killing of men, taking human lives, maybe hundreds of lives, of men — of men who this minute were living, were throbbing, sentient human beings, and by tomorrow some time they might be only bloody clay. As a doctor, Mann was used to life and death. For himself he feared not at all — he was ready, and his time in this world was in the hands of his Captain; but the idea that within ten miles of where he now sat, before tomorrow, so many fellow men would cease existence in this world —! Used he was to a doctor's profession, but not yet used to wholesale killing. He was out in this country to bring life to these very men who were to be killed. He felt he must do something, but he was helpless. As he understood his orders, they said, "Stay here."

So, with a constantly-recurring prayer that God would somehow overrule the furies and passions of men for His own glory, Dr. Mann went about his daily duties and imparted no information whatsoever to his associates. But that night, when he was free again from human contacts, he prayed — prayed earnestly and long for the work of the Lord and the glory of God on this frontier. He prayed to his Captain for

marching orders — to Him, Who fights not as do men, with bullet and sword, but is yet able to pierce even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow.

The next morning the doctor's bearer, as he served him his *choti-hausri*, was obviously much excited. He stood nervously by while his Sahib bowed his head in gratitude and blessing. But after the first cup of tea had been poured and the egg cracked, Mohammed Nur could no longer withhold his feelings, and gave sudden expression to their state.

“Sahib Ji, you have heard? — last night on the road (you know the road, a mile away over that way, the one that leads out to Qila Ghar) — almost all night long troops were passing by. Mostly they were those stocky, black, round-faced fellows, with the slant eyes, that live in *chauni* at Elliotshahar. They say they are neither Hindu nor Mohammedan — who knows what they are? But they say they're terrible fighters; that they themselves come from the mountains away down south of here, off toward Thibet; that they are as fearless in fighting as the Pathan, and that they never surrender. And oh, Sahib, they kept going almost all night — there must have been hundreds and thousands and thousands of them — and then there were some other troops with those big guns that they carry on those big mules — and all the *saman* they had with them — it was enough equipment for a real war! And people say that the Amir of Afghanistan and all the trans-border tribes have

gotten together, and are coming across the border there at Qila Ghar—”

So this poor fellow ran on, giving all the impossible rumors and wild gossip that can spring, full-grown, overnight in any bazaar in India.

That day there was nothing quiet. All was excitement, and people gathered in voluble groups. The doctor, however, knowing more than any other, did not listen to the agglomeration of tales that came in that day, but again went about his duties, in so far as possible, just as usual, endeavoring to quiet and encourage his staff, at least. Now that there were immediate prospects of these wild, lawless tribesmen swooping ruthlessly down into their peaceful territory, all men, even those who recently had been politically-minded and had talked the loudest about the injustice and shame of foreign rule, those who had tried to inoculate the people with talk of “*swaraj*” — now all alike called on “*Sirkar*” for the protection expected of a government.

All day wild rumors kept coming in concerning happenings at the “front” — rumors of defeat — of victory — of great bloodshed — of flight — of any and every kind of result. Some even said they could distinguish the sound of firing across ten miles of mountains and muffled by a high pass between. By evening, rumor was rather consistent that there had been a big battle, but how it had gone none could yet give authentic information. Several of the reckless, excitable youths of Sarhad had made their way

through the jungles, avoiding traveled paths, to the top of the ridge whence they might get some view of operations, and some said that if the government forces should be overcome, these would be ready to first start looting and pillage. But none of these had yet returned.



## CHAPTER XVI

Late that night, when there was a semblance of quiet forced by exhaustion of nervous and emotional energy, when only one light still shone out brightly — for seldom was the doctor's extinguished until the night was full half past—there came a guarded knock on his *daftar* door. Laying down the current Medical Journal, which he had been endeavoring to read, he went to the door and received another envelope in the now-familiar hand. It read:

Dear Doctor Sahib:

I know your anxiety and concern, so I am sending a messenger this late at night hoping that he may find you before you retire.

We have met the enemy and he is defeated. It was a great slaughter, and it is well that you, in your profession as life-saver, were not here to witness this. But what else could have been done? Nothing else would have saved the day, and it is hoped that this will end the whole matter and probably save more lives in the end. These fellows have had a lesson that they will not soon forget.

The *lashkar* reached the border last evening, but fortunately for us they decided to wait till morning to come across. I had most of my own

force out picketing the hills, and there was some sniping back and forth, but we were able to prevent any small groups that roved around from crossing. By morning they were restless for the wonderful conquest that had been promised them. Were they not fighting the battle of Allah, and had he not caused that no foreign bullets could harm them, and were not all the riches of British territory waiting for them to pillage?

But just before daylight the troops from cantonment began to arrive — a detachment of six hundred from the 16th Royal Gurkhas and a Mountain Pack Battery. Some of the officers had arrived ahead, and the plan of campaign was mapped out, so that immediately the men themselves arrived, machine-gun nests were fixed on either side of the trail within our own territory. Before they had arrived, I had had entanglements of barbed-wire stretched among the trees just at the foot of the steep pass. So we were ready by real daybreak — but none too soon.

Of course, we had to wait till the enemy had actually crossed the line, for the political department would allow no firing into *gair-ilaqa*. In fact we had to wait until they first opened fire. There was, however, no order to their attack, and at first only a small body, more impatient than the rest appeared, and firing began. These, however, my own men were able to hold at bay,

giving the regular troops a little more time to finish their preparations. The sound of this beginning fight hurried on the rest who were eager not to be left behind in the glory and profits of this march.

Then, without any tactics or formation, secure in their fanaticism and fatalism, they swarmed for the narrow defile of the pass. A weltering, crowding, juggling mass, they poured through onto our side as through the neck of a bottle. It was a shambles — even as a soldier, I say it was terrible. They had to be mown down as they came, for nothing but British bullets would stop them. At the wire entanglement their bodies were heaped up. Still, those behind, thinking only of victory, pushed on. At last, however, it was decisive, and even these fanatics decided that fate was against them instead of in their favor — that their *kismet* this time was bad. You are a surgeon and maybe you can understand. Like the necessity of a serious operation — an amputation, say — in order to save a life, that is what this seems to me as a soldier.

Your mad Mullah was quite evident — a magnificent figure, indeed, he was. With his flowing robes, he stood for a long time on a rock at the head of the pass, and with his mighty staff a-whirl, he urged on the attack. Then he, too, fell — evidently with one of those British bullets. When it came to picking up the bodies after-

ward, though, we didn't find his, so I can't say for sure whether he is done for or not. But there will be a big reward out for his capture, and he had best never cross into our territory again.

We gathered up and buried some three hundred bodies of those brave men, and buried them with respect and honor. And as you may imagine, our little fort dispensary is overflowing, but the troops brought out with them doctors, nurses, and orderlies, and all equipment for a field hospital, so we do not need to call you for professional aid. You carry on at your own place. You are likely to get some strays from this affair — ones who will be afraid to come to us may filter through to you. But you had better still be a bit careful. The *lashkar* has been absolutely broken up, but it's possible that some small bands may have broken off on their own for a bit of looting. We haven't had time as yet to comb them out, but the troops will be kept here for some time yet until assured of absolute quiet.

This has become a lengthy and detailed report, but you deserve it, for if you hadn't warned us that night, the outcome might have been very different.

Dr. Mann is being mentioned for his part of this affair on the border in our official report.

Again, cheerio,

W. D. PATTERSON.

The sensitive soul of the Mann of the border was profoundly affected at this reading. For verily, even as the Good Samaritan, he loved those who were his enemies. He loved these sturdy, independent, but ignorant, superstitious men of the trans-border tribes. He longed to minister to them in their suffering and in their darkness of soul.

Sleep would not come and he felt restlessly lonely, desirous of human fellowship, of those who would understand. He paced the floor, and as he paced, he prayed. His thoughts turned, then, as though seeking shelter and comfort, to those who alone in the whole district might enter into his feelings. And turning in that direction they dwelt on the one, the one who seemed in his loneliness to be but the missing part of himself.

But better than mere thinking he would write. Of course, he could not directly in her name, but in the name of her brother, who would read to her what he had written. So for an hour and a half he wrote, almost feverishly — wrote as to her of whose face he was conscious before him, the one in whose name he did not yet feel entitled to address his communication. He wrote in detail of his experiences since he had stood at the side of the road and watched the old Ford, with its renewedly-precious burden, disappear around a distant curve. From that day to this he had not written, except a postcard, briefly informing them of his safe return from Qila Ghar. So now he wrote of the rumors of the day, of the information just

received that night. He wrote of his own agitation of soul, and his longing to aid these poor people. And as he wrote he seemed to realize that she was with him and that she understood, and that she was sympathetic and united with him in this service.

Strangely, this seeming presence calmed and quieted his over-wrought being. So at the last he wrote of the possibility of getting in for a part, after all, of their interrupted holiday. Only another three or four days, if all kept quiet and peaceful, and he thought he might leave his hospital again in the hands of Khair Din. He even dared so far as to express a mild degree of his personal desire and longing for that visit with them.

At last, with the night far spent, he rested with the peace and quiet of a sense of fellowship, both human and divine. The three hours that were left for rest that night were then of double value.

## CHAPTER XVII

One day — another — and still another, passed in their order. The town, with its wild talk, had quieted. All seemed again as it had been before. No trace of any party of the *lashkar* had been found on this side of the border. Tomorrow he would go to Eliotsharar — but the name that was in his mind was not Eliotsharar! Tomorrow he would go to *her*, and he would fathom to the bottom that look that she had given him at parting, and he would discover if its depths did contain that which he thought he had seen there. Only one meaning it could have, his heart told him, and yet could it be that meaning? Could it be that she cared? — that she gave herself again to him? Oh! now that the time for seeing was so close — could it be? He would go, then, and he would fathom that look; he would know what was in the heart of her.

That night, after dinner, as had often been his custom, he walked in the quiet of the starlit hillsides. This night, without really conscious direction, his way led him to that ravine and on to the place where, shut in by the leafy canopy, they had stood so close together, and he had removed the particle from her eye. Now he thought he was beginning to get the key to the code of what he had seen deep in her inner being that time. Might God grant that he be kept from

mistake in this matter — but if — if it be His will — might yet the yearning of his soul be satisfied.

He sat on a fallen log, oblivious to any small sounds of the woods about him. He knew not how long he sat — probably it was not more than a half-hour.

Then suddenly, as from another existence, there came to him a voice in trans-border Pushtu, “Sit still.”

Five men, armed with knives and guns, surrounded him. One of them, the spokesman, evidently a Khan of importance, continued: “We desire not your money or your goods. We desire not even your life. We saw you when you first came from the bungalow and we followed you here. But you must accompany us. We shall take you across the line to where there is a man who is in hiding, a man who has been wounded — wounded unto death, unless the great doctor would come and heal him. Will you come peaceably — or shall we take you by force? Men say that as a follower of Hazarat Jesus, you do not lie, that whatever you say, at all cost, even of your life, you will perform. Only this, give us your word that you will come peacefully, and we shall do you no harm on the way. Beyond that it is not within our power to say.”

One desire — that of service to these poor, benighted people — was to be fulfilled at the cost of another — his cherished longing to see “her” again on the morrow. But the Father’s will was evident in the matter, so he answered simply: “I go. Only allow me to take from the hospital the implements and medi-



cines that I need, and to change to a suit of Pathan clothes, that my nationality be not so conspicuous in your land.”

“We allow you what you ask. But we have brought with us a suit, made after the fashion of our own tribe, so that you may travel unquestioned as one of ourselves. Let us make haste!”

Only the leader of the band accompanied him to the bungalow. The rest remained in readiness a little way off. An emergency kit was kept always ready in his *daftar*, so he had no delay in securing that. He did pause, however, long enough to write three hastily-brief notes: one to the Wallaces; one to her, telling of being called out of a sudden on an emergency case some miles off, and that he could not therefore come on the morrow — could not now, in fact, set any definite date; one to his assistant, telling of the sudden call, and to carry on until his return. To Major Patterson at Qila Ghar, he wrote more particularly of the circumstances:

My dear Major:

Your battle is over — congratulations! Mine is now begun. We shall see now how the Lord of Hosts fights His battles in this modern day. We shall see whose methods of warfare are the more effective in establishing real peace. I have just received my marching orders and am thankful to be in action. I am preparing now to depart.

This is not an S. O. S., and I beg of you not to try to follow me with your forces. My Commanding Officer, Himself, with all His forces is on this march with me, and my life is in His care. I beg of you that even if I should not return, that you will make no reprisals for my life on these poor people.

A band of what you call '*dacoits*' has taken me, at the points of knives and guns. So I go by force. But also I accompany them willingly, for they would lead me to ones who need my surgical skill. I know not the place that I am going to, nor how far it is. But before you receive this, I shall probably be across the border and deep in *gair-ilaga*.

I cannot say as to the time of this campaign, or when I shall return. But again, I do beg of you not to try to rescue me with military force. If, within ten days, I do not appear, and you hear nothing further from me, then, by peaceable means if possible, I give you my approval of inquiry and search.

So, farewell till we meet again,

ERNEST MANN.

Mann then changed hurriedly to a suit of coarse, homespun cloth that had been brought for him — not the fine, showy clothes that he had acquired for some dress occasion. He appeared now very much a border Pathan himself — even his face being not much fairer than that of some of these north-country Khans.

His guest on the verandah had been growing impatient at the delay and had begun to question in his heart the truth of the word of the Christian. But when he saw this form appear, in fashion as a Pathan and like unto himself, he was assured. The servant, who slept always on the verandah ready to answer calls, when aroused, found it difficult to reconcile the voice and the figure of his master. Mann, however, quickly quieted his alarm and gave him instructions. No one else was to be disturbed at this time of night. He had been called out on an emergency case, and was going now with this Khan. This letter he should give to Khair Din in the morning. This one, he should take early to the post office so that it would catch that day's mail for the cantonment. And this one — very especially, the doctor emphasized his instructions—he himself should take to Qila Ghar and give only into the hands of the Major Sahib. For the rest, he was to keep himself quiet, and tell no one else this night of this call.

Then they were off, and it appeared as though they were now a band of six Pathans that traveled at night — traveled fast and with a sure course, avoiding all settlements — to an unpatrolled but difficult pass over the border hills.

Much these wild men thought and wondered in their hearts at this Sahib, who showed no sense of fear, though going alone into hostile territory—who looked now as but one of their number and was easily able to keep step with their pace over the most difficult of

trails. Much more, then, would they wonder as the hours and the days would pass — for they had in their company the Mann of the border.

Until well over the ridge and far down on the other side, where the arm of British law did not readily reach, they kept all their thoughts to themselves. They marched in silence, in the silence of alert attention.

By early morning they came to the house of a friend who received them as though awaiting them, and had food and provisions ready for their needs. Not long, however, did they tarry here, for the case for which they were hurrying was urgent, with the urgency of the life or death of one whom they respected. So with only a brief rest they set off again and now might Ernest Mann be thankful for his superb strength and good living, for the pace was continued during the day even more severely than throughout the night. It was wearing even his reserve.

It was a cross-country march, for there was not time to take the much longer, circuitous, easy trail which wound up to the head of the broad valley into which they had descended. But crossing the valley, directly on the other side, they began the steep ascent, following a shut-in ravine with a narrow, zig-zagging path for their steps. Over a little-used pass, down again into another of the innumerable valleys, which to the stranger are as indistinguishable as passages of a labyrinth. The captive's guides, however, were not confused by this intricacy of topography, holding steadily to their course as men in the country of their birth.

Up still another slope they started, and now steeper and steeper it became, and a bit more slowly they progressed. Thirty miles of rough mountain travel they had accomplished, in almost a straight course from Sarhad, and the strain was beginning to tell, even on the hardy constitutions of these natural-born mountaineers, and it was to be seen that their companion was laboring heavily.

Now, at last, a word of encouragement was given the foreigner by the Khan — a word that it was a pleasure for him to hear. “Only to the top of this ridge. See that little point, just to the side of that deep cut in the back of the mountains? — That is our goal. Only another hour and we’ll be there.”

## CHAPTER XVIII

Throughout the march the Khan had remained silent, intent only on pushing forward with all speed, but now that the end of his journey was in sight, his tension relaxed and he spoke further.

“Oh, Sahib, you have done well. Long have I heard that these ‘*Engrez*’ (English) have not the strength of men; that they live at their ease in bungalows. They drink the strong drink that our prophet has forbidden; they weaken themselves with rich food, and care only for their pleasure. But you have been verily as a Pathan, a true man of the border, in strength and in courage as now you are in dress. You have not feared when death itself followed your trail; when you were being taken by force into the heart of enemy country where never before the foot of white man has trod. You, an ‘*Engrez*’, I would be proud to call ‘brother’ — I, Jahangir Khan, son of Rahmat Ullah Khan, the chief of the powerful Yaqubzaies.”

Ernest Mann was deeply affected by this tribute of friendship and sensed well of what value it might be to him ere he would return to his own people. But with the shortness of breath on this last upward stretch, he merely remarked feelingly and briefly: “You are my brother, and I am your brother.” Thus was established a relationship in this strange land, far from the

abode of a European, a relationship that with the Pathan was as the relationship of blood.

Then Jahangir Khan told of the purpose and mission for which the doctor was called. "A guest in my father's house lies low — badly wounded in the battle of Qila Ghar. If his fate is good, he still lives and you may have opportunity to practice your knowledge and skill. If otherwise, in his fate it has been written — God's will be done!

"I warn you, though, oh, my brother, that this guest is brother — a real brother — to him who has been instigator and leader of this *lashkar*. To him this brother, who is younger, is very dear. He also is guest in my father's house. Of him you will have heard. He is a modern prophet, a prophet of sword and of blood, a prophet of the wars of Allah. Against all infidels, and especially against the *kafirs* of the English is he incensed.

"Mufti Ibrahim himself also was wounded and cursed the day in which the magic of the English overcame all our charms that had been granted us from the *Koran*. He was wounded, wounded by one of those cursed British bullets. Except for some potency of the charm which he carried, it surely would have killed him. But as it was, it only grazed his skull, stunning him for a time. It was when he fell that our men turned back from that slaughter-house, and in turning we carried with us this our leader and his brother.

“He soon recovered, but the fire that rages now in his heart is many times fiercer than before. Therefore, I tell you that you may know him whom you shall meet, and him whom you shall treat. But remember, come what may, Jahangir Khan, son of Rahmat Ullah Khan, chief of the Yaqubzaies, is your brother.”

They had arrived so close now that again there was no talking, and a small party came out from the buildings above to greet them. At the entrance to the enclosure stood a Khan of an age which in India is usually well advanced; but this man of fifty was yet well-preserved and bore the conscious dignity of authority. The resemblance of this elder man to his newly-found “brother” told Mann that this was Rahmat Ullah Khan, chief of the Yaqubzaies.

The son spoke but briefly to the father. “I have returned; I have brought with me the doctor from Sarhad. Tell me, does Abdullah the brother of Mufti Ibrahim still live? Does our revered leader, himself, still reside in this place as our guest?”

“Well done, my son. You have traveled quickly. I had not thought that this foreign doctor could have maintained such a pace. The man who is wounded still lives, and his brother is still guest in this house. Today only he has gone to a place some ten miles distant on business with a *jirgah* of the leaders of our ill-fated *lashkar*. I have stayed with the wounded. By evening he will return. But come in; rest and refresh yourselves. You too, oh *Hakim*, we shall honor you,



too, as our guest, for it is evident that among your own people you are a man."

On the exact ridge of the range was situated the *hujra* (guest-house) of Rahmat Ullah Khan. In front of this was the "sitting-place", or common gathering ground, for the inhabitants of this settlement, formed by the broad, flat, mud and dung-plastered roof of the house next lower down in the series of terraces.

An easy-chair, probably a relic of some long past raid into British territory, was produced from within and reserved for their "European" guest. A small, square-topped, unvarnished table was spread with a cloth, which was entirely covered with hand-embroidery in bright silk yarns of all colors and irregular designs — the work of the women of the household. The universally evident *charpai* was pulled forth and spread with thick comforts in flaming-colored cases. Three or four of these light-weight rope- or rawhide-strung portable beds were formed in a semi-circle about the center of interest, which was the strange doctor.

Soon there were seated on these beds a dozen or more of the Khans or others of some importance. Sandals or shoes were slipped off, and with legs crossed and folded, so that the feet were tucked underneath them, they sat in the position that is most comfortable to the man who knows not the use of a chair. The tenants and servants squatted on the bare floor of the roof. They sat in curious, staring silence, unmoving, except for the passing of the inevitable *huqqa*

from one to another. This pipe had a stem a full yard long, so that with the water-bowl still on the ground, the smoker might draw on it with scarce bending from his normal position. With hand cupped over the end of the stem and held close to the mouth, he inhaled with a force that made hollows of his cheeks. The smoke, drawn from the earthenware cup of smouldering tobacco, traveled down through the water with the "hubble-bubble" sound which has given this pipe its name in English, and then it passed up along the long stem to the mouth and lungs.

It was good to rest and to relax cramping muscles. The host, thoughtful of his guest in the ways of the East, called an old man to Ernest's service. His shoes were removed, his trouser-legs were rolled up, and this old man found and massaged every tired, aching muscle with the sure touch of one who has been trained during a life-time in that which is a common custom of the land. Oh, what a relief! Almost it was worth those thirty miles of gruelling travel just for this cessation and soothing of the pain.

Then was brought a great brass tray, laden with cups and saucers and a large china pot of hot tea (for the custom of the West had penetrated even to this unknown land). With the tea there were also *prantas*, the deliciously hot, flat, whole-wheat bread, saturated before cooking in *ghee* (clarified butter); also hard-boiled eggs, which the host himself shelled, leaving finger-prints on the glistening white, smooth inner surface that would take no Bertillon expert to detect;

and small, home-made cakes of unrecognized ingredients. This was "tea", only — a light refreshment; not a regular meal.

Ernest Mann rested, ate, and was thankful. It was good to be alive; it was good to be the guest in this strange household in this strange land; it was good to be here on this roof-top with a panoramic view that encompassed the complete circle. He looked to the north — far across range upon range of mountains similar to those that already he had passed, a region so little explored that even the maps of the Government Survey Department were uncertain. As he looked, he dreamed of the future. No one could foretell the intermediate steps and the means, but of this his faith assured him: that some day that country, too, would be open to the gospel of Christ.

Then, with an equally open and distant view, he looked to the south — across the hills up and down which he had labored. His thoughts sped with instantaneous speed back to his hospital, to the visible result of his last six years of service, to the change that had come over the people, to the opening of the land, which now was an accomplished fact. But his thoughts tarried not long at Sarhad. They leaped on out over another forty miles of well-known mountain and valley — out almost to where the hills end and begin to give way and drop to the level of the plains of the Punjab; to that cantonment, the farthest north in British India. Out of the hundreds and thousands

and hundreds of thousands of this frontier district they centered on one, the one who had become for him the only antecedent for the unmodified, feminine personal pronoun. "She" might even now be receiving word of his capture.

## CHAPTER XIX

Soon, however — very soon — the professional instinct, prompted by love and sympathy for human kind, aroused the doctor from his reverie. For not long could he remain inactive in the nearness of dire need.

He started and addressed himself to his host: "It is not fitting that I sit here at ease — I, in whose God-given skill may be life or death — while so close to me lies the one who needs my aid. Take me at once, O Khan Sahib Ji, to the side of this bed of suffering, and we shall see what God in His mercy will do for him."

"The wounded one's brother has not yet returned," was the answer. "You arrived hours ahead of what we had thought possible, and until he gives his consent you may not operate. But to see him, and to study his condition, there can be no objection. Come with me."

Into a small, separate courtyard he led the way. There lay one on a string-bed who was only a lad, some eighteen or nineteen years of age. But his face was distorted by the unalleviated, excruciating suffering of four days. The wound had been plastered — after the manner of the untrained, superstitious, Oriental *hakim* — with cow-dung, and over it had been

bandaged what four days before had been a fresh, raw skin of a goat. All was now putrid, both the wound and its "cure." The doctor marveled at the natural reserve of such a man that had kept him still alive. It was a reserve that had been bred into this son of the border and cultivated in him from childhood by rigorous living.

First, the attention of the doctor turned to the palliation of the awful agony, and he begged permission to administer an opiate. The induction of any form of artificial anesthesia, or the use of pain-killing drug, is not the Pathan's idea of bravery that befits a man. Stoic endurance is his pride, even to undergoing a major operation with fully conscious faculties. Nevertheless, the Khan, with that respect which had been born on first meeting with this "*Engrez*" doctor, and possibly with a bit of sympathy for this youth who had already proved his manhood in suffering, gave his consent. Again, however, at sight of the hypodermic needle, he started to protest, but by this time the doctor, acting as his own nurse, had cleaned and sterilized a patch on the patient's arm and was injecting the fluid. So the Khan refrained from interruption.

Sleep! Who can tell just what it is? That state which precludes, by its very definition, the possibility of investigation or a full definition of its state. The unconsciousness and insensibility of sleep cannot include the two qualifications necessary for a scientific observation of its own experience, consciousness and

sensibility. So sleep remains one of the everlasting, universal mystery-facts of our common existence, the external semblance of which only we may know. Sleep, that state so common and so universal that in it normally every human being, every one of the thousands of days that he lives on this earth, spends some time — yet when he wakes he cannot tell where or what his consciousness had been while he was unconscious. We lay ourselves down. Sleep evens up all the high and low spots of life for a time. The high peaks of pleasure and desirable emotion are leveled down, and the hollows of grief and pain, worry and strife, are filled up. While man is asleep he knows not that he is, and when he awakes he knows not that he was. Blessed is sleep to the human being.

So this youth, Abdullah, brother of Mufti Ibrahim, slept — the sleep of one with whom nature has been defied and defeated by pain, and is four days behind schedule; a sleep now induced by nature, when freed by the knowledge and skill of the physician from the sentry of pain, which in its turn has been subjected and bound.

Then, without further questioning, the doctor began the process of cleansing and investigation of the nature of the wound in itself. He had taken away all the putrifying mass of accretions; had bathed the wounded part with warm water and a strong antiseptic; had determined the course and effect of the bullet, which had entered the heavy muscles of the hip, and passing through, had broken the head of the femur.

So serious was this injury and the results of its subsequent treatment, that even if life be spared, unless this young giant of the mountains received the greatest of surgical and medical skill, he might never walk again on both feet. This much had the doctor determined when there was heard a commotion without in the *baitak*.

Rahmat Ullah Khan hastily departed, and the doctor, left alone, sensed the significance of this disturbance, but continued undeterred in his ministrations.

There soon appeared in the doorway of the courtyard a figure that had been for Mann as but a legend. Having straightened up after the low passage, the newcomer towered above even the lintel, there in silence, too overmastered by his own passions to give vent immediately to them. In that moment, also, the doctor straightened from his task of mercy, and unconsciously his powerful shoulders squared back, and his head also lifted with a set of almost imperial dignity. Glance with glance, unwavering, before ever a word was exchanged, these two for the first time matched one another. Ernest saw here a man, the like of whom scarce before had he ever seen. From his shoulders and upward — like Saul, the son of Kish — this masterpiece of the race of Pathans stood above even the tall of his own people.

Never before had this man been gainsaid or defeated in purpose or whim, so that the debacle of his *lashkar* at Qila Ghar had greatly increased the rage of his fanaticism and desire for revenge. Thus, for



a moment of measuring silence, these two confronted each other.

Then, raising high over his head his mighty staff, the figure in the doorway released the flow of his pent-up hatred. He used the second person singular pronoun in address, which in his language expresses either affectionate intimacy or the commonest form of strong abuse.

“Thou shalt die, thou dog of an infidel, thou swine! Thou shalt die the death that is fitting! Thou shalt atone for the death of three hundred of the faithful! Thou hast defiled my brother with thy touch — him, who was dearer than life to me. I, Mufti Ibrahim, son of Izhaq, the great Mufti of Kabul, have spoken it. Thou shalt die! Rahmat Ullah Khan, chief of the Yaqubzaies, let him be had out of here, lest his blood further pollute the body of my brother!”

Mann stood, but not a word did he utter and never by even the contraction of an eyeball did he give way to the threat of the other. Not with defiance or a counter-threat, but with a confidence, an assurance, and the superb control of the man who at heart is unafraid, he stood in the attitude that he had first taken and matched well the fire of the Pathan.

In his defense, however, spoke the host, Rahmat Ullah Khan, the chief of the Yaqubzaies; and he spoke with the dignity and finality of one who is used to ruling his own household. In the presence of him who had been the leader of his own people in the *lashkar*, and even opposed to him, he spoke.

“Not so, O, most honorable, O Mufti Sahib. This foreigner, this ‘*Engrez*’ doctor also is my guest. He has come as a man amongst men, unafraid of the dangers that to him may be unknown. He is my guest, the guest of my people. My people they were that fought with you at Qila Ghar, and what tribe sent forth more men, and what tribe returned leaving more dead and wounded than the Yaqubzaies? Aye, from there my own second son returned not back. Yet I, the chief, say that while this man remains here, he has the safe custody of the tribe of the Yaqubzaies, and he shall not die in this house. Treat him as is fitting from guest to guest while yet under my roof, or within the bounds of my tribe.

“A long journey he has come, and come with a grace that I have never before seen in any man, and truly there is a quality manifest in him that seems not human. He has come to restore life to this brother of yours. Slay not your own brother by the death of this only one through whom he may yet live. Let him who is known on yon side of the border and whose fame has reached far on this because of his skill in healing, let him be unhindered in his service to your brother.”

At that moment the young man on the bed turned and groaned in his sleep, as though adding his petitions to the urgency of his host.

A conflict of passions was depicted on the stern face of this would-be administrator of vengeance. But, at last, when he had reconciled in his own mind

the two major forces that fought within him, he answered, "Even so, for the sake of my brother, let him live. Let him to his work, and if my brother shall die under his hand, I myself shall see that he, too, shall die. Aye, even though in this case the dog of a *kafir* be successful, even though my brother shall live, my vengeance shall follow him in retribution for the lives of the others. Outside the bounds of your protection it shall overtake him. Let this foreign *hakim* begin immediately so that if the fate of my brother be good, he may yet live."

Only now, at last, did Ernest speak. "It is well. For the sake of your brother I shall now live, and God grant that he, too, may live and —" he breathed this as a prayer, the secret of which only the Father could hear — "may this mighty man also come to live, live as You would give eternal life."

Then he turned to Jahangir Khan, who had accompanied his father and the Mufti to the scene, but had spoken no word. "My brother, you shall be my assistant. None other shall attend. May all others be excluded while this operation is being performed. It may be long and it may be difficult, but you are my brother and will not fail me. Come. Let us waste no more time, but prepare for this service."

Operating-table there was none, so he would work on the *charpai* on which the patient was now lying. A sterilizer also was an unknown article, but a couple of *ingithies* (light, open-ended sheet-iron drums, fitted with grates for charcoal fire) with *degchies* (alu-

minum pots), filled with boiling water, served the purpose. Another bed, spread with a sheet of sterilized gauze, was the instrument table. Surgeon's apron, rubber gloves, instruments, gauze, anesthetics — all had been brought out of the kit. The doctor worked with the efficiency and sureness of one who before this had operated under primitive conditions. Soon all was ready.

Mann placed the ether-mask and showed his assistant the method of dropping, drop-by-drop, the required amount to maintain unconsciousness. He then cleansed and probed, and finally found and removed the bullet that had lodged against the bone of the hip.

With the handicap of such working conditions and lack of trained assistance, it was a full hour and more before he was ready for the setting of the plaster cast. This was so wound and adjusted that he would be able still to get at the wound for daily dressing and treating.

Only just with the fading light of day the case was finished, and the bed with its still sleeping burden was carried to an inner room.

No more that night did Doctor Mann see Mufti Ibrahim.

Dinner was served, a dinner of desi food such as would have been a feast in the homes of the great mass of the poor of the country. Again the doctor visited his patient, who was now profiting by a much

more natural and restful sleep. Mann's request to be allowed a bed along-side, so as to be ready to answer any summons of the night, was granted, and again Jahangir Khan was the only other that remained as a companion.

## CHAPTER XX

The first two days and nights passed in rather constant attendance on the sick. The wild, delirious fever began to abate; the raw inflammation of the wound and its terrible septic condition were clearing. A little he might now begin to relax his intentness. Still, many more days he must remain as nurse if he were to have hopes for the successful recovery of this youth. During these days his fame as a physician and surgeon spread, and many others from the mountainsides and valleys round about came for treatment of all kinds of diseases. There were some others, also, who still bore signs of the recent combat at Qila Ghar. Some cases, too serious to be brought to him, he visited. All were given freely and graciously of the skill and love of the doctor.

As near to his usual custom as was possible under such restricted conditions, Ernest sought times of fellowship with the Father. As the crisis of his patient's condition passed, he hunted for himself outside a "spot," sheltered and secluded from frequent intrusion. In the mornings, after he had had his tea and *prantas*, and had made his round of the sick, he betook himself to this "spot" for a quiet hour.

One day his "brother," Jahangir Khan, followed him here and inquired as to his occupation. Little,

however, could even that man conceive of the idea of spiritual fellowship and prayer. The outward genuflections of the ritualistic five-times-a-day of *namaz*, in full view of his fellows, had been the Khan's only experience of prayer. Even less could he understand the gospel message of the cross, or the love of God that sent His only begotten Son into the world to save sinners. Loyalty and admiration, however, for him to whom he had sworn the allegiance of brotherhood, insured his tolerance and his silence before others.

A week passed thus, and because of the steady progress of the patient, the Mufti Ibrahim was unable to find occasion to speak openly against the doctor. Seldom at all did he take notice, by any speech, of the presence of the hated "*Engrez*," and as much as possible he avoided approach, even to his proximity. But Ernest marked the evil flash of his eye and the furrowed drawing of his heavy brows, and the evident enmity of his whole attitude. The more that his brother owed his life to this *kafir*, so much the more he hated and plotted to wreak his vengeance, "for who could tell with what evil magic he had produced the cure?"

With the lifting of the hanging cloud of gloom and foreboding, a gayer and more natural atmosphere pervaded the settlement. More visitors were coming and going. Hunting trips were organized. Games and contests of strength and skill, that delight the heart of the stalwart Pathan, were engaged in.

Particularly the wrestling bouts were of keen interest to Ernest, who experienced often the old-time thrill of the mat as he watched two lithe, powerful, breech-clothed bodies circle and charge and feint, and come at last to close grips with each other.

Another there was, also, who seemed almost as absorbed an observer as himself — his friend, the enemy, Mufti Ibrahim. His powerful frame swayed and twisted in involuntary unison with the contestants, as though he, too, longed to take the place of these wrestlers, and enjoy the actual physical contacts, instead of watching merely the vicarious struggle of another.

An unusually well-matched bout had been ended, and so intense had been these two in their observations that each had forgotten the other and had crowded close, side-by-side. Then it was that the giant from Kabul realized the proximity of the object of his hate, and a gleam more evil than usual came to his eye. He studied him closely for a moment, as would a cat that is determining just how and when to spring on a cornered rat.

“Ha, son-of-a-pig, white-face *kafir!*” he hissed. “Art thou interested in this pastime of men? Thinkest thou that thou couldst so take the part of a man in this game of men? Afraid thou art to face a man in that ring with the stake of thy winning thine own safe exodus from this country!”

Mann was surprised, but not unready for such a challenge. Confronting now so closely this one whose



greatest desire seemed his own death, again his head lifted and his shoulders squared, and an answering light flashed back to the eyes of his tormenter. All other activity ceased, silence encompassed the whole company as every ear and every eye was strained to catch the effect of this insulting challenge.

Six inches taller, fifty pounds heavier, and muscle-hardened as an athlete and a mountaineer, this champion towered over his foreign antagonist. But Ernest Mann, with a fearlessness and a control of calm assurance that drew from the encompassing circle under-breathed exclamations of admiration, answered without hesitation.

“Stake or no stake, my safety or no, oh, honorable Mufti Ibrahim, tomorrow at the same hour as the matches of today, I shall take my place as a man in that ring, providing only that you, oh, honorable one, shall be the man whom there I shall face. What say you? Tomorrow shall we meet as man to man?”

A twinge of involuntary admiration, felt by one brave man for the bravery of another, was immediately consumed in the furnace of the Afghan's hate, and cunning and subtlety provided draft to its flame. As he looked on him and thought of having this representative of the anathematized race within the grasp of his mighty hands, an expression of malicious anticipation covered his face. He was confident in his own superior strength, and he remembered well the body-breaking tactics, allied to the sport of wrestling, that he had learned in former years. Thus he recognized

the opportunity that he sought, now offered to him, to accomplish the fulfillment of his threat of vengeance, and the sacrificing of this particular victim to the atonement of the lives of his followers.

So he answered, "Ha, wouldst thou contend with me, who ten years ago stood as champion wrestler of the whole of the country of Afghanistan? Thinkest thou this the path of safety and return to thine accursed people? Tomorrow at this hour, as thou hast said, meet me in that ring, and these two hands of mine shall rend thee limb from limb, and feed thee to the vultures and buzzards and the jackals whose food alone thou art worthy to become!"

## CHAPTER XXI

That night Jahangir Khan, the "brother," talked long and tried to persuade Mann that his was an hopeless attempt.

"A man you have proven yourself, a man whom men love and admire. But this that you have undertaken is impossible. You know not him whom you have so lightly challenged. Truly, he has been a champion in this sport amongst men taller and heavier and stronger than you. He is the 'enemy of your life.' As he will contend it will not be sport, but murder. He sees not a mere wrestler's victory, but your death. He will use any unfair means to slay you. Oh, my brother, do not enter that ring against him! Allow me, even yet, with the authority of my father, to call off such an affray that must be but your slaughter."

But Ernest Mann had considered well the task he had set himself in that brief moment of his challenge. With the assurance from One mightier than all others, he remained firm.

"No, my brother, you would have me take the part of a woman. I boast not in my own strength, but in Him Whose servant I am. Fear not for me. Not quite so unacquainted as you think am I in this sport of wrestling. Not so one-sided as you imagine may be its outcome. As I have said, so shall I meet this

giant in the ring, and may the God Whom I worship give me strength and skill to the glory of His own name. You again shall be my assistant, my second, in this contest.”

The news of this match-to-be spread quickly and far, and the next day a great company was gathered on the hilltop to see a bout such as certainly had never been promoted on that side of the border before.

Wrestling is the most primitive and universal of all sports. In every land and amongst every people it has been commonly practiced. In the pentathlon this was the sport of sports for the ancient Greeks. In all European countries and America such contests still prove a popular attraction. In Japan today the closely related method of self-defense by bodily disabling the opponent has made famous the mysterious sounding words, *jiu jitsu*. So, also, throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan and its neighboring lands it is the most common and universal of sports. Outside nearly every one of the hundreds of thousands of its villages, in some soft-ploughed field, may be seen boys and young men, with glistening brown bodies, stark-naked except for the breech-cloth, contending for this mastery in strength and skill. *Pahlwans*, who are usually literally giants in size and strength, are the heroes of youth. Weight and brute force are the factors that count most. Little are these wrestlers of the East bothered with rules or restrictions, for any hold and any advantage may be taken over an opponent.

So has been produced the mighty *Gama*, whose approximate three-hundred-weight of bone and pleated muscle impress the beholder, as does the immovability of a mountain. These qualities have proved more than a match for any of the highly skilled wrestlers of Europe who have dared trespass on his domain, and have entitled the Indian champion to the claim of the world's champion wrestler.

Ernest Mann, however, was not unacquainted with the methods and customs of Indian wrestling, for, for nearly a decade, he had lived close to the people of this land and at every opportunity he had watched, with a professional interest, contests of wrestling. He stood now, with body bared after the approved style of the East, his fair white skin in striking contrast to even the fairness of this Pathan of the far north. Thus exposed, the cords of muscle up and down his back, across his shoulders, and bulging large his biceps, increased the impression of his power. Among those who observed closely, many now began to question, even before the contest commenced, whether here was not a formidable antagonist for even the famous *Kabuli*.

As Ernest entered the ring of soft-turned earth, some twelve feet in diameter, which served in the place of a mat — as he faced this *pahlwan* from the grim northern hills — well he knew the task that was his.

Experienced he was in the catch-as-catch-can method of wrestling in common vogue in America, which

makes legitimate every hold except that which would strangle or cause fracture or dislocation. Thus also he knew all maneuvers common to the European methods of more restricted holds. Well also he knew that this tremendous antagonist opposed him with the set purpose of injuring or maiming or even of killing if he could. But well, also, Ernest knew, as a trained wrestler, and knew also as a surgeon, the body-breaking anatomical tricks of *jiu jitsu*, and he knew also how to avoid and defend himself from them. The feints, and the pliability and the sureness of eye of the Japanese system that allows even a small man such a tremendous advantage over a slower-moving, slower-thinking giant of an antagonist, were all at his command.

So, there faced each other in the ring these two experienced, stalwart, splendid specimens of manhood. Men of the border they were, one from this side and one from that. And now when they were seen in the ring together they did not appear so uneven a match.

The American missionary's eye, during his years spent in India, had not grown dim, nor had his hand lost much of its cunning or become feeble. He was physically and professionally fit. But the greatest quality in his favor was his faith in his God, which gave to him that calmness, that sure, steady control over every muscle and move, that concentration of attention to every detail, which let nothing escape and took greatest advantage of every slightest opportunity.

The Afghan Maulvie was handicapped — handicapped because he knew not the knowledge of the other — handicapped by his own haughty and careless contempt for the ability and strength of his opponent; but most handicapped by the very fury that burned within him, that made him reckless of all consequences except that of his fiendish purpose.

For a few moments only they faced each other, studying for an opening of attack. They crouched and circled, maneuvering for favorable position. But not for long did the vengeful fire of the Pathan tolerate such tactics. With the lust of blood in his eye, and his hands as talons stretched to grasp his prey, he rushed to do as he had promised and tear to pieces this one who dared to oppose him. Mann, on tip-toe, foresaw the attack and awaited the charge, but with agility and speed almost beyond the power of eyesight to follow, he avoided at the last that terrible clasp. Twisting and turning as the other stumbled past off his balance, he caught him and with a bowing of back and a tension of mighty muscles, such as had lain unsuspected when dormant, he heaved clean over his head the great bulk of his opponent.

Purposely neglecting the advantage thus gained to end at once this bout, Mann faced about and awaited the recovery of Ibrahim.

Now there was a holding of breath all around the closely-packed circle of witnesses. A new aspect was apparent on the faces of all. Instead of a mere farce,

there was now presented before them the promise of the greatest wrestling match they had ever witnessed.

The cautious, wary circling, one of the other, began again. Some of the blind rage had been knocked, by the fall, out of the mind of Mufti, and in its place was the sly cunning of a great cat. He would not again rush off his guard, but would maneuver in some way to come to close grips, so that his hands might find their object in the flesh and bone of the "Englishman".

At last they closed, and the struggle of body against straining body continued. For minutes, neither secured a hold that was an advantage. The tension and exertion of constantly taut muscles broke glistening sweat, even in that cool air. Slowly, the weight and superior reach of the Afghan prevailed, and he secured a grip on the body of Mann that, according to all his experience, must mean the breaking of the arm at the socket, and then, he thought, he would wreak his full vengeance before any could interfere. But just as his heart exulted with diabolical glee, Mann's arm, even his whole body, relaxed the strain and tension of muscle and tendon, which would have wrought his own injury, and suddenly with the limpness and flexibility of an infant he slipped with a spiral movement and escaped, uninjured, from the grasp.

Again a great sigh of relief and approbation came from the circle of the audience, and proclaimed that the favor of these hillmen was not entirely with their



own boastful and vengeful champion. This time there was a more vocal note of admiration evidenced than had been given before.

Now, for a third time, both faced each other, breathing deeply and resolved to end as quickly as possible this encounter. Mann determined to avoid any more close grips which put him at such a disadvantage with the larger, heavier man. The open, sudden attack and throw must be his method. Ibrahim, on the other hand, had recognized that which was in his favor, and he sought again a tight hold on the elusive body of his adversary. So they maneuvered, each for the position that would be for him most favorable.

With feints, with simulated attacks and retreats, each sought to draw the other off guard. Mann's patience and his strategy, however, were superior.

With difficulty, the giant of the hills had been able to curb his fiery nature thus far. Now that once he had felt within the grip of his hands the object he wished to rend, his lust of destruction was so whetted that he again threw away all caution, and when it seemed that his adversary was momentarily off guard and in a position for another close clasp, he rushed.

But in that moment, even as his hands closed for their hold, they seized nothing but thin air, for the body he had seen there had vanished. Mann had wrenched to one side, stooped, and tackled the oncoming figure in approved football style. The impact of his shoulder against the upper legs and the force of

his spring lifted the other clean off his feet, and with another mighty heave he twirled the heavy burden so that it fell with breath-jarring violence on its back. With a movement that was but the continuation of his spring he landed with the sprawled figure, but on top, and supplementing with his own powerful grasp the force of the fall, he pressed to earth both shoulders of the enemy.

For a long moment he held them there, the sign that in both India and America is the sign of victory, and of defeat.

Then, with a spring coordinated from all fours at once, the victor cleared the body of his prostrate foe and landed lightly on his feet. So sudden had been this result that from the audience at first there was but the sound of sharply in-taken breath; but as Mann stood to one side and their own fallen champion began to struggle to his feet, there was involuntarily a mighty, almost unanimous roar of admiration for this surprising foreigner who again had proved himself a man among men, according to the standards of the Pathan.

There was no wild, insane demonstration as would have been in America after such a feat, but these hill tribesmen showed in their own way that they now accepted this stranger as one of their own and were proud of his prowess.

## CHAPTER XXII

Now these simple-minded, bravery-loving people did Mann service with the respect and deference due to one of their own chiefs. For, they considered, had not this white man come as a stranger, but come unafraid, and had he not spent his days among them doing good? He was no enemy, but a friend, a friend whose friendship was not that of weakness and dependence, but of a quality that they could not understand. And this other, this one from Kabul, he too really was but a stranger. He was not one of any of their tribes; he did not belong at all to the border people, but had come in from the outside and had brought to them nothing but injury and defeat. He it was who had stirred them out of their peaceful and profitable condition, and led them to his own purpose against the British Raj. He it was who was the real cause of the loss of three hundred of their best men.

Better had they restore friendly relations and maintain peace with the British Raj which had shown itself so invincible against their combined attack. The British Raj had never made an unprovoked attack on them; the British Raj had even paid them subsidies of much money while they remained peaceable. And if this specimen of the white race, who had come into their midst, represented their man-power, then cer-

tainly they need not feel ashamed of their alliance. Yes, better had they owe allegiance to the Government of India than to the cruel, unstable rule that was in Kabul.

So Mann was almost embarrassed that evening by the homage of his companions. Mufti Ibrahim, also, sensed this change in attitude and swore in his heart that there would be no further delay, but that in spite of his host and his former followers he would fulfill his vengeance.

Night-time came, the time for rest. Mann had retired, for here there were not the conveniences for night reading or study as in his *daftar* at Sarhad. But the bed at his side was still empty; Jahangir Khan had not yet occupied his accustomed place. Mann felt that some occurrence of importance was taking place that would account for this delayed rest, something that might possibly affect himself, so he lay awake and watching.

In this late evening time he had come to allow himself the intense pleasure of memory and visions of the days and possibly years that he hoped were to come. In this hour of quiet, when no contacts of those physically near disturbed him, he felt her presence and fellowship. As nightly he re-lived those experiences of meeting with her, he came to a clearer and surer interpretation of her attitude. It must be that she still loved him. No other explanation satisfied all events and factors in the case. Somehow, the ten-year-old conflict of their calls to service would be recon-

ciled. So, in a semi-conscious state of bliss, unhampered by the restrictions of time or of space, unhampered, also, by logical sequence of events as in actuality, the longings of his heart led him whither they would.

So, when there came to his ear the sound of an opening door, turning on its crude, wooden socket and pinion that served in the place of hinges, he started. But he lay still, only turning his eyes to observe the one approaching. Midnight had passed and only now Jahangir came to his side. A moment the Khan stood silent and looked down on the recumbent figure of the one whom he loved as his own. Then, in an undertone, he spoke.

“Doctor Sahib, do you wake?”

Ernest answered immediately, in the same tone, “Yes, brother, I am awake.”

“This is not a night for sleeping. By morning you must be far away, approaching the border of your own people, and this place will be lonely for me, your brother.”

“Why so sudden a dismissal? Have I lost favor in your sight or with your father and his men?”

“Nay,” was the answer, “but it is because you have won favor with all — except one — that we would return you to your own in safety before that one can do you injury. For three hours my father, chief of the Yaqubzaies, I, and the leaders of our own people and also of the neighboring tribes, have sat in *jirgah!* We have seen the folly of our way, of fighting the

great *Sirkar*, and we would send you as our messenger bearing our apologies and our proffers of peace. We desire the peace and profit of friendship with your people.

“Also, for your personal safety, I am concerned, and my father also. The honor, the privileges, and the protection of a guest are yours in this house. But there is another here that would break the rights of guestship. Even now, this very night, he is scheming to come and destroy you, and it might be that his vengeance would somehow find its mark. So arise quickly and prepare to depart. We, the same who were your captors at Sarhad, will be now your body-guard and escort-of-honor to the border above Qila Ghar.”

Many interests made a conflict of Ernest's thoughts. A messenger of peace, that was a role that he desired for the sake of his friends. But to leave so unceremoniously, and as a fugitive at night, was not to his liking. He would not depart in this secret fashion because of any fear for himself, but to relieve his host of an embarrassing situation that might easily involve his new-found friends in much misunderstanding and possible trouble: he was ready even to seem to flee. With that consideration, too, came another — he had asked only ten days' respite from the constabulary officer. Quick calculation showed him that these days had been completed with the one that had now just passed. In his primitive, close-to-nature surroundings the passage of time, or the relationships

with the great outside world, had been lost track of. An absolutely distinct, separate existence he had lived during these ten days. And because he had sent no message, nor had received any, he could only guess at the condition and activities of his associates on the other side of the border. Now the thought of the distress of friends and the concern of the officials determined his acceptance of the proposals for his immediate departure in the dead of night. If a rescue party should have been organized and should set out the next morning, thinking of him as a captive or murdered, much more fighting might be the result. Yes; he must push on this very night, that he might arrive next morning at the fort. Of his patient, too, he thought. For him, however, nothing more was required but long rest for the knitting of the bone and muscle. Him he could leave in the care of his assistant.

So with all consideration, except those of his own selfish honor and comfort, calling him, he answered simply, "I am ready. I go with you at once."

Less time was needed for the preparation for this departure than had been when he left Sarhad. Within a half hour, without disturbing the household, he was off. Rahmat Ullah Khan, the chief, honored him with his own company down as far as the stream-bed, along which their path would lead for some miles. Then again this company of seemingly six Pathans struck off in the silence of night in the mountains.

## CHAPTER XXIII

The significance of this move, with respect to his own intimate and personal longings, had escaped Ernest in the hurry of departure, but it became the companion of his thoughts along the way. During the past ten days the fulfillment of his desires had been so unrelated to his corporeal existence that they had always partaken of an ethereal nature. But now that he was on the way, and the time when he might see her in physical reality was so close, an entirely different sensation suffused him. Tomorrow morning he would be at Qila Ghar. Maybe she would have word for him there — at least he hoped for some message from his missionary friends. And then — maybe that day — maybe the next — or at most, the day after that! He tingled with the thought of this as no imagination of her in these past days of indefinite future had ever affected him.

Yes, but how much of his month was still left? How many days of it had already passed? Several there had been before he had even known of her presence in India. Then there had been this one great unforgettable day — then three till the battle — then four or five days till his capture — and now ten full days more on this side of the border. How many in all? He calculated roughly. Previously, at that early



morning breakfast table at Eliotsharar, he had figured that he had three weeks left. Now there couldn't be more than two or three days left. But surely, if she loved him still — and now he felt certain that she did — surely then, this month wouldn't end it all. Surely somehow it would be arranged whereby this month would be only the beginning of a new life together!

But — how did he know? . . . Did she love him? . . . How much was this certainty, that he had felt, only the imaginings of those indefinite, dream-like days of his unnatural life on this side of the border? What had he to go on? Certainly she had never spoken any word that would indicate a renewed deep affection for him; no act of hers would give basis for the assumption of such hopes. Only there had been that look. But a look might easily have been misinterpreted by the intenseness of his own longings! And only a day — or two — left! His month had been spent and if she went on, and on around the world, on to her old manner of life and associations, then what a blank she would leave behind in his life!

But no! This was not right — this was not the way of faith; this was not trust. Had he not committed his way to his Lord before? He had renounced this month, deliberately, at his call to service. Could he not yet trust his Father to do what was best, to make all things to work together for his good? Uncertainty indeed there was again in his heart as to whether she

loved him, and whether she would ever be his life companion. But no uncertainty could there be as to the Father's love and His care. Whatever was right, whatever was best, that most certainly would be done. So what better than the best would he ask for? — even though he could not yet himself see the end? “Father, Thy will be done”, was again in his final and satisfying prayer.

Still, as he marched along, his thoughts were of her. Though he questioned now the correctness of his interpretation of what he had seen in her eyes, yet in his own heart was again that peace that passeth all understanding.

The night passed on their march. The dawn broke, and yet far ahead of them the pass above Qila Ghar appeared. Some *prantas*, brought along by the Khan, served as a hasty breakfast — then on they pushed. Now they were following up a narrow, steep valley, headed straight toward the depression in the ridge that formed the pass. They came at last to the side of the camping ground of the *lashkar*, occupied that night before its ill-fated attack on the British forces. As they drew near the defile itself there rang out the challenge, “Halt! Who goes there?” — the challenge of the sentry still on guard at that fatal pass.

The six men, in trans-border Pathan garb, stopped as four armed sepoy blocked their path. One of the six, scarcely distinguishable from the others, stepped forward and answered with a mixture of English and

Urdu, "We are friends. It is I, Dr. Mann, returned from ten days across the border. Send an escort with me to the Major Sahib at once."

The change of expression on the face of the *Subedar* in charge was comical when he found that the Pathan at whom he had leveled his rifle was the famous Doctor Sahib himself. The butt of his gun dropped to the earth at his side, he stiffened to attention, and saluted. Then he spoke.

"For days we have had orders to watch for you or a messenger from you. The Major Sahib will be relieved and glad to see you." Then, turning to more of his men off duty at the side of the road he shouted his order, "Nur Mohammed, take two others with you and escort the Doctor Sahib at once to the fort."

Before starting, however, Mann spoke again to the Indian officer. "Subedar Ji, these five men who have accompanied me, you will allow to return in peace. They are my friends and the friends now of our Government."

Then, turning to his former companions, he bade a farewell, with four of them in Western style, the handshake, which is rapidly becoming affected by the East and is appreciated by an Easterner from a Westerner.

But with him who was their leader, their Khan, with him who had proven himself truly his own sworn brother, he used no such casual salutation. But with the Indian custom of deep friendship, which seems

to the uninitiated Englishman or American as an excess of emotional display between man and man, he embraced him with a close hug, first with the face over one shoulder and then over the other. Then, still holding him close, he spoke words of affection, appreciation, and farewell — words in the Pushtu language, which translated literally into English, seem effeminate and unsuitable. But there on the top of that wild pass, surrounded only by Indians and Pathans, and dressed after their own fashion, it seemed only the natural parting of two very close friends, even of two brothers.

“God bless you. Farewell. We shall meet again.”

With these last words he turned about, salaamed to the *Subedar*, and motioned his new escort to bring with them his medical kit and light luggage.

Only barely in time was he on his arrival at the fort. For with something of impatience Major Patterson had awaited the end of these ten days, and now he was preparing for further action. Scouts, who somehow missed them on their trail home, were even then out across the border seeking information of his position and welfare. Not until Mann had drawn close, until the features of his face were distinguishable, did this British officer recognize the object of his immediate concern.

“Dr. Mann!” he exclaimed. “Is it really you yourself in that disguise? I must say I’m glad to see you back, for several reasons. Are you sound and well?”

“Quite fit and fine, as I have had opportunity to demonstrate over there . . .” Mann waved his arm in a comprehensive gesture. “Only I’m sorry for having been the cause of adding to your worries.”

“I wonder if you really are. This last exploit of yours, I’m afraid, will not receive the same kind of mention in my report as your former action did.”

“Don’t be too sure of that. Don’t write up your report of my return until you have heard my own. I have been out on duty and fighting battles according to the rules and orders of my Commanding Officer. So wait until you find out the results, then we’ll see whose is the greater victory.”

“Righto. That’s fair. I’ll hold up my decision for a while and give you a chance to show what you’ve been doing. But come along in; you must be ready to get out of that outfit and live and eat like a white man again. And you, Subedar Dost Mohammed,” changing in mid-speech the language and the person of address, “cancel the orders given this morning for preparation for the march, and get all men back on regular duty and drill.”

## CHAPTER XXIV

Oh, how good it was to get into a bath with lots of hot water and good soap; how good to change to really clean clothes, an extra outfit of Major Patterson's; how good to be rid of the crawly, biting things that are sure to be the intimate body companions of those living "native"; how good to sit at a regular table, have a knife and fork again in his hand, and to eat the kind of food that had been his from his childhood; how good to have one opposite him at the table, one with whom he could converse in his mother-tongue and find an intelligent understanding on all subjects; how good — and this thought intruded itself even in the midst of the realization of the other good things — how good it was to have completed the first stage of his return to "her"! Now he was anxious to be off on the next lap, but he must fulfill his duty, and then would the personal pleasure of his longed-for meeting be his.

While he ate he gave a vivid account of his adventures, beginning with his capture in the ravine that night, of the gradually changing attitude of the people whose guest-by-force he had been, of the one who opposed him, and of that one's waning influence and power, briefly of the encounter in the ring, and then

of the decision of the *jirgah* that had met in the early part of this night, only just past.

“Now I feel better, thanks again to your hospitality. And if we can have the privacy of your *daftar* with only your head-clerk to read to us for a while, I have some papers here to show you that I am sure will be interesting and that may change your estimate of this last ‘exploit’ of mine, as you call it.”

Cheap, age-yellowed paper, such as had been laid away for years in a place where paper is not much in use, double-foolscap size, it did not look like the material of important documents, but as the *Munshi* read, its real consequence became apparent. Translated, it contained the following:

*From: —*

The Chiefs and Khans of many tribes, assembled in *Jirgah* at the place of Rhamat Ullah Khan, chief of the Yaqubzaies,

*To: —*

The Great Government, the British Raj, the Invincible, may the blessing of Allah rest upon her.

After our most humble respects, be it known to your honor that we, the Chiefs and Khans of these border tribes, have realized the folly of our way in breaking the peace that your honor had established, and in making unprovoked attack on the territory of Sirkar. Your humble servants of this territory were stirred to this act

of foolhardiness by one who himself is not of us, one who had come into our midst from another country. The inflicting of terrible defeat on us at Qila Ghar had again revealed to us your honor's power and our powerlessness. But more than all this, the residence in our midst for many days of your most esteemed Doctor Sahib, has revealed to us the character of your men. We have grown to honor and respect and love him, and because of him, you, too. He has taught us many things; he has taught us of the benefits to be received from your favor. Against such we cannot remain at enmity.

We, therefore, send him, our friend and your friend, as our intermediary of peace, and beg of your most gracious Government to put behind you the thought of our folly and our *lashkar*, and that again there may be amongst us only peace.

Following this was the whole side of foolscap page covered with signatures in vernacular handwriting and thumb-prints of the unlettered.

The constabulary officer, serving also as political agent, extended his hand in a warm grip. "My hat is off to you, Doctor; you have won. We fought them and conquered them, but you have done more than conquer. We won the battle, but you have won them. We put the fear of British bullets in their hearts, but you have changed that to love and respect. Now only



that *pahlwan* of yours remains to be dealt with. He had better keep quiet and on the other side of our border, for there's a reward of ten thousand rupees out for his capture.

“Now we can send back this very day the extra troops that the army men left out here. And, believe me, this paper and its literal translation go with my report to the chief commissioner. Any favor that I can recommend for you from the Government, you will please make known. Certainly some recognition and reward of these services will be made.”

Now Ernest felt free to inquire of more personal matters. “Have you seen anything of my friends from Eliotsharar, or have you heard from them?”

“Yes; four or five days ago that young chap — Wallace is his name, isn't it? (sounds as if he ought to be a fellow-countryman of my own) — came out here seeking news of you. He came on here by himself, but had brought his wife and some guest of theirs along as far as your hospital at Sarhad. He wanted word of you, yet was not much alarmed; seemed to have that same kind of an idea you have, that you were off on duty, and that you would turn up again all right. I can't quite follow you in that myself, but somehow, I must say, it's seemed to work out. Your *chaprasi* from the hospital then came along just yesterday with a 'chit' from Wallace. He'd run out that far again. He wrote something about his guest, who seems to be his sister, leaving soon, and

hoping that you would turn up before she left. But whether he's still at Sarhad or not, I can't say."

This was news, almost first-hand news of his loved one, that made Ernest tingle and thrill. Maybe she had come out again along with her brother. Maybe — could it be possible? — maybe she was still there waiting for him, just ten miles off, just over that screen of hills. He wanted to fly, to forget all other things and to be immediately at his place in Sarhad.

But with deliberate control he kept from unceremonious and impolite haste. Sufficient excuse, though, he did have — his long absence from the hospital, and the anxiety of his friends — to decline, without seeming precipitation, the officer's invitation to remain at Qila Ghar the rest of that day. Coolies for his luggage were had, and a pony for himself. He would ride from here on, for he had already traveled twenty hard miles and more during the past night, and that without any sleep. After a one o'clock lunch he was off, and by near tea-time came in close sight of his own buildings.

He trembled at the very thought of possibly meeting her here, as he had never trembled in the ring when facing the murderous look of the *pahlwan*. His breath came in short gasps and the muscles of his throat worked and stiffened, involuntarily and spasmodically tensed and jerked. Such only were the almost invisible signs of his inner perturbation. What was it that could so overpower this strong man? She

was only one, a woman, and he was only one, a man. But they two together it seemed should be one.

A distant view of the hospital buildings had revealed no sign of her presence, nor yet did a closer one. Actually, he was entering the compound before he met even any one connected with the staff of his institution; for this was the lax time of day, the period after a long morning's duty and before the beginning of the evening's round. The *mali* was taking up bulbs from the flower-bed, to be put away for the winter, working along the border of the path from the dispensary to the bungalow. He dropped his tools with a glad, welcoming cry and came, *salaaming* all the way, as he ran. But from him the doctor would not ask what was most on his heart. He had for him a hearty greeting, and then the command, "Go, call the 'little doctor sahib'." Then, as the man hurried on the errand he did call after him, for he could wait no longer, "Is there any other here, any one at the bungalow?"

"No, Sahib. There is no one else here now."

He must restrain his impatience, come out of his preoccupied thoughts. Here he had returned to Sarhad, to the hospital, his hospital, which had been for seven years the very center of his life, and now after an absence of ten or more days he had scarcely an involuntary thought for it. Only by forcing his attention did he ask from Khair Din as to his welfare, the welfare of the hospital, and the welfare of the

patients and the people. The emptiness of his sensations, the lifeless relaxation of keen disappointment, the unimportance of all things else, told him more unmistakably than would have the buoyant pleasure of her presense, just how big a part of himself she had become and how far he had let himself go in dreams of anticipation. And with it all, what assurance had he that any of them would ever come true?

As he asked and answered many other questions, he turned with the really functioning part of his mind in prayer. "Oh, Father, give me Thy control. Give me — Thy will be done!"

Only then, when he had gotten his answer to this petition, did he give vocal expression to the question of his heart. "I heard at Qila Ghar that Mr. Wallace was out here yesterday. When did he go back? Did he leave any message for me?"

"Yes, sir. He was here yesterday, also his *memsahiba* and his sister. They were quite concerned for you. They seemed anxious to see you very soon. They even stayed over last night in the hope that you might come along, and left here only after lunch this noon — so you missed them by only two or three hours. From what I heard them saying, they had to hurry back to get arrangements made for Miss McCune's departure for America. But they left a letter for you; it's on your desk in the *daftar*."

Mann cut remaining greetings as short as he decently could, and then locked himself in his *daftar*, which he imagined yet to breathe of her presence. Instead of one letter, there were the two that he had hoped for. The one, in George's scrawling hand, he pushed by. It could have only formal, matter-of-fact matters and could well wait. But that other! Again a tingle — he held it for a moment clasped close while he prayed for grace. Then he tore it open. It was short and simply written, but it seemed that he felt a strong pulse running through its every line, as though these curves and dots and dashes had a mystic power to convey their writer's real feelings that were beyond the power of the words to express. He felt elated by its simple message — the fact of her own hand-writing, that she herself had written at all, must mean far more than she could have put into words.

Dear Ernest:

Twice we have been out here to find our Mann of the border, and each time we have found that he is yet on the other side. May God be blessing and keeping you.

Yesterday morning I received a wire from the steamship company, saying that their schedule has been hurried up by three days and that my steamer would sail on the 20th instead of the 23rd. So if I am to catch it, I must leave Eliotsharar day after tomorrow.

I had counted on this month, for old times' sake, more than I can tell you now, and now that month is almost ended. If you receive this in time, if you can, if you care to, come in before I leave. I want to see you again before I go.

As ever,

MARGARET

He skimmed through the letter again, and then again, and picked out phrases and pondered them for their in-between-the-line meanings. "*If* I am to catch it" . . . Had she used that little word "if" as a casual and hypothetical expression?—or was it really conditional in her own meaning? Does it mean that maybe she won't catch it? — doesn't intend to catch it? — maybe won't leave on the 20th? "I had counted on this month, more than I can tell now" . . . Oh, how much more? — that is the question! Had she counted on it as Mann himself had counted? Would she be able to tell him when he met her? Oh, how much had she counted on it? "I want to see you again" . . . Again, how much did she want? How much did she care? All these questions his heart asked and answered, asked and answered, in harmony with his own longings, then asked and answered, in doubt.

But this much at least did remain for him, sure — she herself had written him, she had asked him to come in, she had wanted to see him; yes, she was

waiting for him. He must go to her at once. She wanted him! She wanted him! But how much did she want him? He would go directly to her and he would get his answer to all these questions directly from her.

## CHAPTER XXV

Mann started at once to get ready, then stopped. Here! he must be sensible and reasonable. It was already five o'clock and he couldn't get in until well after dark. He wasn't ready to go. He was just back after ten days in the wilds. He hadn't yet gotten his own clothes together. So much would there be to do that he would scarcely get started before dark. Then, too, he remembered his past night — no sleep, the long march, and the travel of the day. So far he had been sustained by the exhilaration of anticipation, but he mustn't be foolish, and his first impulse had been certainly foolish. Better get a good night's real rest and start early, sanely, sensibly. He needed rest. That must be the reason that he had so gone to pieces and was so impatient to be off.

Then another conclusive fact struck his memory that confirmed his decision — his motorcycle. It wasn't here; it had been left at the room in the church at Eliotsharar. He remembered clearly, he had come out on that last trip with her — ages ago! — in George's old car. This time of evening no cars or lorries would be starting, so he must wait till morning. With this definiteness his whole mind cleared and he went about necessary duties of the evening, and preparations for the morrow, in an orderly way.



That night he slept — early to bed and early to rise. Still early, he was across the river, and waiting with his luggage at the motor-stand, ready for the first lorry-load that would be collected that morning at the *edda*. He got the choice of seats, in front with the driver. Then slowly the quota of sixteen passengers gathered. Not often had he traveled this plebeian way, in a lorry, for he had his own “iron donkey”. In a detached sort of way he was interested in these other early travelers. A Khan, whom he knew — with his wife, enveloped in the long, trailing *burkha* — arrived at the last, and Ernest saw their hesitation at her crowding in amongst the closely-packed men in the rear. His was to be a day of blessing and joy, so he could give unto others, also. He sprang from the commodious front seat and called to his acquaintance, “Here you are, Khan Sahib, get in here with your wife.” And not allowing time for remonstrance, he quickly wedged himself into the other last remaining space.

They were off — off for Eliotsharar — so the driver had said; and so the passengers all thought — but they were off, he for her. If he had been on his cycle alone again he would have sung, and understood better the reason for his singing than he had that last trip over the hills for Eliotsharar. But now, packed in close, he only looked with half-conscious eyes on his companions and pitied them, for they knew not his joy.

But these people would not leave him long in that undisturbed state of detachment. One or two of his companions recognized him. At first there had been casual greetings and the ordinary passing of remarks of the day. But by the time they had been on the road for a half hour or so, the general hush of settled endurance had fallen on the company. Then, with the ease and freedom of discussion of religious matters in India, where it becomes a most natural and common subject of conversation among either friends or strangers, one of the travelers, whom Mann did not remember to have seen before, turned to him with the question, "You are a Padri Sahib, are you not?"

Mann, still half abstracted, answered as often before he had answered this question, "No, I am not a Padri Sahib; I am a doctor, a *hakim*." L

"But what's the difference? You are a missionary, and all missionaries are padries, so of course you are a Padri Sahib!"

Another took up the task of questioning: "Doctor Sahib, is it true that the Christians believe that Hazarat Isa Masih is the Son of God? How could that be?"

Now, indeed, Mann needed his faculties in full functioning order, so with a resolute will, again he put from his voluntarily conscious mind the thought of the personal pleasure of the coming hours, and devoted all his powers to giving some enlightenment on this question, which is the most puzzling and perplexing to the Moslem understanding.

“As I have just said, I am not a Padri and am not trained in the art of argument in religious matters, but if you will listen quietly I shall try to help you to understand somewhat of this matter.”

Now all the others became quiet. No other conversation continued. All were intent on the missionary. There were only the chug of the engine and the creak and rattle of an old-bodied lorry to accompany him. All seemed friendly — curious in their attention.

“Yes, we Christians believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God —”

Only thus far had he gotten when close beside him there was the stir of one, large-bodied, who sat humped, with knees to his chin, and enwrapped in a heavy, brownish-gray, native-woven, woolen blanket, which muffled him even to the head against the chill of the early November morning. The figure stirred and muttered fiercely into the depths of its blanket, words, indistinguishable in sound but, because of circumstances and intonation, recognized as the creed of the “faithful”. Even one or two of the others in the crowd joined in unison with the invisible person, but these without much malice in their words.

“The Lord Jesus Christ,” Mann started again, “is truly the Son of God, the real and only Son. He is the eternal Son of God —”

No further than that again had he proceeded when with a sudden fling, a flap of the blanket over the

form at his side was heaved aside, a long arm sprang forth and drew back. A growl came from the depths, "Take that, thou dog of an infidel, for thy blasphemous teachings!" With that, before any could stop him, this unknown one struck Mann full fair on the cheek a mighty slap with his open hand. The place showed first in ghostly white, then suffused, revealing in blood-red the print of the hand, fingers and all.

For a moment these two gazed at each other. By these words of abuse, by this unprovoked attack, but especially in those eyes of blazing fury, Ernest recognized the one, the only one in the whole world, whom he knew to be his enemy. They gazed as they had gazed before, and as their eyes held, there flashed through the minds of both the memory of days past, especially the former thrice-repeated encounter on the top of the hill. Then the Mufti had been in trans-border land, amongst friends, and Ernest had been a dependent stranger. As a complement to that memory came also the mutual recognition of the fact that now conditions were reversed. Now they were in a fast-moving lorry, well within the boundaries of Sirkar, heading for *chauni* itself, where civil and military headquarters were strong, and here at Mann's mercy was the man for whose capture there was the reward offered of ten thousand rupees.

Thought of so great a sum, so easily obtained, and with it final revenge on the enemy — such a thought caused not even a momentary covetousness. Only Mann's heart welled with a love and desire for the

mighty spirit of this defender of his Faith, and in retaliation he only answered in Pushtu, "Brother, you forget yourself, who you are, and where. But if you would, here is the other cheek."

Then, lest further notice of this individual would endanger the secret of his identity, and arouse the cupidity of others, he turned again to the crowded company and took up a third time his discussion, where it had been so rudely and suddenly broke off.

All the fellow-travelers sat aghast, not stirring in the silence that had fallen so instantaneously with the impact of that slap. Amazed they had been at the temerity of this disguised and unknown figure, but more amazed yet were they at the calmness of the sahib. That a sahib had been so insulted, had been attacked, and that he did not resent it, they could not believe. Such a display of Christian fortitude and love, though it had happened in their very presence, they could not credit. And yet certainly it was not fear that kept this doctor sahib from retaliation. There was no cringing, no blanching of color, except that spot which had been struck.

None dared speak, not even to question one with another as to this occurrence. While either of the antagonists was present, they feared to make any reference to it. But unforgettably this incident would live in their memories, and often would they recall the contrast of character and act, and would tell of it to others and wonder at the power exhibited by the follower of Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER XXVI

Mann now sought to distract the thoughts of the people away from the happenings in the lorry, and to clarify for them the Christian conception of the Sonship of Christ. “You misunderstand entirely our belief, and it is not our belief but your own misinterpretation of our belief that sounds in your ears as blasphemy.

“You think that we preach that Jesus was the physical son of God, even as we are sons of our earthly fathers. But never have we believed or preached such a thing. That, to us, sounds as blasphemous as it does to you. He is the spiritual Son, who was Son from the beginning. Let me read to you how the Spirit of God, Himself, in His own Word, explains and differentiates the manner of Sonship. ‘His Son, who was born of the *seed of David* according to the *flesh*, but was declared to be the *Son of God* with power, according to the *Spirit* of holiness—even Jesus Christ our Lord.’ So you see Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but in a spiritual, heavenly, divine relationship, not in the physical and human.

“Then there is another big mistake you make — because you don’t know what we believe but you think we believe something that we don’t. You think that we have taken a man, named Jesus, and have made

Him to be God, and you say such a thought is blasphemy. I, too, say it is blasphemy, and no Christian believes such a thing any more than you do. It is the very exact opposite of what we believe. Listen again to what God, Himself, in His own Word says about Him. 'Christ Jesus, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself.' So, you see, first of all Jesus was not a man, but was first God. Then, because there was no other possible way to save us, He became man. That is, God became man, not man became God. Do you see the difference? Then, naturally, after Jesus had done all that He came into the world to do, after He had finished His special work for our salvation, He went back to heaven, back to His own rightful place.

"Still another mistake you make. You say that the Christians believe in three Gods. That, too, is absolutely not true. We do not believe in three Gods. We are just as firm in our belief as you in yours that there is only one God. But as to how it is possible that Jesus can be God and the Father be God and the Holy Spirit also be God — well — that is one of the mysteries of the being of God, and no man could ever hope to fully understand it in this world. However, if you will be patient a while, I'll try to explain our belief regarding this that we call the Trinity, and I'll

try to show you that it really is not hard to believe these things —”

With many other words did Mann seek to clear away misconceptions of the gospel of Christ, and to plant some seeds of understanding and faith. For a whole hour and more he continued his discourse. There were no further interruptions. Many understood almost nothing of what he said; a few seemed really interested. The figure at his side did not stir again, but revealed his antipathy now in his very forced silence. He sat silent and inactive, muffled again against the Lashkara winter climate.

The motor lorry whirled along, diving down steep grades and laboring up opposite inclines. Nearer and nearer they drew to Eliotsharar. The thought-forming part of Ernest's mind was concentrated on the subject of his discussion, but suffusing his whole being was a suppressed sensing of the fast-nearing goal of his journey, and the consummation of his dreams. He tingled and thrilled in his physical sensitiveness, even while his well-schooled mind held to the intricacies of Christology, and while his genuine passion for the souls of men held his conscious interest. But through it all there broke now and then a lightness of sensation, induced by the subjected thought of her; an ethereal buoyancy, such as experienced in an elevator when its sudden descent neutralizes the weight-producing force of gravity, and we feel in contrast as though a reverse upward attraction pulled each separate atom of the body.



A sudden termination, however, was put to his talk, and a rude interruption to his subconscious sensations. There was a loud report and the jarring, limping stop of the lorry. All passengers descended, and for lack of better employment, crowded around, watching the driver and his cleaner patch together old tire and tube. Mann did not chafe at the delay, but was glad for respite after his strenuous efforts in the bus. Only ten miles now remained, but the nearer the approach, the less ready he felt for this crucial meeting. For almost an hour he sat on a low prominence above the roadside. The great figure of the vindictive stranger, muffled close in his blanket, showed no indication of flight at this opportune moment. Rather he seemed set on some pre-determined objective, from which even the dangers of that fortune-making reward could not restrain him. He was deliberately risking his all to accomplish some mission of extreme importance. His fanatical assault upon the one who knew him best, revealed his identity to Mann only, else he might have remained incognito to all. He moved now as one absorbed in meditation, his attitude revealing the raging agitation within him. What could have drawn him here at such a time of danger? Vaguely, Mann wondered if he himself might not be the object of this trip. But these conjectures concerning the Pathan were soon lost in those of more pressing moment.

His thoughts raced back and forth from past to present, from future back to past, as he reviewed his relationship with Margaret. What would be her re-

sponse to him? What her decision? Sitting apart from the crowd, he prayed, "O, God, Thou alone art unchanging. Grant me Thine own grace for this meeting."

There was much delay in the repair work. The lorry's kit was lacking, due to the careless improvidence of the Indian driver and the Eastern disregard for the passing of time, but the punctured tire now repaired, and the remaining ten miles traversed, the Zero Hour for Ernest Mann was striking at last.

## CHAPTER XXVII

Ernest left the lorry at the stand, and with a coolie — suitcase and *bistar* balanced atop his head bringing up the rear — he struck off afoot for the remaining short distance to the Wallace home. He strode down the driveway. Never more uncertainly, yet never more eagerly, did he approach this quest of his heart's desire. No one was in view at the front, so at the open door of the drawing-room he hailed, "*Koi hai!*"

Once, twice, he called — then there was an answering shout from the *daftar* in George's exuberant, welcoming voice, "*Hai, ji! Well, shabash*", and even before the handclasp, he called, "Margaret! Edith! Come quick! Here's our lost Mann back again!" Then, more quietly: "Say, old man, you're the best sight I have seen for an age. We've sure been anxious about you! The girls will just about fall on your neck and weep. They're back in Margaret's room now, finishing her packing. The rest of this day is declared a holiday, and we'll have the fatted calf for dinner tonight, sure thing."

Ernest was glad for this spontaneous outburst. It was good to be back and have such a hearty welcome from his loyal friend and fellow-worker, but his engaging thought was, "Margaret is here! But she's packing. That means — she's going."

Edith, the "Little Sister", rushed in now and did almost fall on his neck in the joy of her welcome, but while there was nothing lacking in the warmth of his greeting, Ernest was watching the door whence Margaret would soon appear. Then she came, calm, poised, unhurriedly crossing the room, her eyes meeting his in casual, ordinary friendship as she greeted him with, "Ernest, we are glad to see you!" That was all.

How tragically he had been mistaken! With what presumption he had assured himself, now to be met with this blow to his fondest hopes! He rallied amidst the talk of the others, sincerely glad for their presence, and to join as one with this home and family circle. Then, after breakfast, he related his story somewhat in detail. While he talked, he watched Margaret's face for some sign of more than mere friendly interest. How he longed to see beyond that mask, if she were at heart more than casually interested in his recital! He told of his encounter in the ring on the mountain top. When he spoke of the final overthrow of his giant opponent, he noted a shiver, a gasp of intaken breath, and her eyes, as though defying her will, turned irresistibly to his, and the veil swept away, he saw into her soul and was satisfied.

It was well that the climax of his tale was reached just then, for a wave of emotion surged through Ernest's being that he could find no words to utter, but to the Wallaces it seemed but a pause, in rhetorical sympathy with his athletic victory and unrelated

to the present hour. When the table was at last cleared, Edith reminded George of his promise of the fatted-calf dinner, which might be a poor one unless they repair at once to the bazaar for supplies, and thus these two were left alone together. For a time silence gripped them, then Ernest gave voice in one single word, to all that had possessed him during the past weeks.

“Margaret!” The tenderness, the masterful strength, the yearning appeal, were in its utterance, and she answered by simply uttering his name “Ernest!”

A human being stands apart — a complete entity — the natural, repellent force and energy which guard inviolate the sanctity and privacy of the soul, resisting all encroachment from without. In opposition to that guardian power, there may arise that most potent, attractive force known in heaven or on earth, which draws one individual to fusion with another — the irresistible law of God and love which declares, “These two shall be one.” So, with the giving of her answer in that single word, his spoken name, this greater force controlled. They had become one in the complete and absolute surrender which united into one entity these two souls. A sense of the physical world and time were absent, nor were they conscious of material things until they heard George’s voice in the driveway.

That night at dinner, they conversed with each other between the lines of spoken words, with eyes unveiled, when each glance was communion, each casual meet-

ing a caress. But not yet did they reveal their secret to the others; too sacred it was to share, and too much yet must they themselves discuss of the past and future, for as yet there had been no realization of aught but the present. But Edith's observant, sympathetic nature needed no words to sense the situation, and she rejoiced that this had been part of her own scheme to bring these souls together. Again she made excuse for leaving them together and drew with her the reluctant, protesting George.

Sitting in the deeply-cushioned sofa, before the blazing logs in the open fireplace, Margaret and Ernest gave voice to their communion, and with the essential adjustment of heart and love, all other plans for the future fitted miraculously into their parts. She told of her continued love for him, even while she had, ten years before, given him up for her call to the profession which had brought no satisfaction nor peace of heart. Then she confessed, "George thought I wasn't interested in missions, and had no concern for your frontier field, but I just devoured every report from Sarhad and had kept posted on your program of deputational work. My heart was out here all right, but I was too proud to acknowledge it. Then that night, when you spoke in Pittsburgh, I felt I must see you at least that one time during your furlough, but before you had done speaking, I knew my only hope of not surrendering right then and there to you would be to disappear without a greeting. But after that my morale was gone. It was a losing fight, and to cap it

all, George and Edith were sent to India and settled right in your own district. Unwittingly, he had been writing in his family letters about the wonderful Mr. Mann. That took my last defenses. They crumbled. So I booked for this cruise around the world, as my friends thought; but my objective was *you*, and my one desire was to be just where I am now, in your arms. Of course, if I had found you absorbed heart and soul in your work, with no thought for me, I would have returned to America according to schedule; but I came prepared to stay: yours now and forever, and I shall keep the rest of my ticket as a souvenir. That first night here, I feared I had lost you forever. You seemed so shocked at the sight of me, and from the set of your white face, I thought it was your fear and dread lest I spoil again the life I once had marred. So I held aloof from you. Up to today I couldn't read your mind. When you came you seemed so self-possessed; rather indifferent, I thought, and I was struggling hard to maintain the same attitude toward you. Then, when you were telling about that awful Maulvie, how he had almost killed you, the shell of my resistance melted. We were face to face and I had my answer in your eyes, but I feared a scene, so had to turn away, but now, with the doubt and question forever gone, we can begin our life work together."

Then Ernest recounted, as briefly as possible, the years of his human loneliness; how his fellowship with his heavenly Father had become so real and natural that he now recognized Him as a blessed, ever-

present friend and guide. "I gave my life in absolute surrender to Him, and he tested that surrender by my willingness to give you up if necessary, and now He has given you to me and my cup of happiness and gratitude is running over. Together let us praise and thank Him."

George, meanwhile, had been restrained with difficulty. "But Edith," he protested, "Margaret is my sister and this is her last night here before she leaves for America."

"But George, can't you see? You will be having a sister and brother as well, stationed permanently right within our own district. You just wait a bit and see for yourself."

Then Ernest called, "Come in, we have some very important news for you. Margaret here has agreed to stay on with us a while longer. She will not go on tomorrow's boat. How's that, George? That is enough news for tonight. How about planning a celebration for tomorrow up at Sarhad? Our last picnic-time was sidetracked by that 'whirlwind' of yours. There are a number of things out there that Margaret ought to see. What do you say?"



## CHAPTER XXVIII

Ernest's room that night, was, as before, only a string bed in the corner of the *daftar*, and again, as before, he was not ready for sleep. He stepped out into the darkness, to give free range, under the stars, to his elation and communion with his God. A new sense of oneness with the Father possessed him, and with his heart welling up in spiritual fellowship, he thanked Him for the priceless gift of the past day.

Without consciousness of his surroundings, he stood beside the hedge, sheltered a bit from the driveway, when he saw a figure emerging from the shadows and coming down toward him. Tall, huge, this oncoming figure, and muffled still in its now familiar blanket. This man's identity, his former hatred, his threatened attacks, his presence at all on this compound and at this time of night, could mean only one thing. He had ventured into the danger-zone in the realm of the British Raj, and he, Ernest Mann, the supreme object of this avenger's hate, might have been the unsuspecting victim of his murderous purpose. How simple and easy the Maulvie's plan — a knock at the door, a call at the window, and he, as a doctor, accustomed to answering calls, could have unsuspectingly opened the door and been greeted with a thrust from the long-

bladed, keen-edged Afghan knife, thrust by a hand, trained and sure and strong.

But there he stood, by divine intervention, not ambushed — on his guard against the attack of a relentless foe. Unintended certainly by any plan of his own, this position of advantage — and, by that, much the more evidently foreordained by Him with whom nothing is unintended — proof positive that his Father was watching over him, over her, over his life work in India, and proof that any fears for his safety were groundless and disloyal to the One Whom he served. The need for waking, physical action drew rapidly nearer, and he was ready. He knew that this meeting would be different from their encounter on the mountain top. There it had been, on both sides, a matching of muscular strength and skill; now, a whetted dagger in the hands of a relentless foe. Straight down the driveway the figure came to the end of the hedgerow, then stopped and looked toward the light still shining from the *daftar*, pausing for its next move. Ernest stepped out into the starlit view, alert, prepared.

“Well, Mufti Sahib, what do you want here?”

The reaction to this challenge was most astonishing. The Pathan flung out his arms, but no dagger was in his hand, nor did he spring in attack. With every evidence of terror and awe, this proud, haughty, contemptuous Afghan fell on his face and touched his forehead to the shoes of Mann’s feet. Twice, thrice, he bowed his head, as was his custom in his Moslem

prayers; then, "*Thou, thou thyself, art the Son of God!*"

Mann thought himself ready for any tactic, any maneuver, but before such a move as this, he stood transfixed, overwhelmed with astonishment. Then he stooped and lifted, almost bodily, the other to his feet. "No, no, my brother. I am only a fellow-man like you. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God and I, by His grace, have been adopted into the relationship of son. Come with me to the *daftar* and tell me how God has humbled this proud spirit of yours."

The Pathan, still shaken and trembling — the reaction from some crucial experience—followed Mann, and when he was seated, with an effort, and scarcely raising his eyes to the face of the missionary, the Mufti began: "This night I have suffered terrible things because of you. That savage attack upon you in the lorry this morning — I had turned *ghazi* — demented in my fury. My purpose was to kill you, believing that by the death of an infidel, as I had been taught, I should have direct access to the pleasures of heaven. All day, without eating, I remained in hiding, consumed with anger and the desire for vengeance. Only for the dark I waited, that I might slay you and escape back to my own country. I waited, hoping to take you unaware while you slept. But in the weakness of fasting and the fire of my rage, I know not whether I was sleeping or awake when suddenly a light, an unearthly light, fell upon

me. Dazzled and blinded, I fell prone to the earth. Then I heard a voice, and looked up to see the Glorious One, whose face shone with unbearable brightness. I lay as one dead, how long I do not know. Then this voice, sweet and powerful as heavenly music — pitying, loving, yet condemning, cried out, ‘Ibrahim, why didst thou smite Me on the cheek this day? Why rage against My teaching?’ I could make no reply, except to ask, ‘Who art thou, O Glorious One?’ He answered, ‘I am Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who died on the cross for thy sins. Go now to him whom thou has persecuted. He will tell thee the way of forgiveness and of life. He is where thou hadst thought to find him, and he will receive thee. Go.’ So, lo, I have come.”

Then Dr. Mann said to himself: “The people of this land of India surely are more closely related than are we Westerners to those who first became Christian nineteen hundred years ago in Palestine. God deals with these as He did with them. Certainly I have never had such a vision, never seen a dream depicting my Savior. But here it seems a common experience. When first I came to India and heard such stories of appearances I called them imagination and fancy. But so many such reports have I heard, and so genuine are the effects on the seers, that I’ve come to believe that God has adopted these more visible methods for this people, who are yet in the childhood of Christianity. Probably some of my professors in medical school would explain that this is just the effect of an over-

wrought mind, the subjective consequence of recent upsetting experiences. But whether it be subjective or a real objective vision, I do believe it is of God for the saving of this mighty man. Whether it is as modern psychologists would tell us, that this was merely dream-conflict, whereby the individual attempts while asleep to solve his problems, or whether it be a definite appearance of the Lord to him, I do believe it be the work of the Holy Spirit of God within him. Other conversions, I know, have been wrought in India through dreams and visions, and now out of His great mercy God has called one who was above all others zealous in persecution.”

By the time the Mufti had finished his tale and had relapsed into the silence of awaited answer, Mann was ready to express aloud his acceptance and opinion of the matter. “God be praised, who yet doth work in wondrous and marvelous ways! Mufti Sahib, as Saul of Tarsus, you were breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. You verily thought you were doing God’s service in slaying those that followed this Way. Now also, as to Saul of Tarsus, Jesus has appeared to you and revealed Himself in a direct manifestation. Therefore, be not disobedient to this heavenly vision.”

Long these two, who had met always before only in antagonism, now conversed in the unity of the Spirit. Never had Mann had a more earnest listener or apt pupil, for now Ibrahim had the “will to understand”,

and the Holy Spirit, in fulfillment of Christ's promise, was showing these things unto him. It was now four o'clock; no sign of dawn. This new "brother", in his physical nervous exhaustion, needed food, but dared not tarry for rest. From an *almirah* in the wall of the *daftar*, some native food, stored there in case of emergency, was brought forth. While the stranger ate, Mann outlined their immediate future. Ibrahim should depart and make his way quickly to the safety of *gair-ilaga*, there to remain in close hiding with Rahmat Ullah Khan until Mann should send him word. Meanwhile the missionary, in the role of peacemaker, would visit the officer in Qila Ghar, claiming as a favor promised him in reward for his former services in peacemaking with the trans-border tribes, that he would intercede with the government of India for leniency toward Mufti Ibrahim, and the cancellation of the reward offered for his capture and amnesty for the man himself. The British Raj could then be assured of peace along this particular piece of the border.

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The party of four came to the steep, wooded ravine below Dr. Mann's favorite "spot" in the hills. Ernest and Margaret loitered behind, while the Wallaces, with the coolie carrying the basket, pressed on. The lovers stood for a few moments, recalling how, on the first visit here, he had removed a tiny bit of bark from Margaret's eye, when by a close contact, the first

insulation of their high-tension lives had been abraded and a short-circuit of their souls had warned of the forces within. No insulation now, no inhibition. With her face between his hands, the two stood together in the white light of recognized love, which partook of the quality of Eternity. When they reached the "spot", they found the feast had been spread out and the kettle boiling. They ate and drank without many words. George was reasonable and possessed his soul in patience. Had not Ernest promised a sequel of what had been intimated the day before?

Their tea finished, and the coolie sent down to the hospital with the basket, the four stood once more on the edge of the miniature plateau and looked out over the "Field of Mann" with contemplative eyes.

At last the silence was broken by Ernest, with intense but quiet and simple words. "George, Edith — now for the news that was promised you for today. Let me lead up to it with just a bit of history and explanation. Ten years ago Margaret and I had our lives all planned together — we considered both as one. Then when I received my call to India, she could not hear it. Those ten years are past, past as a dream. Now, in God's grace and goodness, Margaret, too, has heard that call and answered it, and has come out here to join me again as one in this service. Not for one month — not just for a second month is she staying — but she is remaining even as long as I. George, you are her brother, her only relative near. Do we have your approval and blessing?"

Although George had been warned by his wife with much assurance of some such conclusion, yet now this impetuous speaker for a while could not find ready words. At the start he even stuttered and stammered.

“Oh, I — I — why — so that’s it, is it? Now I understand a lot that was all mystery to me before. Now I see the working of the past. That’s why this sister of mine had such a queer attitude toward missions and wouldn’t show any interest in my coming out here. That’s why Ernest didn’t care for society and kept so close to his wilds. Is that the shock I felt? — the spark that flashed past me the first night you two met in our drawing-room? This explains a lot of little items that seemed queer this past month.

“Give you my approval and my blessing, did you say? A lot of difference it would make in your plans if I didn’t. I’m just a kid and you’re the big folks. But, believe me, if it’s my blessing you really want, both of you have got all that any brother could give.

“Now excuse me, please. I’m afraid I’m still winded with the suddenness of this news, and I can’t get words fast enough to keep up with all I want to ask and say, so I’ll reserve my real ‘engagement oration’ till a later time, after I’ve gotten things straightened out a bit in my own mind. Just now, here’s the proof of my blessing. Edith, come on. Let’s welcome them into the blessedness of the order of married life.”



With that he rushed with typical boyish vehemence to embrace his sister. The four of them together, then, united in one happiness, in one work, in one vision, away from the view of those who would not understand, were close to each other. Hand-clasps, embraces, kisses, and even tears, expressed their joy.

When the first rush was over, Margaret, a bit disheveled by the roughness of affection, and still holding the other woman close, spoke to her. "Now, Edith, you little schemer, you haven't *told* us what you think. In many ways you are the responsible party. If it hadn't been for you, how would all this have come about? So speak up and tell us your opinion."

"I'll have to admit the charge of scheming, but also I'll have to admit that I never knew what a big scheme I had a part in. I only knew something was wrong and I was trying to fix it, and I'm so happy that it has gotten fixed right on both sides.

"I've been just 'little sister,' but now I'm to be a real little sister to this Dr. Ernest Mann." She turned now to this hero of her admiration. "Look here, sir, now that my sister-in-law is to be your wife and your brother-in-law-to-be is my husband, I'm going to drop all this awful formality and hereafter, you are just 'Ernest' to me. I didn't quite dare to call you that before. You were so shut up in your own unsocial self that I was afraid you would be offended at such familiarity. But now you're a different Mann; you're a whole man of two halves now, and I'm not

afraid of you any more. I *am* your little sister! Ernest, call me Edith, please won't you, Ernest? Thank you! That makes me feel much better. Now I feel that this lonely frontier of ours is the most desirable place in all the world."

The eyes of the Seer were filled with the moisture of supreme happiness as he looked on his own, on his field, on his future. He breathed again just, "God's will is good! His will be done!"

