

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

ROMANCE THRIVES WHEREVER THERE IS LIFE. THIS FUNDAMENTAL FACT BRIDGES A GAP OF PERHAPS MILLIONS OF YEARS IN CIVILIZATION AND BRINGS TOGETHER A MAN OF THE OUTER WORLD AND A WOMAN OF THE STRANGE LAND AT THE EARTH'S CORE

PREFACE

You'll find places here that I did not expect you to believe... Nor could you wonder how I was able to read the records in the armor of blissful ignorance...

distance, and for examining the materials through which we were to pass... He tested the strange device, and overlooked the mighty coes which transmitted its marvelous velocity to the drill...

At length all was ready. Perry bowed his head in prayer. For a moment we were silent, and then the old man's hand reached for the starting lever...

"You'd better lend me a hand then, my boy," he replied. "For I cannot judge her weight on the vertical alone. Heaven give that our combined strength may be equal to the task."

I worked my way to the old man's side with never a doubt but that the great wheel would hold on the instant to the power of my young and vigorous muscles...

"Where on earth can we be?" I asked, turning to Perry. For some moments the old man did not reply. He stood with bowed head and a slight frown on his forehead...

us instead of below. We didn't notice it at the time, but I recall it now. "You mean to say that we turned back in a large measure, David? That is not unless it now is detected. If the nose were deflected, we would be outside by some external force or resistance...

CHAPTER I Toward Eternal Fires

I WAS born in Connecticut about 20 years ago. My father was a wealthy man, a graduate of Andover and Yale...

And so it was with the utmost confidence that I laid hold of the huge iron rod; but though I threw every ounce of my strength into it my best effort was as ineffectual as Perry's had been...

"What do you mean, Perry?" I cried. "Do you think that we are dead, and that this is a dream?"

"I don't know, Perry," I answered. "I don't know, Perry," I answered. "I don't know, Perry," I answered.

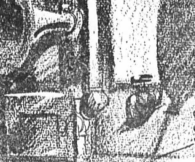
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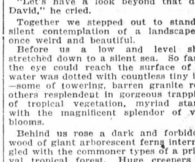
Tearing upon his shirt, I placed my ear to his breast... His heart was beating quite regularly.



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I looked over his plans, listened to his remarks, inspected his working models, and then, convinced, I advanced the funds necessary to construct a full-sized, practical prospector.

But to my astonishment, I discovered that the death starting line in the face of Abner Perry was transformed into a new being. From his lips came a clear and limpid stream of undiluted profanity, and it was all directed toward me.

"What can we do?" I asked, willing my perturbation beneath the mask of a low, hoarse, hoarse voice.

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CHAPTER II In the Strange World

I WAS unconscious little more than an instant, for as I lunged forward from the cross-bar that I had been clinging to, I found myself in the air...

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(CONTINUED IN MONDAY'S EVENING LEDGER)

AT THE DYRTH

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

SYNOPSIS

David Innes, a young man just out of college and Professor Perry, a physicist and astronomer, start on a wild trip in a colonial steel machine invented by the latter, which is built to explore the earth's continents, which spin its way through air, sea, ice and other media through marine depths. Innes is a modern-day Columbus, and Perry is a modern-day Vesputi. They go to the moon, and Perry is the first man to see it. Perry is a modern-day Columbus, and Innes is a modern-day Vesputi. They go to the moon, and Perry is the first man to see it.

when I reached the tree he was racing madly up it, hand over hand. He had almost reached the lowest branch of the tree from which the creeper depended when the thing parted beneath his weight and he fell sprawling at my feet. The misfortune now was no longer amusing, for the beast was already too close to us for comfort. Sliding Perry first, and rushing to a smaller tree—ones that he could easily encircle with his arms I held—I hoisted him as far up as I could, and then left him to his fate. He glared at me with a look of the awful beast almost upon me. It was the great size of the thing alone that saved me. Its enormous bulk rendered it too slow upon its feet to cope with the agility of my young muscles, and so I was enabled to dodge out of its way and run completely behind it before it was too close to me. The few seconds of grace that this gave me found me safely lodged in the branches of a tree a few paces from a haven.

Did I say safely lodged? At the time I thought we were quite safe, and so did Perry. He was praying—raising his voice in thanksgiving at our deliverance—and had just completed a sort of psalm of gratitude that the thing could not climb a tree, when, without warning, it reared its head and lunged forward with its hind feet, and reached those fearfully armed paws quite to the branch upon which I crouched. The accompanying roar was all but drowned in Perry's scream of fright and he was like to have tumbled headlong into the gnawing jaws beneath him as precipitate was his impetuous haste to vacate the dangerous limb. It was with a deep sigh of relief that I saw him reach forth and gain a higher branch in safety.

As I touched the ground I snatched a broken limb from the tangled mass that matted the jungle floor of the forest, and, leaning forward behind the shaggy back, dealt the brute a terrific blow. My plan worked like magic. From the previous blow of the beast I had been led to look for no such marvellous agility as he now displayed. Refusing his hold upon the tree he dropped on all fours and at the same time swung his head and wickered tail with a force that would have broken every bone in my body had it struck me; but fortunately I had turned to face at the very instant that I felt the blow, and so I was spared. I felt the towering back.

As it started in pursuit of me I made the mistake of running along the edge of the forest rather than making for the open beach. In a moment I was lost deep in towering vegetation, the awful thing behind me was gaining rapidly as I floundered and fell in my efforts to extricate myself. A fallen log gave me an instant's respite, for crouching upon it I leaped to another a few paces farther on, and in this way was able to keep clear of the mass that carpeted the surrounding ground. But the zigzag course that this necessitated was plainly such a heavy handicap upon me that my pursuer was steadily gaining upon me.

Suddenly from behind I heard a tumb of hoofs, and sharp piercing bark—much the sound that a pack of wolves raises when in full cry. Involuntarily I glanced backward to discover the origin of this new and menacing note with the result that I missed my footing and went sprawling once more upon my face in the deep mud.

My mammoth enemy was so close by this time that I know I must feel the weight of one of his terrible paws before I could rise, but to my surprise the blow did not fall upon me. The howling and snapping and barking of the new element which had been infused into the melee now seemed centered quite close behind me, and as I raised myself upon my hands and glanced around I saw what it was that had distracted the "dyrth," as I afterward learned the thing is called from my trail. It was surrounded by a pack of some hundred wolf-like creatures—wild dogs they seemed—that rubbed howling and snapping in upon it from all sides, so that they sank their white fangs into the slow brute and were away again before it could reach them with its huge paws or sweeping tail.

But these were not all that my startled eyes perceived. Chattering and gibbering through the lower branches of the trees came a company of manlike creatures evidently using on the dog-pack. They were of all appearances strikingly similar in aspect to the negro of Africa. Their skins were very black, and their features much like those of the more pronounced negroid type, except that the head receded more rapidly above the eyes, leaving little or no forehead. Their hair was rather longer and their teeth shorter in proportion to the torso than in man, and later I noticed that their great toes protruded at right angles from their feet—because of their arboreal habits, I presume, holding them straight long, slender tails, which they used in climbing quite as much as they did either their hands or feet.

I had stumbled to my feet the moment that I discovered that the wolf-dogs were holding the dyrth at bay. At a sight of one several of the savannah creatures left off worrying the great brute to come sinking with hoarse fangs toward me, and as I turned to arm toward the trees again to seek safety among the lower branches I saw a number of the

man-apes leaping and chattering in the foliage of the nearest tree. Between them and the beasts behind me there was little choice, but at least there was a doubt as to the reception these grotesque parasites on humanity would accord me, while there was none as to the fate which awaited me beneath the grim fangs of my fierce pursuers. And so I raced on toward the trees intending to pass beneath that which held the man-apes and take refuge in another further on.

aggregation of half savage beasts which they kept within their village. I realized the necessity for the pathway. There were a number of the same vile, vile wolf-dogs which we had left worrying the dyrth, and many goatlike animals whose distended udders explained the reason for their presence. My guard halted before one of the huts into which I was pushed, then two of the creatures squatted down before the entrance to prevent my escape, doubtless, though where I should have escaped to I certainly had not the remotest conception. I had no more than entered the dark shadows of the interior than there fell upon my ears the tones of a familiar voice, in prayer.

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When they had examined me for a few moments one of them discovered that my clothing was not a part of me, with the result that they found my garment there it from my amid peals of the wildest laughter. And, they essayed to don the apparel themselves, but their ingenuity was not sufficient to the task and so they gave it up.

In the meantime I had been straining my eyes to catch a glimpse of Perry, but nowhere about could I see him, though the clump of trees in which he had first taken refuge was in full view. I was much exercised by fear that something had befallen him and though I called his name about several times there was no response.

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CHAPTER III A CHANGE OF MASTERS.

FROM tree to tree the agile creatures sprang like flying squirrels, while the cold sweat stood upon my brow as I glimpsed the depths beneath, into which a single misstep on the part of either of my bearers would hurl me.

As they bore me along my mind was occupied with a thousand bewildering thoughts. What had become of Perry? Should I ever see him again? What were the intentions of these half human things into whose hands I had fallen?

Were they inhabitants of the same world into which I had been born? No! It could not be. But yet where else?

I had not left that earth-of that I was sure. Still, neither could I reconcile the things which I had seen to a belief that I was still in the world of birth. With a sigh I gave it up.

We must have traveled several miles through the dark and dismal wood when we came suddenly upon a dense village built high among the branches of the trees.

As we approached it my escort broke into wild shouting which was immediately answered from within, and a moment later a swarm of creatures of the same strange race as those who had captured me poured out to meet us.

Again I was the centre of a wild chattering horde. I was pulled this way and that. Though pinched, pounded and thumped until I was black and blue, I do not think that their treatment was dictated by either cruelty or malice. I was a curiosity, a freak, a new plaything and their childish minds required the added evidence of all their senses to back up the testimony of their eyes.

Presently they dragged me within the village, which consisted of several hundred rude shelters of boughs and leaves supported upon the branches of the trees. Between the huts, which sometimes formed crooked streets, were dark passages and the trunks of small trees which connected the huts upon one tree to those within adjoining trees; the whole network of huts and pathways forming an almost solid flooring a good 50 feet above the ground.

I wondered why these agile creatures required connecting bridges between the trees, but later when I saw the motley

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THE HILLS

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SYNOPSIS

David Innes and Professor Perry, a David Innes, a professor who has a world-famous steel machine which he had built, the first made through the outer crust of the earth in the same manner as the great diamond that is known as the "Innes" after his death. The principal character is a girl named Helen, who has been captured by the men in the mountains with animals and half-breeds. David Innes and Professor Perry are captured by some primitive men named Sagoths, who are the enemies of the "Innes." There are other races of men, especially named the "Sagoths," of whom David becomes enamored, but when Helen is discovered she is freed from the place of the city of the Mahars. She has escaped by the aid of Innes. Innes is captured by the Sagoths and taken to work in an underground mine. Innes escapes, but is recaptured by the Mahars, the country of the Mahars, and taken to a place of slavery. Innes tries to kill Innes and his captives to her, but is taken to a place of slavery.

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued)

"I," I exclaimed, "you and I may reclaim a whole world. Together, we can lead the races of men out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of advancement and civilization. At one step we may carry them from the age of stone to the twentieth century. It's marvelous—absolutely marvelous just to think about it."

"David," said the old man, "to believe that God sent us here for just that purpose, I shall be my life work to teach them His word—to lead them into the light of His mercy while we are training their hearts and hands in the ways of culture and civilization."

"You are right, Perry," I said; "and while you are teaching them to pray, I'll be teaching them to fight, and, between us, we'll make a race of men that will be an honor to us both."

Ghah had entered the apartment some time before we concluded our conversation, and now he wanted to know what we were so excited about. Perry thought we had best not tell him too much, and so I only explained that I had a plan for escape.

When I had outlined it to him, he seemed about as horror-stricken as Perry had been, but for a different reason. The hairy one only considered the horrible fate that would be ours were we discovered; but at last I prevailed upon him to accept my plan; and when I had assured him that I would take all the responsibility were we captured, he accorded a reluctant assent.

Within Pellucidar one time is as good as another. There were no rights to mask our attempted escape. All must be done in broad daylight—all but the work I had to do in the apartment beneath the building.

So we determined to put our plan to an immediate test, lest the Mahars who made it possible should awake before I reached them; but we were doomed to disappointment, for no sooner had we reached the main floor of the building on our way to the pits beneath than we encountered hurrying bands of slaves being hastened under strong Sagoth guard out of the edifice to the avenue beyond.

Other Sagoths were darting hither and thither in search of other slaves, and the moment that we appeared, they were pounced upon and hustled into the line of marching humans.

What the purpose or nature of the general exodus we did not know, but presently through the line of captives ran the rumor that two escaped slaves had been recaptured—a man and a woman—and that we were marching to witness their punishment, for the man had killed

a Sagoth of the detachment that had pursued and overtaken them.

At the intelligence my heart sprang to my throat, for I was sure that the two were of those who escaped to the dark grove with Hoaja the Sly One, and that they must be the woman.

"Ghah thought so, too, as did Perry," "Is there meant that we may do to 'Naught," he replied.

Along the avenue we marched, the guards showing unusual cruelty toward us, as though we, too, had been implicated in the murder of their fellow.

The occasion was to serve as an object lesson to all other slaves of the danger and fatality of attempted escape, and the Sagoths felt amply justified in making no error proceeding as unaccommodable and painful to us as possible.

They jabbed us with their spears, and struck at us with their hatchets at the least provocation, and at no provocation at all. It was a most uncomfortable half hour that we spent before we were introduced upon a low entrance into a huge building, the center of which was hinged up to a large arena. Benches surrounded this open space upon three sides, and along the fourth were heaped tiers toward the roof.

At first I couldn't make out the purpose of this mighty pile of rock, unless it were intended as a rough and picture gallery for the Mahars, but presently, after the wooden benches had been pretty well filled by slaves and Sagoths, I discovered the purpose of the building; for then the Mahars commenced to file into the inclosure.

They marched directly across the arena toward the rocks upon the opposite side, where, spreading their battle wings, they rose above the high wall of the pit, settling down upon the benches above. These were the reserved seats, the boxes of the elect.

Here they lolled, blinking their hideous eyes, and doubtless conversing with one another in their shrill-voiced-fourth-dimensional language.

For the first time I beheld their queen. She differed from the others in no feature that was appreciable to my earthly eyes; in fact, all Mahars look alike to me, but when she crossed the arena, after the balance of her female subjects had found their benches, she was preceded by a score of huge Sagoths, the largest I had ever seen, and on either side of her waddled a huge thug, while behind came another score of Sagoth guardmen.

At the barrier the Sagoths clambered up the steep side with truly apellike agility, while behind them the haughty queen rose upon her wings, with her two frightful dragons close beside her, and settled down upon the largest boulder of them all, in the exact centre of that side of the amphitheatre which is reserved for the dominant race.

Here she squatted, a most repulsive and uninteresting queen; though doubtless quite as well assured of her beauty and divine right to rule as the proudest monarch of the outer world.

And then the music started—music without sound! The Mahars cannot hear, so the drums and flutes and horns of earthy bands are unknown among them. The "band" consists of a score or more Mahars. It filed out in the centre of the arena, where the creatures upon the rocks might see it, and there it performed for 15 or 20 minutes.

Their tails and moving their heads in a regular succession of measured movements, resulting in a cadence which evidently pleased the eye of the Mahars as the cadence of our own instrumental music pleases our ears.

Sometimes the hand took measured steps in unison to one side or the other, or backward and again forward; it all seemed very silly and meaningless to me; but at the end of the first piece the Mahars upon the rocks showed the first indications of enthusiasm that I had seen displayed by the dominant race of Pellucidar.

They beat their great wings up and down, and smote their rocky perches with their mighty tails until the ground shook. Then the band started another piece, and all was again as silent as the grave.

That was one great beauty about Mahars music. If you didn't happen to like a piece that was being played, all you had to do was to shut your eyes.

When the band had exhausted its repertoire it took wing and settled upon rocks above and behind the queen. Then a man and woman were pushed into the arena by a couple of Sagoth guardmen.

I leaped forward in my seat to recognize the female-looking creature that she might prove to be another than Dian the Beautiful.

Her back was toward me for a while, and the sight of the great mass of raven hair piled upon her head filled me with alarm.

Presently a door in one side of the arena wall was opened to admit a huge, shaggy, bull-like creature.

A boy whispered Perry excitedly: "His kind roamed the outer crust with the cave bear and the mammoth ages and ages ago. We have been carried back a million years, David, to the childhood of a planet. It is not wonderful." But I saw only the raven hair of a half-naked girl, and my heart stood still in dumb misery at the sight of her, nor had I any eyes for the wonders of natural history.

But for Perry and Ghah, I should have leaped to the floor of the arena and shared whatever fate lay in store for this beauty of the Stone Age.

With the advent of the boy—they call the thing a thug within Pellucidar—two spears were tossed into the arena at the feet of the prisoners. It seemed to me that a bean-shooter would have been as effective against the mighty monster as these pitiful weapons.

As the animal approached the two, following and pawing the ground with the strength of many earthly bulls, another door directly beneath us was opened, and from it issued the most terrific roar that had even fallen upon my outraged ears. I could not at first see the beast from which emanated this fearsome challenge, but the sound had the effect of bringing the two victims round with a sudden start, and then I saw the girl's face. She was not Dian!

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CHAPTER VII. FREEDOM.

AND now, as the two stood frozen in terror, I saw the author of that fearsome sound creeping steadily into view. It was a huge tiger—such as hunted the great boar through the jungles primal when the world was young. In contour and markings it was not unlike the noblest of the Bengals of our own world, but as its dimensions were exaggerated to colossal proportions, so, too, were its colors exaggerated. Its

world yelled faintly screamed aloud; its whites were as slender; its blacks glossy as the finest anthracite coal, and its coat long and shaggy as a mountain goat.

That it is a beautiful animal there is no gaining but if its size and color are magnified here within Pellucidar, so is the atrocity of its disposition.

It is not the occasional member of its species that is a non-hunter—all are non-hunters; but they do not confine their foraging to man alone, for there is no flesh or fish within Pellucidar that they will not eat with relish in the constant efforts which they make to furnish their huge carcasses with sufficient sustenance to maintain their mighty thews.

Upon one side of the domed pair the thug belowed and advanced, and upon the other, tarak, the frightful, crept toward them with gaping mouth and dripping fangs.

The man seized up the spears, handing one of them to the woman. At the sound of the roaring of the tiger the bull's belowing became a veritable frenzy of raged noise. Never in my life had I heard such an infernal din as the two brutes made, and to think it was all lost upon the hideous reptiles for whom the show was being staged!

The thug was charging now from one side and the tarak from the other. The two puny things standing between them seemed already lost, but at the very moment that the beasts seemed upon them the man grasped his companion by the arm and the frenzied creatures came together like locomotives in collision.

There ensued a battle royal which for sustained and frantic energy transcends the power of imagination or description.

Time and again the colossal bull tossed the enormous tiger high into the air, but each time that the huge cat touched the ground he returned to the encounter with apparently undiminished strength and seemingly increased ire.

For a while the man and woman busied themselves only with keeping out of the way of the two creatures, but finally I saw them separate and each creep stealthily toward one of the combatants.

The tiger, as now upon the bull's broad back, clinging to the huge neck with powerful fangs, while its long, strong talons ripped the heavy hide into shreds and ribbons.

For a moment the bull stood belowing and quivering with pain and rage. Its cloven hoofs wide-spread, its tail lashing viciously from side to side, and then, in a mad frenzy of bucking, it went careening about the arena in a frenzied attempt to unseat its rendering rider. It was with difficulty that the girl avoided the first mad rush of the wounded animal.

All its efforts to rid itself of the tiger seemed futile, until in desperation it threw itself upon the ground, rolling over and over. A little of this so disconcerted the tiger, knocking its breath from it. I imagine that it lost its hold, and then, quick as a cat, the great thug was up again and had buried those mighty horns deep in the tarak's abdomen, pinning him to the floor of the arena.

The great cat, clawed at the shaggy head until eyes and ears were gone and nought but a few strips of ragged, bloody flesh remained upon the skull. Yet through all the agony of that fearful punishment the thug still stood motionless, pinning down his adversary, and then the man leaped in, seeing that the blind bull would be the least formidable enemy, and ran his spear through the tarak's heart.

As the animal's fierce clawing ceased the bull raised his gory, sightless head and, with a horrid roar, ran headlong across the arena.

With great leaps and bounds he came straight toward the arena wall directly beneath where we sat, and then accident carried him, in one of his mighty springs, completely over the barrier, into the midst of the slaves and Sagoths just in front of us.

Swinging his bloody horns from side to side, the beast cut a wide swath before him straight upward toward our seats. Before him slaves and gorilla-men fought in mad stampede to escape the menace of the creature's death agonies, for such only could that frightful charge have been.

Forgetful of us, our guards joined in the general rush for the exits, many of which pierced the walls of the amphitheatre behind us.

Perry, Ghah, and I became separated in the chaos which reigned for a few moments after the beast cleared the wall of the arena, each intent upon saving his own life.

I ran to the right, passing several exits choked with the fear-madd mob that were battling to escape. One would have thought that an entire herd of thugs was loose behind them, rather than a single, blinded, dying beast; but such is the effect of panic upon a crowd.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE TARZAN ADVENTURE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER VIII—(Continued).

W GREAT hunters as well, often going to the mainland in search of the game that is scarce upon the larger islands. And we are warriors as well," he added proudly. "Even the Saguths of the Mahars are better to leave us alone."

When Pellucidar was young, the Saguths were wont to capture us for slaves. It is handed down from father to son that this is so; but we are now so desperately and cleverly equipped that we are able to produce in regular quantities the fish that we catch, and the Mahars live in peace.

The great ones even come to our islands. It is there, far from the prying eyes of their own Saguths, that they receive their religious rites in the temples they have built there with our assistance.

"If you live among us you will doubtless see the manner of their worship, which is strange indeed, and may perhaps like to take part in it."

As he talked I had an excellent opportunity to inspect him more closely. He was a hazy fellow, standing, I should judge, six feet six or seven inches, well developed and of a coppery red not unlike that of our own North American Indian. He wore his features dissimilar to theirs, but he had the scull-like nose found among many of the higher tribes, the prominent cheekbones and black hair and eyes, but his mouth and lips were better molded. All in all, Ja was an impressive and handsome creature, and he talked well, too, even in the miserable makahlit language we were compelled to use.

During our conversation Ja had taken my deepest admiration, since it had been with vigorous strokes toward a large island that lay some half mile from the mainland. The skill with which he handled his crude and awkward craft elicited my deepest admiration, since it had been so short a time before that I had made such pitiful work of it.

As we touched the pretty, level beach, Ja leaped out and I followed him. Together we dragged the skiff far up into the bushes that grew beyond the sand.

"We must hide our canoes," explained Ja. "for the Mesops of Luana are always at war with us and would steal them if they found them."

He nodded toward an island further out at sea and at so great a distance that it seemed but a blur hanging in the distant sky. The upward curve of the surface of Pellucidar was constantly revealing the impossible to the surprised eyes of the earth-dweller.

To see land and water curving upward to the distance until it seemed to stand on edge where it melted into the distant sky, and to feel that seas and mountains hung suspended directly above one's head required such a complete reversal of the perspective and reasoning faculties as almost to stupefy one.

No sooner had we hidden the canoes than Ja jumped into the jungle, presently emerging into a narrow but well-defined trail, which wound hither and thither man after the manner of the blightways of all primitive folk. There was, however, one peculiarity about this Mesop trail which I was later to find distinguished

It from all other trails that I have seen within or without the earth.

It would run on plain and clear and well defined and end suddenly in the midst of a tangle of matted jungle, then Ja for a little distance, springing into a tree, climb through it to the other side, drop on to a fallen log, leap over a low bush. Once more alighting upon a distinct trail, he would follow it back for a short distance, only to turn directly about and retrace his steps, until after a mile or less this new pathway ended as suddenly and mysteriously as the former section.

Then he would pass again across some media which would reveal no spur, to take up the broken thread of the trail beyond.

As the purpose of this remarkable avenue dawdled upon me I could not but admire the native shrewdness of the ancient progenitor of the Mesops who hit upon this novel plan to throw his enemies from his track and delay or thwart them in their attempts to follow him to his deep-buried cities.

To you of the outer earth it might seem a slow and tortuous method of moving through the jungle, but were you of Pellucidar you would realize that time is no factor where time does not exist.

So labyrinthine are the windings of these trails, so varied the connecting links and the distances which one must retrace one's steps from the palm ends to find them that a Mesop often reaches many a estate before he is familiar even with those which lead from his own city to the sea.

In fact, three-fourths of the education of the young male Mesop consists in familiarizing himself with these jungle avenues, and the status of an adult is largely determined by the number of trails which he can follow upon his own island.

The females never learn them, since from birth to death they never leave the village of their nativity, except they be taken to mate by a male from another village or captured in war by the enemies of their tribe.

After proceeding through the jungle for what must have been upward of five miles we emerged suddenly into a large clearing, in the exact centre of which stood as strange an appearing village as one might well imagine.

Large trees had been chopped down 15 or 20 feet above the ground, and upon the tops of them spherical habitations of woven twigs, mud-covered, had been built.

Each habitable house was surmounted by some manner of carved image, which Ja told me indicated the identity of the owner.

Horizontal slits, six inches high and two or three feet wide, served to admit light and ventilation. The entrances to the houses were through small apertures in the bases of the trees and thence upward by rude ladders through the hollow trunks to the rooms above.

The houses varied in size from two to several rooms. The largest that I entered was divided into two floors and eight apartments; the village, between it and the jungle, lay beautifully cultivated fields, in which the Mesops raised such cereals, fruits and vegetables as they required. Women and children were working in these gardens as we crossed toward the village.

At sight of Ja they saluted deferentially, but to me they paid not the slightest attention. Among them and about their outer verge of the cultivated area were many warriors. These, too, saluted Ja by touching the points of their spears to the ground directly before them.

Ja conducted me to a large house in the

centre of the village—the house with eight rooms—and, taking me up into it, gave me food and drink. There I met his mate, a comely girl, with a nursing baby in her arms.

Ja told her of how I had saved his life, and she was thereof most kind and hospitable toward me, even permitting me to hold and amuse the tiny bundle of humanity who Ja told me would one day rule the tribe; for Ja, it seemed, was the chief of the community.

We had eaten and rested, and I had slept, much to Ja's amusement; and it seemed that he seldom if ever did so, and then the red man proposed that I accompany him to the temple of the Mahars, which lay not far from his village.

"We are not supping to wait for it," he said. "but the great ones cannot bear, and if you keep well out of sight they need never know that we have been here. For my part I hate them, and always have; but the other chieftains of the island think it best that we continue to maintain the amicable relations which exist between the two races."

"Otherwise I should like nothing better than to lead my warriors among the hideous creatures and exterminate them. Pellucidar would be a better place to live in were there none of them."

I wholly concurred in Ja's belief, but it seemed that it might be a difficult matter to exterminate the dominant race of Pellucidar. Thus conversing, we followed the intricate trail toward the temple, which we came upon in a small clearing surrounded by enormous trees similar to those which must have flourished upon the outer coast during the carboniferous age.

Here was a mighty temple of hewn rock built in the shape of a rough oval with rounded roof in which were several large openings. No doors or windows were visible in the sides of the structure, nor was there need of any—except one entrance for the slaves—since, as Ja explained, the Mahars drew to and from their place of ceremonial, entering and leaving the building by means of the apertures in the roof.

"But," added Ja, "there is an entrance near the base of which even the Mahars know nothing. Come." He led me across the clearing and about the end to a pile of loose rock which lay against the foot of the wall. Here he removed a couple of large boulders, revealing a small opening which led straight within the building; or so it seemed, though, as I entered after Ja, I discovered myself in a narrow place of extreme darkness.

"We are within the outer wall," said Ja. "It is hollow. Follow me closely."

The red man crept ahead a few paces and then began to ascend a primitive ladder similar to that which led from the ground to the upper stories of his house.

We ascended for some 30 feet, when the interior of the space between the walls commenced to grow lighter, and presently we came opposite an opening in the inner wall which gave us an unobstructed view of the entire interior of the temple.

The lower floor was an enormous tank of clear water in which numerous hideous Mahars swam lazily up and down.

Artificial islands of granite rock dotted this artificial sea, and upon several of them I saw men and women like myself.

"What are the human beings doing here?" I asked.

"Wait and you shall see," replied Ja. "They are to take a leading part in the ceremonies which will follow the advent of the queen. You may be thankful that you are not upon the same side of the wall as they."

Scarcely had he spoken than we heard

a great fluttering of wings above, and a moment later a long procession of the frightful reptile of Pellucidar winged slowly and majestically through the large central opening in the roof and circled in stately manner about the temple.

There were several Mahars first, and then at least 20 inspiring pterodactyl-hipsters they are called within Pellucidar. Behind these came the queen flanked by other childers as she had been when she entered the amphitheatre at Phutra.

Three times they wheeled about the interior of the oval chamber, to settle finally upon the damp, cold boulders that fringed the outer edge of the pool. In the centre of one side the largest rock was reserved for the queen, and here she took her place surrounded by her terrible guard.

All lay quiet for several minutes after settling to their places. One might have imagined them in silent prayer. The poor slaves upon the diminutive islands watched the horrid creatures with wide eyes. The men, for the most part, stood erect and stately with folded arms, awaiting their doom; but the women and children clung to one another, hiding behind the males.

Now the queen moved. She raised her ugly head, looking about; then very slowly she crawled to the edge of her throne and slid indolently into the water, up and down the long tank she swam, turning at the ends as you have seen captive eels turn upon their backs and dive below the surface.

Nearer and nearer to the islands she came, until at last she remained at rest before the largest, which lay directly opposite her throne. Raising her hideous head from the water, she fixed her great, round eyes upon the slaves.

The queen fixed her gaze upon a plump young man.

Her victim tried to turn away, hiding her face in her hands and kneeling behind a woman; but the reptile with unblinking eyes, stared on with such fixity that I could have sworn the vision penetrated the woman and the girl's hands, to reach at last the very centre of her brain.

Slowly the reptile's head commenced to move to and fro, but the eyes never ceased to bore toward the frightened girl, and then the victim responded.

She turned wide, fear-haunted eyes toward the Mahars queen; slowly she rose to her feet, and then, as though dragged by some unseen power, moved as one in a trance straight toward the reptile, her glassy eyes fixed upon those of her captor.

To the water's edge she came, nor did she even pause, but stepped into the shallow beside the little island.

On she moved toward the Mahars, who now slowly retreated as though fearing her victim on.

The water rose to the girl's knees, and still she advanced, chained by that clammy eye.

Now the water was at her waist.

Now to her armpits.

Her fellows upon the island looked on in horror, helpless to avert her doom in which they saw a forecast of their own.

The Mahars had sunk now till only the long upper bill and eyes were exposed above the surface of the water, and the girl advanced until the end of that frightful beak was but an inch or two from her face, her horror-filled eyes riveted upon those of the repulsive reptile.

Now the water passed above the girl's mouth and nose, her eyes and forehead were all that showed, yet still she walked on after the retreating slither.

The queen's head slowly disappeared beneath the surface, and after it went the eyes of her victim.

Only a slow ripple widened toward the shores to mark where the two vanished.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

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THE MARCH OF THE MAHARS

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER IX.

THE PACE OF DEATH.

On a plain all was silence within the temple.

The slaves were motionless in terror. The Mahars watched the surface of the sea for the reappearance of their queen, but presently at one end of the tank her face rose slowly into view.

She was backing toward the surface, her eyes before her as they had been when she dragged the helpless girl to her doom.

And then, to my utter amazement, I saw the forehead and eyes of the maiden come slowly out of the depths, following the curve of the reptile, just as when she had disappeared beneath the surface.

On and on came the girl, until she reached a point that reached barely to the surface, and though she had been beneath for a sufficient time to have drawn her trachea over, there was no indication other than her dripping hair and glistening body, that she had been submerged at all.

Again and again the queen led the girl to the depths and out again, until the weary waitness of the thing got on my nerves so that I could have leaped to the child's rescue had I not taken a firm hold of myself.

(Once they were below much longer than when they came to the surface.)

I was horrified to see that one of the girl's arms was gone—gnawed completely from the shoulder, but the poor thing gave no indication of feeling pain, nor the horror in her set eyes seemed in the least.

The next time they appeared—I cannot say.

The poor creature on the island gazing their face tried to cover their eyes with their hands to hide the fear, but now I saw that they too were under the hypnotic spell of the queen, so that they could only crouch in terror, with their eyes fixed upon the ghastly thing that was transpiring before them.

Finally, the queen was under much less than ever before, and when she rose she came alone and swam directly toward her boulder. The moment she mounted it seemed to be the signal for the other Mahars to enter the tank, and as she commenced, upon a larger scale, a repetition of the grisly orgy through which the queen had led her victims.

Only the women and children fell prey to the Mahars—they being the weakest and most tender—and when they had satiated their appetite for human flesh, some of them divorcing two and three of the slaves to be spared, but such was far from the case for as the last Mahars crawled to her rock the queen's thipdars dived into the air, circling the temple once, and then, using the steam engine, swooped down upon the remaining slaves.

There was no hymenium here—just prey, tearing, rending and guising; but at that it was less horrible than the ghastly method of the Mahars.

By the time the thipdars had disposed of the last of the slaves the Mahars were all asleep upon their rocks, and a moment later the great prehistoric evening hawk came to their points beside the queen and themselves dropped into slumber.

"I thought the Mahars seldom, if ever, slept," I said to Ja.

"They do many things in this temple which they do not elsewhere," he re-

sponded. "The Mahars of Phutra are not supposed to eat human flesh, yet slaves are brought here by thousands and most always you will find Mahars on hand to consume them.

"I imagine that they do not bring their practice, which is supposed to obtain only among the least advanced of their race; but I would wager my canoe against a broken paddle that there is no Mahars but eats human flesh whenever she can get it."

"Why should they object to human flesh," I asked, "if it is true that they look upon us as lower animals?"

"It is not because they consider us lower animals, for they are supposed to look with abhorrence upon those who eat our flesh," replied Ja. "It is merely that we are worm-blinded animals."

"They should not think of eating the meat of a thing, which we consider such a delicacy, any more than I would think of eating a snake. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to explain just why this sentiment should exist among them."

"I wonder if they left a single victim," I remarked, leaning far out of the opening in the rock wall to inspect the temple better.

Directly below me the water lapped the very side of the wall, there being a break in the boulders at this point, as there was at several other places about the side of the temple.

My hands were resting upon a small piece of granite which formed a part of the wall, and all my weight upon it proved too much for it. It cracked and I lunged forward.

There was nothing to grasp to save myself, and I plunged headforemost into the water below.

Fortunately, the tank was deep at this point, and I suffered no injury from the fall, but as I was rising to the surface my mind filled with the horrors of my position as I thought of the terrible doom which awaited me the moment the eyes of the reptiles fell upon the creature that had disturbed their slumber.

As long as I could I remained beneath the surface, swimming rapidly in the direction of the islands, that I might procure my life to the utmost.

At last I was forced to rise for air, and as I cast a terrified glance in the direction of the Mahars and the thipdars I was almost stunned to see that not a single one remained upon the rocks where I had last seen them, nor as I searched the temple with my eyes could I discern any within it.

For a moment I was puzzled to account for the thing, until I realized that, being perhaps dead, could not have been disturbed by the noise my body made when it hit the water, and that there is no such thing as time within Pellicular.

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At the thought cold sweat broke out upon me from every pore, and as I crawled from the water on to one of the tiny islands I was trembling like a leaf—you can imagine the awful horror which even the simple thought of the repulsive Mahars of Pellicular induces in the human mind, and to feel that you are in their power—that they are crawling, slimy and abhorrent, to drag you out beneath the water and devour you! It is frightful.

But they did not come, and at last I came to the conclusion that I was indeed alone within the temple. How long I should be alone was the next question to assail me as I swam frantically about once more in search of a means of escape.

Several times I called to Ja, but he must have left after I tumbled into the tank, for I received no response to my cries.

Doubtless he had felt as certain of my doom when he saw me tepee from our hiding place as I had, and lest he too should be discovered had hastened from the temple and back to his village.

I knew that there must be some entrance to the building beside the doorways in the roof, for it did not seem reasonable to believe that the thousands of slaves which were brought here to feed the Mahars' human flesh, which they craved would all be carried through the air, and so I continued my search until at last it was rewarded by the discovery of several loose granite blocks in the masonry at one of the angles of the temple.

A little effort proved sufficient to crawl these stones to permit me to dive through into the clearing beyond, and a moment later I had scurried across the intervening space to the dense jungle beyond.

Here I sank panting and trembling upon the matted grasses beneath the ancient trees, for I felt that I had escaped from the grinning fangs of death out of the depths of my own grave.

Whatever dangers lay hidden in this island jungle, there could be none so fearsome as those which I had just escaped.

I knew that I could meet death bravely enough if it but came in the form of some familiar beast or man—anything other than the hideous and uncanny Mahars.

I must have fallen asleep from exhaustion. When I awoke I was very hungry, and after buying myself searching for fruit for a while, I set off through the jungle to find the beach.

I knew that the island was not so large but that I could easily find the sea, if I did but move in a straight line, but those came the difficulty, as there was no way in which I could direct my course and hold it, the sun, of course, being always directly above my head, and the trees so thickly set that I could see no distant object which might serve to guide me in a straight line.

As it was I must have walked for a great distance, since I ate four times and slept twice before I reached the sea, but at last I did so, and my picnic at the sight of it was greatly enhanced by the chance discovery of a hidden canoe among the bushes through which it had stumbled just prior to coming upon the beach.

I can tell you that it did not take me long to pull that awkward craft down to the water and shove it far out from shore. My experience with Ja had taught me that if I were to steal another canoe I must be quick about it, and get far beyond the owner's reach as soon as possible.

I must have come out upon the opposite side of the island from that at which Ja and I had entered it, for the mainland was nowhere in sight. For a main-

time I paddled round the shore, though well out, before I saw the mainland in the distance.

At the sight of it I lost no time in directing my course toward it, for I had long since made up my mind to return to Phutra and give myself up that I might be once more with Perry and Ghak the Hairy One.

I felt that I was a fool ever to have attempted to escape alone, especially in view of the fact that our plans were already well-formulated to make a break for freedom together.

Of course I realized that the chances of the success of our proposed venture were slim indeed. I knew, however, that I never could enjoy freedom without being as long as the old man lived, and I had learned that the probability that I might find means from without to rescue him was less than slight.

Had Perry been dead I should gladly have put my strength and it against the savage and primordial world in which I found myself. I could have lived in seclusion within some rocky cave until I had found the means to outfit myself with the crude weapons of the Stone Age, and then set out in search of those whose image had now become the constant companion of my waking hours, and the central and beloved figure of my dreams.

But, to the best of my knowledge, Perry still lived, and it was my duty and my wish to be again with him, that we might share the dangers and vicissitudes of the strange world we had discovered. And Ghak, too, the great, shaggy man had found a place in the hearts of us both, for he was indeed every inch a man and dog. Fierce, smooth-tongued, and brutal, as I judged too harshly by the standards best of effects twentieth century civilization, but withal noble, dignified, chivalrous and lovable.

Chance carried me to the very beach upon which I had discovered Ja's canoe, and a short time later I was scrambling up the steep bank to retrace my steps from the plain of Phutra.

But my troubles came when I entered the canyon beyond the summit, for here I found that several of them centred at the point where I crossed the divide, and which one I had traversed to reach the pass I could not for the life of me remember.

It was all a matter of chance, and so I set off down that which seemed the easiest going, and in this I made the same mistake that many of us do in selecting the path along which we shall follow out the course of our lives, and again learned that it is not always best to follow the line of least resistance.

By the time I had eaten eight meals and slept twice I was convinced that I was upon the wrong trail, for between Phutra and the inland sea I had not slept and had eaten but once.

To retrace my steps to the summit of the divide and explore another canyon seemed the only solution of my problem, but a sudden widening of the canyon just before me seemed to suggest that it was about to open into a level country, and, with the lure of discovery strong upon me, I decided to proceed but a short distance farther before I turned back.

The next turn of the canyon brought me to its mouth, and before me I saw a narrow plain leading down to an ocean. At my right the side of the canyon was a narrow ledge, and the valley lying to my left and the foot of it running into the sea, where it formed a broad, level beach.

Clumps of strange trees dotted the landscape here and there almost to the water and rank grass and ferns grew between. From the nature of the vegetation, I was convinced that the land between the ocean and the foothills was swampy, though directly before me it seemed dry enough all the way to the sandy strip along which the restless waters advanced and retreated.

Curiosity prompted me to walk down to the beach, for the scene was very beautiful. As I passed along beside the deep and tangled vegetation of the swamp I thought I saw a movement of the ferns at my left, but I stopped a moment to look, it was not repeated, and if anything lay hid there my eyes could not penetrate the dense foliage to discern it.

Presently I stood upon the beach, looking out over the wide and lonely sea, across whose forbidding bosom no human being had yet ventured to discover what strange and mysterious lands lay beyond or what its invisible islands held of riches, wonders, or adventures.

What savage races, what fierce and formidable beasts, were this very instant watching the lapping of the waves upon its farther shore? How far did it extend? Perry had told me that the seas of Pellicular were small in comparison with those of the outer earth, but even so this great ocean might stretch its broad expanse for thousands of miles. For countless ages it had rolled up and down its countless miles of shore; and yet today it remained all unknown beyond the tiny strip that was visible from its beaches.

The fascination of speculation was strong upon me. It was as though I had been carried back to the birth of time of our own outer world to look upon its lands and seas ages before man had traversed either. Here was a new world, all untouched. It called to me to explore it.

Upon one hand was the bluff that ran from the canyon to the sea, on the other the fearsome swamp from which the creature had sneaked upon me, behind lay the mighty untraced sea, and before me in the centre of the narrow way that led to safety stood this huge mountain of terrible and menacing flesh.

A single glance at the thing was sufficient to assure me that I was facing one of those long-extinct, prehistoric creatures whose fossilized remains are found within the outer crust as far back as the Triassic formation, a gigantic labyrinthodon.

And there I was, unarmed and, with the exception of a loin cloth, as naked as I had come into the world. I could imagine how my first ancestor felt that distant, prehistoric morn that he encountered for the first time this terrifying progenitor of the thing that had me cornered now beside the restless, mysterious sea.

Unquestionably he had escaped, or I should not have been within Pellicular or elsewhere, and I wished at that moment that he had handed down to me with the various attributes that, I presume, I have inherited from him the specific application of the instinct of self-preservation which saved him from the fate which loomed so close before me today.

To seek escape in the swamp or in the ocean would have been similar to jumping into a den of lions to escape one upon the outside. The sea and swamp both were doubtless alive with these mighty, carnivorous amphibians, which if not the individual that menaced me would pursue me into either the sea or the swamp with equal facility.

AT THE BATHHOUSE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TZARZAN"

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

THURSDAY seemed nothing to do but stand idly and await my end. I thought of Perry—how he would wonder what had become of me. I thought of my friends because of the outer world, and of how they would go on living their lives in total ignorance of the strange and terrible fate that had overtaken me, or unassuming the weird surroundings which had witnessed the last frightful agony of my extinction.

With these thoughts came a realization of how unimportant to the life and happiness of the world is the existence of any one of us. We may be snuffed out without an instant's warning, and for a brief day our friends speak of us with great interest.

The following morning, while the first worm is busily engaged in testing the strength of our coffin, they are teeing off for the first hole to suffer more acute construction of our coffin, they are teeing off for the hole to us, untimely demise.

The labyrinthine was coming more and more alive to me. He seemed to realize that escape for me was impossible, and I could have sworn that his huge, fanged jaws grinned in pleasurable appreciation of my predicament, or was it in anticipation of the juicy morsel which would soon be pulp between those formidable teeth?

He was about 50 feet from me when I heard a voice calling to me from the distance of the bluff. I had left.

I looked and could have sworn in delight at the sight that met my eyes.

There, waving frantically to me, stood Ja, urging me to run for it to the cliff base.

CHAPTER X.

PHUTRA AGAIN.

I HAD no idea that I should escape the monster that had marked me for his breakfast, but at least I should not die alone. Human eyes would watch my end. It was cold comfort, I presume, yet I derived some slight peace of mind from the contemplation of it.

To run seemed ridiculous, especially as yet I did so, and as I ran I saw Ja, agile as a monkey, crawl down the precipitous face of the rocks, clinging to small projections, and the tough creepers that had found foothold here and there.

The labyrinthine doubtedly thought that Ja was coming to double his portion of human flesh, so he was in no haste to pursue me to the cliff and frighten away this other threat. Instead, he merely trotted along behind me.

As I approached the foot of the cliff I saw what Ja intended, but I doubted if the thing would prove successful. He had come down to within 25 feet of the bottom and there, clinging with one hand to a small ledge, and with his feet resting precariously upon tiny bushes that grew from the solid face of the rock, he hovered the point of his long spear until it hung some six feet above the ground.

To clamber up that slim shaft without dragging Ja down and precipitating both to the same doom from which the copper-colored one was attempting to save me seemed utterly impossible, and, as I came near the spear, I told Ja no, and that I would not risk him to try to save myself.

But he insisted that he knew what he was doing and was in no danger himself. "The danger is still yours," he called, "for unless you move much more rapidly than you are now the sithic will be upon you and drag you back before ever you are halfway up the spear. He can rear up

and reach you with ease anywhere below where I stand."

Well, Ja should know his own business. I thought, and so I grasped the spear and clambered toward the red man as rapidly as I could, not so far removed from my sinian ancestors as I am. I called him, suddenly realized our intentions and that he was quite likely to lose all his meat instead of having it doubled, as he had hoped.

When he saw me clambering up that spear he let out a hiss that fairly shook the ground, and came charging after me at a terrific rate.

I had reached the top of the spear by this time, or almost—another six inches would give me a hold on Ja's hand, when I felt a sudden wrench from below and, glancing fearfully downward, saw the mighty jaws of the monster close on the sharp point of the weapon.

I made a frantic effort to reach Ja's hand, the sithic gave a tremendous tug, the spear slipped from his fingers, and, still clinging to it, plunged not foremost toward my ravenous executioner.

At the instant that he felt the spear slip from Ja's hand the creature must have opened his huge jaws to catch me, for when he came down, still clinging to the butt-end of the weapon, the point was that the sharp and transfixed his lower jaw.

With the pain he snapped his mouth closed. I fell upon his snout, lost my hold upon the spear, rolled the length of his face and head across his short neck on to his broad back and from there to the ground.

Scarcely had I touched the earth than I was upon my feet, dashing madly for the path by which I had entered this horrible valley.

A glance over my shoulder showed me the sithic engaged in pouring at the spear stuck through his lower jaw, and so busily engaged did he remain in this occupation that I had gained the safety of the cliff-top before he was ready to take up the pursuit.

When he did not discover me in sight within the valley he dashed, hissing, into the rank vegetation of the swamp, and that was the last I saw of him.

I hastened to the cliff edge above Ja and helped him to a secure footing. He would not listen to any thanks for his attempt to save me, which had come so near miscarriage.

"I had given you up for lost when you tumbled into the Mahar temple," he said, "for not even I could save you from their clutches. You may imagine my surprise when, on seeing a carter dragged up upon the beach of the mainland, I discovered your own footprints in the sand beside it."

"I immediately set out in search of you, knowing, as I did, that you must be entirely unarmed and defenseless against the many dangers which lurk upon the mainland, both in the form of savage beasts and reptiles, and men as well. I had no difficulty in tracking you to this point. It is well that I arrived when I did."

"But why did you do it?" I asked, puzzled at this show of friendship on the part of a man of another world and a different race and color.

"You saved my life," he replied, "from that moment it became my duty to protect and defend you. I would have been no true Mezap had I evaded my plain duty; but it was a pleasure in this instance, for I like you."

"I wish that you would come and live with me. You shall become a member of my tribe. Among us there is the best of hunting and fishing, and you shall have to choose a mate from the most beautiful of my sinian ancestors as I am. I called him, suddenly realized our intentions and that he was quite likely to lose all his meat instead of having it doubled, as he had hoped."

"You need merely to come to the foot of the Clouds. There you will find a river which flows into the Loral Az."

"I earnestly oppose the mouth of the river you will see three large islands far out, so far that they are barely discernible, the one to the extreme left as you face them from the mouth of the river is Anoroc; where I rule the tribe of Anoroc."

"But how am I to find the Mountains of the Clouds?" I asked.

"Men say that they are visible from half of Pellucidar," he replied.

"How large is Pellucidar?" I asked, wondering what sort of theory these primitive men had concerning the form and substance of their world.

"The Mahars say it is round, like the inside of a tin shell," he answered, "but that is ridiculous, since, were it true, we should not have to travel far in any direction, and all the waters of Pellucidar would run to one spot and drop us."

"No," Pellucidar is quite flat, and extends so many leagues how far all directions. At the edge, so my ancestors have reported and handed down to me, is a great wall that prevents the land and waters from escaping over into the burning sea whereon Pellucidar floats; but I have never been so far from Anoroc as to have seen this wall with my own eyes."

"However, it is quite reasonable to believe that this is true, whereas there is no reason at all in the foolish belief of the Mahars. According to them, Pellucidarians who live upon the opposite side walk always with their heads pointed downward." And Ja laughed uproariously at the very thought.

It was plain to see that the humans of this inner world had not advanced far in learning and the thought that the ugly Mahars had so outstripped them was very pathetic indeed. I wondered how many ages it would take to lift these people out of their ignorance, even were it given to Perry and me to attempt it.

Possibly we would be killed for our pains as were those men of the outer world who dared challenge the dense ignorance and superstition of the earth's younger days. But it was worth the effort if the opportunity ever presented itself.

And then it occurred to me that here was an opportunity—that I might make a small beginning upon Ja, who was my friend, and thus note the effect of my teaching upon a Pellucidarian.

"Ja," I said, "what would you say were I to tell you that in so far as the Mahars' theory of the shape of Pellucidar is concerned it is correct?"

"I would say," he replied, "that either you were a fool or took me for one."

lucidar, and walk always with you head pointed downward?" he scoffed. "And were I to believe that my friend, I should indeed be mad."

"I attempted to explain the force of gravity to him, and by means of the dropped fruit to illustrate how impossible it would be for a body to fall off the earth under any circumstances."

He listened so intently that I thought I had made an impression and started the train of thought that would lead him to a partial understanding of the truth. But I was mistaken.

"Your own illustration," he said finally, "proves the falsity of your theory."

He dropped a fruit from his hand to the ground.

"See," he said, "without support even this tiny fruit falls until it strikes some thing that stops it. If Pellucidar were not supported upon the flaming sea it, too, would fall as the fruit falls—you have proved it yourself."

He had me that time; you could see it in his eyes.

It seemed a hopeless job, and I gave it up, temporarily, at least, for when I contemplated the necessary explanation of our solar system and the universe, I realized how futile it would be to attempt to picture to Ja or any other Pellucidarian the sun, the moon, the planets and the countless stars. Those born within the inner world could no more conceive of factors appreciable to our finite minds such terms as space and eternity.

"Well, Ja," I laughed, "whether we be with our much wiser, we came from as where we are going now."

"For my part I wish that you could guide me to Phutra, where I may give myself up to the Mahars once more, that my friends and I may work out the plan of escape which the Sagoths interrupted when they gathered us together and drove us to the arena to witness the punishment of the slaves who killed the guards."

"I wish now that I had not left the arena, for by this time my friends and I might have made good our escape, whereas this delay may mean the wrecking of our plan, which depended for their consummation upon the continued sleep of the three Mahars who lay in the pit beneath the building in which we were confined."

"You would return to captivity," cried Ja in astonishment.

"My friends are there," I replied—"the only friends I have in Pellucidar except you. What else may I do under the circumstances?"

He thought for a moment in silence. Then he shook his head sorrowfully.

"It is what a brave man and a good friend should do," he said. "Yet it seems most foolish, for the Mahars will never condemn you to death for running away, and so you will be accomplishing nothing for your friends by returning."

"Never in all my life have I heard of a prisoner returning to the Mahars of his free will. There are but few who escape them, though some do, and these would rather die than be recaptured."

"I see no other way, Ja," I said, "though I can assure you that I would rather go to shed another Perry than to Phutra. However, Perry is much too pliant to make the probability at all great that he shall ever be called upon to rescue him from the former locality."

Ja asked me what should be, and when I explained as best I could, he said: "You are speaking of Pellucidar floats. All the dead who are buried in the ground go there."

"Pieces by pieces they are carried down to Malop Az by the little demons who dwell there. We know this because when graves are opened we find that the bodies have been partially or entirely borne away."

"That is why we of Anoroc place our dead in high trees where the birds may find them and bear them bit by bit to the Dead World above, the land of Awful Shadow. If we kill an enemy we place his body in the ground that it may go to Malop Az."

As we talked we had been walking up the canyon down which I had come to the great ocean and the sithic. Ja did his best to dissuade me from returning to Phutra, but when he saw that I had determined to do so he consented to guide me to a point from which I could see the plain of Phutra.

To my surprise the distance was but short from the beach where I had again met Ja. It was evident that I had spent much time following the windings of a tortuous canyon, while just beyond the ridge lay the city of Phutra near to which I must have come several times.

As we topped the ridge and saw the granite gate towers dotting the flowered plain at our feet Ja made a final effort to persuade me to abandon my mad purpose and return with him to Anoroc, but I was firm in my resolve, and at last he hid me good-by, assured in his own mind that he was looking upon me for the last time. I wonder if he was right!

I was sorry to part with him, for I had come to like him very much indeed. With his hidden city upon the island of Anoroc as a base, and his savage warriors as escort, Perry and I could have accomplished much in the line of exploration, and I hoped that were we successful in our effort to escape we might return to Anoroc later.

There was, however, one great thing to be accomplished first—at least it was the great thing to me—the finding of Dian the Beautiful.

I wanted to make amends for the affront I had put upon her in my ignorance, and I wanted to— Well, I wanted to see her again, and to be with her.

Down the hillside I made my way into the gorgeous field of flowers, and then across the rolling land toward the shadowless columns that guarded the ways to buried Phutra. At a quarter mile from the nearest entrance I was discovered by the Sagoth guard, and in an instant four of the gorilla-like men were dashing toward me.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE DRAGON'S EYE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER X—(Continued)

THOUGH they brandished their long spears and yelled like wild Comanches, I paid no the slightest attention to them, walking quietly toward them as though unaware of their existence. My manner had the effect upon them that I had hoped, and as we came quite near together they ceased their savage shouting.

It was evident that they had expected me to turn and flee at sight of them, thus presenting that which they most enjoyed, a human target at which to cast their spears.

"What do you have?" shouted one, and I recognized me. "Ho! It is the man who claims to be the first to see the smoke within the amphitheatre. But why are you here, having once made good your escape?"

"I did not escape," I replied. "I had my way to avoid the thag, as did others, and coming into a long passage I became confused and lost my way in the foothills beyond Phutra. Only now have I found my way back."

"And you come of your own free will back to Phutra?" exclaimed one of the guards.

"Where else might I go?" I asked.

"Is a stranger within Phutra, and how so other where than Phutra. Why should I not desire to be in Phutra? Am I not well fed and well treated? Am I not happy? What better lot could man desire?"

The Sagoths scratched their heads. This was a new one on them, and so being stupid brutes they took me to their masters, whom they felt would be better fitted to solve the riddle of my return, for riddles they still considered it.

I had spoken to the Sagoths as I had for the purpose of throwing them off guard, so they thought that I was so glibly won my way within Phutra that I would voluntarily return when I had one had so excellent an opportunity to escape they would never for an instant imagine that I could be occupied in anything but my return to the city.

As they led me before the slimy Mahah who clung to a slimy rock within the large room that was the thag's office.

With cold, reptilian eyes the creature seemed to bore through the thin veneer of my deceit and read my inmost thoughts. It heeded the story which the Sagoths told of my return to Phutra, watching the profligate's lips and fingers during the recital. Then it questioned me through one of the Sagoths.

"You say you returned to Phutra of your own free will because you think yourself better off than elsewhere. Do you not know that you may be the next chosen to give up your life in the interests of the wonderful scientific investigations that our learned ones are continually occupied with?"

I hadn't heard of anything of that nature, but I thought best to admit it, I said, "I had never heard of it, but I had heard of it in the lonely plains of Phutra. It was fortunate, I think, to return to Phutra at all. As it was, I had nearly escaped death within the jaws of a huge snake."

"So, I am sure that I am safer in the hands of intelligent creatures such as the Phutra. At least, such would be the case in my own world, where human beings like myself rule supreme."

"There the higher races of man extend protection and hospitality to the stranger within their gates. Being a stranger here, I naturally assumed that a like courtesy would be accorded me."

The Mahar looked at me in silence for

some time after I ceased speaking and the Sagoths had translated my words to his master. The creature seemed deep in thought.

"Presently she communicated some message to the Sagoth. The latter turned and, motioning me to follow him, left the presence of the reptile. Behind and on either side of me marched the balance of the guard.

"What are they going to do with me?" I asked the fellow at my right.

"You are to appear before the learned ones, who will question you regarding this strange world from which you came."

"After a moment's silence he turned to me again.

"Do you happen to know," he asked, "what the Mahars do to slaves who lie to them?"

"I do not recall," he said, "nor do I know, as I have no intention of lying to the Mahars."

"Then be careful that you don't repeat the impossible tale you told today to just now. Another world, indeed, where human beings rule?" he concluded in fine scorn.

"But it is the truth," I insisted. "From where else did I come? I am not of Phutra, and any one with half an eye could see that."

"It is your misfortune, then," he remarked, dryly, "that you may not be marked by one with but half an eye."

"What will they do with me," I asked, "if they do not have a mind to believe me?"

"If they may be sentenced to the arena, or go to the pits to be used in research work by the learned ones," he replied.

"And what will they do with me there?" I persisted.

"No one knows exactly the Mahars and those who go to the pits with them, but as the latter never return their knowledge does them but little good. It is said that the learned ones cut up their subjects while they are yet alive, thus learning many useful things."

"However, I should not imagine that it would prove useful to him who was being cut up; but of course, this is all but conjecture. The chances are that ere long you will know much more about it than I, and be grimed as he spoke. The Sagoths have a well-developed sense of humor."

"And suppose it is the arena," I continued. "What then?"

"The Lord only knows how long and the thag the time that you escaped!" he said.

"Yes."

"Your end in the arena would be similar to what was intended for them," he explained, "though of course the same kind of animals might not be employed."

"It is sure death in either event?" I asked.

"What becomes of those who go below with the learned ones I do not know, nor does any other," he replied, "but those who go to the arena may come out alive and thus regain their liberty, as did the two whom you saw."

"They gained their liberty? And how?"

"It is the custom of the Mahars to liberate those who remain alive within the arena after the beasts depart or are killed. Thus it has happened that several mighty warriors from far distant lands, whom we have captured on our slave raids, have battled with the brutes trained in upon them and slain them, thereby winning their freedom."

"In the instance which you witnessed the brutes killed one another, but the result was the same—the man and woman were liberated, furnished with weapons and started on their homeward journey."

Upon the left shoulder of each a mark was burned—the mark of the Mahars, which would forever protect those two from slaying parties.

"There is a slender chance for me, then, if I be sent to the arena, and none at all if the learned ones drag me to the pits?"

"He is quite right," he replied, "but should you be sent to the arena, there is scarce one in a thousand who comes out alive."

"To my surprise they returned me to the same building in which I had been confined with Perry and Chak before my escape. At the doorway I was turned over to the guards there.

"The still drowsier he called before the investigators shortly," said he who had brought me back, "so have him in readiness."

CHAPTER XI.

FOUR DEAD MAHARS.

THIS guards in whose hands I now found myself, upon hearing that I had returned of my own volition to Phutra, evidently felt that it would be safe to give me my liberty within the buildings as had been the custom before I had escaped, and so I was told to return to whatever duty had been mine formerly.

My first act was to hunt up Perry, whom I found pursuing, as usual, over the great tomes that he was supposed to be merely dusting and rearranging upon new shelves.

As I entered the room he glanced up and nodded pleasantly to me, only to resume his work as though I had never been away at all.

"I was both astonished and hurt at his indifference. And to think that I was risking death to return to him purely from a sense of duty and affection!"

"Why, Perry?" I exclaimed, "have not you a word for me after my long absence?"

"Long absence?" he repeated in indignant astonishment. "What do you mean?"

"Are you crazy, Perry? Do you mean to say that you have not missed me since that time we were separated by the change of things within the arena?"

"That time," he repeated. "Why, man, I have but just returned from the arena. You reached here almost as soon as I."

"Had you been much later I should indeed have been worried, and as it is, I had intended asking you about how you escaped the heat as soon as I had completed the translation of this most interesting message."

"Perry, you are mad," I exclaimed. "Why, the Lord only knows how long I have been away. I have been to other lands, discovered a new race of humans within Phellidair, seen the Mahars at their worship in their hidden temple, and barely escaped with my life from them and from a great laborerhood that I met afterward, following my long and tedious wanderings across an unknown world."

"It must have been away for months, Perry, and now you barely look up from your work when I return and insist that we have been separated but a moment. Is that any way to treat a friend?"

"Surprised at you, Perry, and if I'd thought for a moment that you cared so more for me than this I should not have returned to chance death at the hands of the Mahars for your sake."

"The old man looked at me for a long time before he spoke. There was a puzzled expression upon his wrinkled face, and a look of hurt sorrow in his eyes.

"David, my boy," he said, "how could you be for a moment duller than you are? There is something strange here that I

cannot understand. I know that I am not mad, and I am equally sure that you are not, but how in the world are we to account for the strange hallucinations that each of us seems to harbor relative to the passage of time since last we saw one another?"

"You are positive that months have gone by, while to me it seems equally certain that not more than an hour ago I set beside you in the amphitheatre. Can it be that both of us are right and at the same time both are wrong? First tell me what time it is, and then maybe I can solve our problem. Do you catch my meaning?"

"I did," and said so.

"Yes," continued the old man, "we are both right. To me, bent over my book here, there has been no lapse of time. I have done little or nothing to waste my energies and so have required neither food nor sleep."

"You, on the contrary, have walked and fought and wasted strength and time, which must needs be rebuilt by nutrient and food, and so, having eaten and slept many times since that you saw me you naturally measure the lapse of time largely by those acts. As a matter of fact, David, am rapidly coming to the conviction that there is no such thing as time."

"Surely there can be no time here within Phellidair, where there are no means for measuring or recording time. Why the Mahars themselves take no account of such a thing as time. I find here in all their literary works but a single tense, the present. There seems to be neither past nor future with them. Of course, it is impossible for our earthly minds to grasp such a condition, but our recent experiences seem to demonstrate its existence."

It was too big a subject for me, and I said so, but Perry seemed to enjoy nothing better than speculating on it, and after listening with interest to my account of the adventures through which I passed he returned once more to the subject, which he was enlarging upon with considerable energy when he was interrupted by the entrance of a Sagoth.

"Come," commanded the introducer, beckoning to me. "The investigators would speak with you."

"Good-by, Perry," I said, clasping the old man's hand. "There may be nothing but the present and no such thing as time, but I feel that I am about to take a trip into the hereafter from which I shall never return."

"If you and Chak should manage to escape, I want you to promise me that you will find Dian the Beautiful, and tell her that with my last words I asked her forgiveness for the unintentional affront I put upon her, and that my one wish was to be spared long enough to right the wrong that I had done her."

Tears came to Perry's eyes.

"I cannot believe that you will return, David," he said. "It would be awful to think of living out the balance of my life among these hateful and repulsive creatures without you. If you are taken away I shall never escape, for I feel that I am as well off here as I should be anywhere within this buried world. Good-by, my boy, good-by."

Then his old voice faltered and broke, and as he hid his face in his hands the Sagoth guardman glared me roughly by the shoulder and hustled me from the chamber.

A moment later I was standing before a dozen Mahars, the official investigators of Phutra. They asked me many questions during a Sage interview.

I answered them all truthfully. They seemed particularly interested in my account of the outer earth and the strange vehicle which had brought Perry and me to Phellidair.

During this apparent silence they were debating through the medium of their strange, unspoken language the merits of my tale. At last the head of the tribunal communicated the result of their conference to the officer in charge of the Sagoth guard.

"Come," he said to me, "you are sentenced to the experimental pits for having dared to insult the intelligence of the mighty ones with the ridiculous tale you have had the temerity to unfold to them. Do you mean that they do not believe me?" I asked, totally astonished.

"Believe you?" he laughed. "Do you mean to say that you expected any one to believe so impossible a lie?"

It was hopeless, and so I walked in silence beside my guard down through dark corridors and runways toward my awful doom. At a low level we came upon a number of lighted chambers, in which we saw many Mahars engaged in various occupations. To one of these chambers my guard escorted me, and before leaving they chained me to a side wall.

There were other humans similarly chained. Upon a long table lay a victim even as I was ushered into the room. Several Mahars stood about the poor creature, holding him down so that he could not move. Another, grasping a sharp knife with her three-toed forefoot, was laying open the victim's chest and abdomen.

No anesthetic had been administered, and the shrieks and groans of the tortured man were terrible to hear.

This, indeed, was vivisection with a vengeance. Cold sweat broke out upon me as I realized that soon my turn would come.

And to think that where there was no such thing as time, I might easily imagine that my suffering was ending for months before death finally released me!

The Mahars had paid not the slightest attention to me as I had been brought into the room. So deeply immersed were they in their work that I am sure they did not even know that the Sagoths had entered with me.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE EARTH'S CORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

The door was close by. Would that I could reach it! But those heavy chains precluded any such possibility. I looked about for some means of escape from my bonds.

Upon the floor between me and the Mahars lay a tiny surgical instrument—a scalpel. It was a button hook, but was much sharper, and its point was sharpened. A hundred times in my boyhood days had I used such a button hook.

I tried to reach that little bit of polished steel, but I could not get effect at least a few inches. I tried to reach one hand as far as I could, my fingers still fell an inch short of the coveted instrument. It was impossible! I stretched every fiber of my body as I would a bow, and extended one hand toward the object.

My heart came to my throat! I could not reach the thing! But suppose that in my effort to draw it toward me I should suddenly shove it still further away from me entirely out of reach? Could that result end upon me.

Steadily and cautiously I made the effort. My feet dropped upon the cold floor. Gradually I worked it toward me until I felt that it was within my grasp, and a moment later I had turned about and the precious thing was in my hand.

Instantly I fell to work upon the Mahars. A child might have done the job as simply. The Mahars were now evidently considering their work at the table. One already had turned away and was examining the other victims, evidently with the intention of selecting the next subject.

Those at the table had their backs toward me. But for the creature walking toward us I might have escaped that moment. The thing approached me, when my attention was attracted by a huge glare that came to my right.

There I was or whether I was going to have met. My only thought was to place as much distance as possible between me and that frightful chamber of torture.

Instantly I reduced my speed to a jog walk, and later realizing the danger of running into some new predicament were I not careful, I moved more slowly and cautiously still.

After a time I came to a passage that seemed in some mysterious way familiar to me, and presently changing to glances within a chamber which led from the corridor I saw three Mahars curled up in slumber upon a bed of skins.

I could have shouted aloud in joy and relief. It was the same corridor, and here were the same Mahars that I had needed to have had important a role in our escape from Phutra. Providence had indeed been kind to me, for the reptiles still slept.

My one great danger now lay in reaching the upper levels in search of Perry and Ghak, but there was nothing else to be done, so I hastened upward.

When I came to the frequent portions of the building I found a large bundle of skins in a corner and these I thrust to my head, carrying them in such a way that coils and corners fell down about my shoulders, completely hiding my face.

Thus disguised, I found Perry and Ghak together in the chamber where we had been wont to eat and sleep. Both were glad to see me, it is needless to say, though of course they had known nothing of the fate that had been meted out to me after my trial by the judges.

It was decided that no time should now be lost before attempting to put our plan of escape to the test, as I could not hope to remain hidden from the Sagoths long, nor could I forever carry that bale of skins about upon my head without arousing suspicion.

However it seemed likely that it would try me once more safely through the crowded passages and chambers of the upper levels, and so I set out with Perry and Ghak—the stench of the ill-cured pig fairly choking me.

Together we repaired to the first tier of corridors beneath the main floor of the building, and here Perry and Ghak halted to await me.

The buildings are cut out of the solid limestone formation. There is nothing at all remarkable about their architecture. The rooms are sometimes rectangular, sometimes circular, and again oval in shape.

The corridors which connect them are narrow and not always straight. The chambers are lighted by diffused sunlight reflected through tubes similar to those by which the avenues are lighted.

The lower the tiers of chambers, the darker. Most of the corridors are entirely unlighted. The Mahars can see with well in semidarkness.

Down to the main floor we encountered many Mahars, Sagoths and slaves; but no attention was paid us, as we had become a part of the domestic life of the building. There was but a single entrance leading from the place into the avenue, and this was well guarded by Sagoths. This doorway alone were we able to pass.

It is true that we were not supposed to enter the deeper corridors and apartments except on special occasions when we were instructed to do so; but as we had no other reason to fear that we could accomplish any harm by so doing and so we were not hindered as we entered the corridor which led below.

Wrapped in a skin I carried three swords and the two boxes, with the arrows which Perry and I had fashioned. As my slaves bore skin-wrapped burdens I was free to my load attracted no comment. Where I left Ghak and Perry there were no other creatures to sight, and so I withdrew one sword from the package, and leaving the balance of the weapons with Perry, started on alone toward the lower levels for my dangerous enterprise.

Having come to the apartment in which the three Mahars slept I entered silently, forgetting that the creatures were without the sense of hearing.

The one that had been there when we entered had been occupied with a number of metal vessels, into which had been put powders and liquids, as I judged from the array of flasks standing about upon the bench where it had been working.

In an instant I realized what I had stumbled upon. It was the very room for the fluting of which Perry had given me minute directions. It was the buried chamber in which was hidden the Great Secret of this horrible race of Mahars.

And on the bench beside the flasks lay the skin-bound book which held the only copy of the thing I was to have sought, after dispatching the three Mahars in their sleep.

There was no exit from the room other than the doorway in which I now stood facing the two frightful reptiles.

Cornered, I knew that they would fight like demons, and they were well equipped to fight if they were forced to fight. Together they launched themselves upon me, and though I ran one of them through the heart on the instant, the other fastened the gleaming fangs about my sword arm above the elbow, and then with her sharp talons commenced to rake me about the body, evidently intent upon disemboweling me.

I saw that it was useless to hope that I might release my arm from that powerful, viselike grip which seemed to be severing my arm from my body. The pain I suffered was intense, but it only served to spur me to greater efforts to overcome my antagonists.

Back and forth across the floor we struggled—the Mahars dealing me terrific, cutting blows with her forehead, while I attempted to protect my body with my left hand, at the same time watching for an opportunity to transfer my blade from my now useless sword hand to its rapidly weakening mate.

At last I was successful, and with what seemed to me my last ounce of strength I ran the blade through the helpless body of my foe.

Soundless, as it had fought, it died, and though weak from pain and loss of blood, it was with an emotion of triumph that I stepped across the convulsively stiffening corpse to snatch up to the most potent secret of this horrible world.

And as I glanced it did I think of what it meant to the human race of Pellucidar—did there dash through my mind the thought that countless generations of my own kind yet unborn would have reason to scorn me for the thing that I had accomplished for them? Did I? I did not.

I thought of a beautiful oval face, gazing out of limpid eyes, through a wavy mass of jet-black hair. I thought of red, red lips, God-made for kissing.

For an instant I stood there thinking of Dian the Beautiful, and then, with a sigh, I tucked the book in the thong that supported my loin cloth, and turned to leave the apartment.

At the bottom of the corridor which leads aloft from the lower chambers I whistled in accordance with the prearranged signal which was to announce to Perry and Ghak that I had been successful. A moment later they stood beside me, and to my surprise I saw that Hooba the Sly one accompanied them.

"He joined us," exclaimed Perry, "and would not be denied. The fellow is a fox. He scouted escape, and rather than be thwarted of our chance now I told him that I would bring him to you and let you decide whether he might accompany us."

I had no love for Hooba, and no confidence in him. I was sure that if he thought it would profit him he would betray us; but I saw no way out of it now, and the fact that I had killed four Mahars instead of only three I had expected, made it possible to include the fellow in our scheme of escape.

"Very well," I said; "you may come with us, Hooba; but at the first intimation of treachery I shall run my sword through you. Do you understand?"

He said that he did.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

AT THE BRITHORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XI—Continued
 Some time later we had removed the skins from the four Mahars, and no longer succeeded in crawling inside of them our faces that there seemed an excellent chance for us to pass unnoticed from Phutra.

It was not an easy thing to fasten the hides together where we had split them along the belly to remove them from their owners, but by remaining out until the others had all been sewed in with my help, and then leaving an aperture at the breast of Perry's skin through which he could pass his hands to see if we were capable to accomplish our design to really better purpose than I had hoped.

We managed to keep the heads erect by raising our swords up through the necks and by the same means were enabled to move them about in a life-like manner.

We had our greatest difficulty with the webbed feet, but even that problem was finally solved, so that when we were allowed to see did so quite naturally. They were fastened in the hazy darkness into which our heads were thrust permitted us to see well enough to guide our progress.

Thus we started up toward the main floor of the building, the strange procession, then came Perry, followed by Hoopa, who I brought up the rear, after admonishing Hoopa that I had an arranged my hands into which our heads were thrust permitted us to see well enough to guide our progress.

As the noise of hurrying feet warned me that we were entering the busy corridors of the main level my heart came up into my mouth.

It is with no sense of shame that I admit that I was frightened. Never before in my life, nor since, did I experience any such agony of soul-searing fear and suspense as enveloped me then, if it be possible to sweat blood I sweat it then.

Slooly, after the manner of locomotion habit to the Mahars, when they are not using their wings, we crept through throngs of busy slaves, Sagoths and Mahars. After what seemed an eternity we reached the outer door which leads into the main avenue of Phutra.

Many Sagoths loitered near the opening. They glanced at us as we passed, but they were not interested. Then Perry passed, and then Hoopa. Now it was my turn, and then in a sudden fit of freezing terror I realized that the warm blood from my wounded arm was trickling down through the dead foot of the Mahar skin I wore and leaving its telltale mark upon the pavement. For I saw a Sagoth call a companion's attention to it.

The guard stopped before me and pointing to my bleeding foot spoke to me in the sign language which those two races employ as a means of communication. Even had I known what he was saying I could not have replied with the dead fingers of the dead thing that covered me. I once had seen a great Mahar freeze a presumptuous Sagoth with a look. It seemed my only hope, and so I tried it. Slipping in my tracks I moved my sword so that it made the dead head appear to turn inquiring eyes upon the gorilla-man. For a long moment I stood perfectly still, eyeing the fellow with those dead eyes. Then I lowered the head and started slowly on.

For a moment all hung in the balance, but before I touched him the guard stepped to one side, and I passed on out into the avenue.

CHAPTER XII

PURSUIT.
 ON we went up the broad street, but as we were safe for the very numbers of our enemies that surrounded us

on all sides. Fortunately, there was a great concourse of Mahars remaining to the shallow lake which lies a mile or more from the city.

They go there to indulge their amphibious proclivities in diving for small fish and enjoying the cool depths of the water. It is a fresh-water lake—shallow and free from the larger reptiles which make the use of the great seas of Pellucidar impossible for any but their own kind.

In the thick of the crowd we passed some distance that remained with the stream that was traveling toward the lake; but finally, at the bottom of a little gully, he halted, and there we remained until all had passed and we were alone. Then, still in our disguises, we set off directly away from Phutra.

The heat of the vertical rays of the sun was fast making our horrible prisons unbearable, so that after making a low divide and entering a sheltering forest we finally discarded the Mahar skins that had brought us thus far in safety.

I shall not weary you with the details of that bitter and exciting flight; how we traveled at a dogged run until we were in our tracks; how we were beset by strange and terrible beasts; how we barely escaped the cruel fangs of lions and tigers the size of which would dwarf into pitiful insignificance the greatest fellows of the outer world.

On and on we raced, our one thought being to put such distance between ourselves and Phutra as possible. Ghak was leading us to our own hand of Sari.

No sign of pursuit had developed, and yet we were sure that somewhere behind us relentless Sagoths were digging our tracks. Ghak said they never failed to find us, and at last after what seemed months, and may, I now realize, have been years, we came in sight of the dim encampment which buttressed the foothills of Sari.

At almost the same time Hoopa, who looked over quite as much behind as before, announced that he could see a body of men far behind us, toying a low ridge in our wake. It was the long-expected pursuit.

I asked Ghak if we could make Sari in time to escape them. "No way," he replied. "But you will find that the Sagoths can move with incredible swiftness, and as they are almost tireless they are doubtless much fiercer than we." Then—

"I knew what he meant. The old man was nearly exhausted. For much of the period of our flight either Ghak or I had half suspected him on the march. With such a handicap, less fleet pursuers than the Sagoths might easily overtake us before we could scale the rugged heights which confronted us."

"You said Hoopa go on ahead," I said. "Perry and I shall make it if we are able; we cannot travel as rapidly as you two, and there is no reason why all should be lost because of that. It can't be helped. We have simply to face it."

"It will not desert a companion," was Ghak's simple reply. "I hadn't believed that this great, hairy, primed man had any such nobility of character stowed away inside him. I had always liked him, but now to my liking was added honor and respect. Yes, and love."

But still I urged him to go on ahead, insisting that if he could reach his people he might be able to bring out a sufficient force to drive off the Sagoths and rescue Perry and myself.

No, he wouldn't leave us, and that was all there was to it; but he suggested that Hoopa might hurry on and warn the Sarians of their king's danger. It didn't require much urging to start Hoopa; the

raked idea was enough to send him leaping on ahead of us into the foothills, which we now had reached.

Perry realized that he was jeopardizing Ghak's life and mine, and the old fellow fairly begged us to go on without him, though I knew that he was suffering terror at the thought of falling into the hands of the Sagoths.

Ghak finally solved the problem in part by lifting Perry in his powerful arms and carrying him. While the act cost Ghak's speed he still could travel faster than when half supporting the stumbling old man.

The Sagoths were gaining on us rapidly, for once they had sighted us they had greatly increased their speed, and as we stumbled up the narrow canyon our feet a thick mountain grass formed a soft and noiseless carpet. Since we had entered the canyon we had had no glimpse of our pursuers, and I was commencing to hope that they had lost our trail and that we would reach the now rapidly ascending cliffs in time to scale them before we should be overtaken.

Ahead, we neither saw nor heard any sign which might betoken the success of Hoopa's mission. By now he should have reached the outskirts of the Sarian, and we should at least hear the savage cries of the tribesmen as they swarmed to arms in answer to their king's appeal for aid.

In another moment the frowning cliffs ahead should be black with primeval warriors. But nothing of the kind happened.

As a matter of fact, the sky had betrayed us. At the moment that we expected to see Sarian spearmen charging to our relief at Hoopa's back, the crooked traitor was sneaking round the outskirts of the nearest Sarian village, that he might come up from the other side when it was too late to save us, claiming that he had become lost among the mountains.

Hoopa still harbored ill-will against me because of the blow I had struck in Dian's protection, and his malevolent spirit was equal to sacrificing us all that he might be revenged upon me.

As we drew nearer the barrier cliffs and his sign of resolute Sarians appeared, Ghak became both, at my alarm, and presently, as the sounds of rapidly approaching pursuit fell upon our ears, he called to me over his shoulder that we were lost.

A backward glance gave me a glimpse of the first of the Sagoths at the far end of a considerable stretch of canyon through which we had just passed, and then a sudden turning shot the ugly creature from my view; but the loud howl of triumphant rage which rose behind us was evidence that the gorilla-man had sighted us.

Again the "anyon veered sharply to the left, but so to right another branch man on at a lesser deviation from the general direction, so that it appeared more like the main canyon than the left-hand branch.

The Sagoths were now not over two hundred and fifty yards behind us, and I saw that it was hopeless for us to expect to escape other than by a ruse. There was a bare chance of saving Ghak and Perry, and as I reached the hand-clinging of the canyon I took the chance.

Fanning these, I waited until the foremost Sagoth came into sight. Ghak and Perry had disappeared round a bend in the left-hand canyon, and as the Sagoth's savage yell announced that he had seen me I turned and fled up the right-hand branch.

My ruse was successful, and the entire party of manhunters raced headlong after me up one canyon, while Ghak bore Perry to safety up the other.

CONTINUED MONDAY

THE APARTHEID

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XII—(Continued)

...had never been my particu-
lar athletic forte, and now, when my
...depended upon fleetness of foot, I
...say that I ran any better than on
...my not overbrilliant
...had called down upon my
...the potter's rancous and reproachful
...of "Towagon" and "Call a cab."
...Sagotha were railing on me rap-
...One in particular, fiercer than his
...was perilously close.
...The cañon had become but a rocky slit
...at a steep angle toward
...roughly
...pass between two abutting
...What lay beyond I could not even guess
...a sheer drop of hundreds of
...into the corresponding valley upon
...side. Had I plunged into it
...?—
...that I could not hope to out-
...the Sagotha to the top of the
...I had determined to risk all in an
...to check them temporarily, and
...and had unsling my ruddy mace
...and plucked an arrow from the skin
...which hung behind my shoulder.
...I flung the shaft with my right hand
...and wheeled toward the gorilla-
...of the world of my birth I never had
...a shaft; but since our escape from
...I had determined to risk all in an
...to check them temporarily, and
...and had unsling my ruddy mace
...and plucked an arrow from the skin
...which hung behind my shoulder.
...I flung the shaft with my right hand
...and wheeled toward the gorilla-
...of the world of my birth I never had
...a shaft; but since our escape from
...I had determined to risk all in an
...to check them temporarily, and
...and had unsling my ruddy mace
...and plucked an arrow from the skin
...which hung behind my shoulder.
...I flung the shaft with my right hand
...and wheeled toward the gorilla-

other shaft for him; but he did not wait to receive it.

Instead he turned and retreated toward the main body of gorillas. Evidently he had seen enough of me for the moment.

Once more I took up my flight, now were the Sagotha apparently overanxious to press their pursuit so closely as before.

Unmolested I reached the top of the cañon, where I found a sheer drop of two or three hundred feet to the bottom of a rocky chasm, but on the left a narrow ledge rounded the shoulder of the overhanging cliff.

Along this I advanced, and at a sudden turning a few yards beyond the cañon's end, the path widened, and at my left I saw the opening to a large cave. Before, the ledge continued until it passed from sight about another projecting buttress of the mountain.

Here I felt I could defy an army, for but a single foe man could advance upon me at a time, nor could he know that I was awaiting him until he came full upon me around the corner of the turn. About me lay scattered stones crumbled from the cliff above. They were of various sizes and shapes, but enough were of handy dimensions for use as ammunition in lieu of my precious arrows. Gathering a number of stones into a little pile beside the mouth of the cave, I awaited the advance of the Sagotha.

As I stood there, tense and silent, listening for the first faint sound that should announce the approach of my enemies, a slight noise from within the cave's black depths attracted my attention. It might have been produced by the moving of the body of some huge beast rising from the rocky floor of its lair.

At almost the same instant I thought that I caught the scraping of hide sandals upon the ledge beyond the turn. For the next few seconds my attention was considerably divided.

And then from theinky blackness at my right I saw two flaming eyes glaring into mine. They were on a level that was over two feet above my head.

It is true that the beast who owned them might be standing upon a ledge within the cave, or that it might be rearing upon its hind legs; but I had seen enough of the monsters of Pellucidar to know that I might be facing some new and frightful Titan, whose dimensions and ferocity eclipsed those of any I had before seen.

Whatever it was, it was coming slowly toward the entrance of the cave, and now, deep and forbidding, it uttered a low and ominous growl.

I waited no longer to dispute possession of the ledge with the thing which owned that voice. The noise had not been loud—I doubt if the Sagotha heard it at all—but the suggestion of latent possibilities behind it was such that I knew it could only emanate from a gigantic and ferocious beast.

As I backed along the ledge I soon was past the mouth of the cave, where I no longer could see those fearful, flaming eyes, but an instant later I caught sight of the beast's head as it came face to face upon that narrow ledge.

The thing was an enormous cave-beast rearing its colossal bulk fully eight feet at the shoulder, while from the tip of its

nose to the end of its stubby tail it was fully twelve feet in length.

As it sighted the Sagotha it emitted a most frightful roar, and with open mouth charged full upon them. With a cry of terror the foremost gorilla man turned to escape, but behind him he ran full upon his onrushing companions.

The horror of the following seconds is indescribable. The Sagotha nearest the cave bear, finding his escape blocked, turned and leaped desperately to an awful death upon the jagged rocks 200 feet below.

Then those giant laws reached out and gathered in the next—there was a sickening sound of grinding bones, and the mangled corpse was dropped over the cliff's edge. Nor did the mighty beast even pause in his steady advance along the ledge.

Shrieking Sagotha were now leaping madly over the precipice to escape him, and the last I saw he rounded the turn, still pursuing the demoralized remnant of the man-hunters.

For a long time I could hear the horrid roaring of the brute intermingled with the screams and shrieks of his victims, until finally the awful sounds dwindled and he disappeared.

Later I learned from Ghak, who had fallen prey to his tribesmen and returned with a party to rescue me, that the rhy, as it is called, pursued the Sagotha until it had exterminated the entire band.

Ghak was, of course, positive that I had fallen prey to the terrible creature which, within Pellucidar, is truly the king of beasts.

Not caring to venture back into the cañon, where I might fall prey either to the cave bear or the Sagotha, I continued on along the ledge, believing that by following round the mountain I could reach the land of Sati from another direction. But I evidently became confused by the twisting and turning of the cañons and gullies, for I did not come to the land of Sati then, nor for a long time thereafter.

With no heavenly guide, it is little wonder that I became confused and lost in the mazes of those mighty hills. What in reality I did was to pass entirely through them and come out above the valley upon the farther side. I know that I wandered for a long time until, tired and hungry, I came upon a small cave in the face of the limestone formation which had taken the place of the granite farther back.

The cave which took my fancy lay half-way up the precipitous side of a lofty cliff. The way to it was such that I know no extremely formidable beast could frequent it, nor was it large enough to make a comfortable habitat for any but the smaller mammals or reptiles. Yet it was with the utmost caution that I crawled within its dark interior.

Here I found a rather large chamber, lighted by a narrow cleft in the rock above which let the sunlight filter in in sufficient quantities to partially dispel the utter darkness which I had expected.

The cave was entirely empty, nor were there any signs of its having been recently occupied. The opening was comparatively small, so that, after considerable effort, I was able to put up a boulder from the valley below which entirely blocked it.

Then I returned to the valley for an amount of grasses, and on this trip was fortunate enough to knock over an orthrop, the diminutive horse of Pellucidar, a little animal about the size of a fox terrier, which abounds in all parts of the inner world. Thus, with food and bedding I returned to my lair, where after a meal of raw meat, to which I had now become quite accustomed, I dragged the boulder before the entrance and curled myself

upon my bed of grasses—a naked, primeval cavern, as savagely primitive as my prehistoric progenitors.

CHAPTER XIII
THE UGLY ONE

I awoke rested but hungry, and, pushing the boulder aside, crawled out upon the little rocky shelf which was my front porch.

Before me spread a small but beautiful valley, through the centre of which a clear and sparkling river wound its way down to an inland sea, the blue waters of which were just visible between the two mountain ranges which embraced this little paradise.

The sides of the opposite hills were green with verdure, for a great forest clothed them to the foot of the red and yellow and copper green of the towering crags which formed their summit. The valley itself was carpeted with a luxuriant grass, while here and there patches of wild flowers made great splashes of vivid color against the prevailing green.

Dotted over the face of the valley were little clusters of palmlike trees—these or stood antelope, while others grazed in the open, or wandered gracefully to a nearby ford to drink.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE THIPARS ARE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XIII—(Continued)

Thipars were several species of this beautiful animal, the most magnificent somewhat resembling the giant eland of Africa, except that their spiral horns form a semicircle curve backward over their ears and then forward again beneath them, ending in sharp and formidable points some two feet before the face and above the eyes.

In size they remind one of a thoroughbred Hereford bull, yet they are very agile and fleet. The broad yellow bands that stripe the dark roan of their coats made me take them for zebras when I first saw them. All in all, they are handsome animals, and added the finishing touch to the strange and lovely landscape that spread before my new home.

I had determined to make the cave my headquarters, and with it as a base make a systematic exploration of the surrounding country in search of the land of Shari. First I devoured the balance of the sheep I had killed before my last sleep, though I had the great secret of the Mahars in a deep niche at the back of my cave, raised the boulder before my front door, and with bows, arrows, sword and shield, scrambled down into the peaceful valley. The grazing herds moved to one side as I passed through them, the little oryxoid animals stopping as I approached, and after a distance stood contemplating me with serene eyes and upcocked ears.

Once one of the old bull antelopes of the striped species lowered his head and bowed angrily, even taking a few steps in my direction, so that I thought he meant to charge; but after I had passed he resumed feeding as though nothing had disturbed him.

Near the lower end of the valley I passed a number of fapies, and across the river saw a great mokk, the enormous double-horned progenitor of the modern rhinoceros.

At the valley's end the cliffs upon the left ran out into the sea so that to pass round them as I desired to do it was necessary to scale them in search of a ledge along which I might continue my journey. Some fifty feet from the base I came upon a projection which formed a natural path along the face of the cliff, and this I followed out over the sea toward the cliff's end.

Here the ledge inclined rapidly upward toward the top of the cliff, the stratum which formed it evidently having been forced up at this steep angle when the mountain behind it was born. As I climbed carefully up the ascent my attention was suddenly attracted, aloft by the sound of strange hissing and what resembled the flapping of wings.

And at the first glance there broke upon my horrified vision the most frightful thing I had ever seen even within Pellucidar.

It was a giant dragon such as is pictured in the legends and fairy tales of earthfolk. Its huge body must have measured 40 feet in length while the battle wings that supported it in midair had a spread of fully 30. Its gaping jaws were armed with long, sharp teeth and its claws equipped with horrible talons.

The hissing noise which had first attracted my attention was issuing from its throat and seemed to be directed at something beyond and below me which I could not see.

The ledge upon which I stood terminated abruptly a few paces farther on, and as I reached the end I saw the cause of the reptile's agitation.

Some time in past ages an earthquake had produced a fault at this point, so that beyond the spot where I stood the

strata had slipped down a matter of 20 feet. The result was that the continuation of my ledge lay 20 feet below me, where it ended as abruptly as did the end upon which I stood.

And here, evidently halted in flight by this insurmountable break in the ledge, stood the object of the creature's attack—a girl cowering upon the narrow platform, her face buried in her arms, as though to shut out the sight of the frightful death which hovered just above her.

The dragon was circling lower, and seemed about to dart in upon its prey. There was no time to be lost, scarce an instant in which to weigh the possible chances that I had against the awfully armed creature; but the sight of that frightened girl below me called out to all that was best in me, and the instinct for protection of the other sex, which must have nearly equalled the instinct of self-preservation in primal man, drew me to the girl's side like an irresistible magnet.

Almost thoughtless of the consequences, I leaped from the end of the ledge upon which I stood for the tiny shelf 20 feet below. At the same instant the dragon started in toward the girl, but my sudden advent upon the scene must have startled him, for he veered to one side and then rose above once more.

The noise I made as I landed beside her convinced the girl that her end had come, for she thought that I was the dragon; but finally, when no cruel fangs were seen upon her, she raised her eyes in astonishment.

As they fell upon me the expression that came into them would be difficult to describe; but her feelings could scarcely have been one whit more complicated than my own. For the wide eyes that looked into mine were those of Dian the Beautiful.

"Dian!" I cried. "Dian! Thank Heaven that I came in time."
"You?" she whispered, and then she hid her face again; nor could I tell whether she were glad or angry that I had come.

Once more the dragon was sweeping toward us, and so rapidly that I had no time to unslung my bow. All that I could do was to snatch up a rock and hurl it at the thing's hideous face. Again my aim was true, and with a hiss of pain and rage the reptile wheeled once more and soared away.

Quickly I fitted an arrow now, that I might be ready at the next attack, and as I did so I looked down at the girl, so that I surprised her in a surreptitious glance which she was stealing at me; but immediately she again covered her face with her hands.

"Look at me, Dian," I pleaded. "Are you not glad to see me?"
She looked straight into my eyes.

"The thipar comes," she said, and I turned again to meet the reptile. So this was a thipar. I might have known it. The cruel bloodhounds of the Mahars, the long extinct predators of the outer world. But this time I met it with a weapon it had never faced before. I had selected my longest arrow, and with all my strength had bent the bow until the very tip of the shaft rested upon the thumb of my left hand, and then, as the great creature darted toward us, I let drive straight for that tough breast.

Hissing like the escape valve of a steam engine, the mighty creature fell, turning and twisting into the sea below, my arrow buried completely in its carcass.

I turned toward the girl. She was looking past me. It was evident that she had seen the thipar die.

"Dian," I said, "won't you tell me that you are not sorry that I have found you?"
"I hate you," was her only reply; but I imagined that there was less vehemence in it than before—yet it might have been but my imagination.

"Why do you hate me, Dian?" I asked, but she did not answer me.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, "and what has happened to you since Housa freed you from the Sagochas?"
At first I thought that she was going to ignore me entirely, but finally she thought better of it.

"I was again running away from Jubal the Ugly One," she said. "After I escaped from the Sagochas I made my way alone back to my own land, but on account of Jubal I did not dare enter the villages or let any of my friends know that I had returned, for fear that Jubal might find it out."

"By watching for a long time I found that my brother had not yet returned, and so I continued to live in a cave beside a valley which my race seldom frequents, awaiting the time that he should come back and free me from Jubal."

"But at last one of Jubal's hunters saw me as I was creeping toward my father's cave to see if my brother had yet returned, and he gave the alarm, and Jubal set out after me. He has been pursuing me across many lands."

"He cannot be far behind me now. When he comes he will kill you and carry me back to his cave. He is a terrible man. I have gone as far as I can go, and there is no escape."

She looked hopefully up at the continuation of the ledge, 20 feet above us. "But he shall not have me," she suddenly cried with great vehemence. "The sea is there"—she pointed over the edge of the cliff—"and the sea shall have me rather than Jubal."

"But I have you now, Dian," I cried. "You shall Jubal nor any other have you, for you are mine."
And I seized her hand, nor did I lift it above her head and let it fall in token of release.

She had risen to her feet and was looking straight into my eyes with level gaze. "I do not believe you," she said, "for if you meant it you would have done this when the others were present to witness it; then I should truly have been your mate; now there is no one to see you do it, for you know that without witnesses your act does not bind you to me."

She withdrew her hand from mine and turned away.
I tried to convince her that I was sincere, but she could not forget the humiliation that I had put on her upon that other occasion.

"If you mean all that you say you will have ample chance to prove it," she said. "If Jubal does not catch and kill you, I am in your power, and the treatment you accord me will be the best proof of your intentions toward me. I am not your mate, and again I tell you that I hate you, and that I should be glad if I never saw you again."

Dian certainly was candid. There was no guising that, in fact, I found candor and directness to be a quite marked characteristic of the exwives of Pellucidar.

Finally I suggested that we make some attempt to gain my cave, where we might escape the searching Jubal, for I am free to admit that I had no considerable desire to meet the formidable and ferocious creature, of whose mighty prowess Dian had told me when I first met her.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE TARZAN SCORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

It was who, armed with a puny knife, had met and slain a cave bear in a hand-to-hand struggle. It was Jubal who could cast his spear entirely through the armored carcass of the sadok at 80 paces. It was he who had crushed the bones of his warclub.

I was not pining to meet the Ugly One, and it was quite certain that I should not go out and hunt for him; but the matter was taken over by my hands, and I followed Jubal the Ugly One face to face.

This is how it happened:

I had led Dian back along the ledge of the cave, and she had come, searching for a path that would lead us to the top of the cliff. I knew that we could then cross the edge of my own little valley.

I felt certain we should find a means of ingress from the cliff-top.

As we proceeded along the ledge, Dian made directions for finding the cave against the chance of something happening to me. I knew that she would be able to find the shelter of my hands, and the valley would afford her escape.

I was much piqued by her treatment of me. My heart was sad and heavy, and I wanted to make her feel that I was suggesting that something terrible might happen to me; that I might, in fact, be killed.

I didn't work with a cent, at least as far as I could perceive. Dian simply suggested those magnificent shoulders of hers and murmured something to the effect that one was not rid of trouble so easily as that.

For a while I kept still. I was utterly speechless. And to think that I had twice preceded her from attack, the last time saving my life to save hers. It was incredible that even a daughter of the stone age could be so ungrateful, so heartless; that maybe her heart tookook of the quality of her epoch.

Frequently we found a rift in the cliff which had been widened and extended by the action of water draining through it from the plateau above. It gave us a rather rough climb to the summit, but finally we stood upon the level mesa which stretched back for several miles to the main mountain range.

Behind us lay the broad inland sea, curving upward in the horizonless distance to merge into the blue of the sky, and that for all the world it looked as though the sea lapped back to arch completely over us and disappear beyond the distant mountains at our backs—the weird and uncanny aspect of the seascape of Pannular talk description.

At our right lay a dense forest, but to the left the country was open and clear of the plateau's farther verge. It was in that direction that our way lay, and we had turned to resume our journey when Dian touched my arm.

"I tried to hear, thinking that she was about to make peace overtures; but I was mistaken."

"Jubal," she said and nodded toward the forest.

I looked, and there, emerging from the dense wood, came a perfect giant of a man. He must have been seven feet tall, and proportioned accordingly. He still was too far off for me to distinguish his features.

"Dan," I said to Dian; "I can engage him until you get a good start. Maybe I can hold him until you have gotten entirely away."

Then, without a backward glance, I advanced to meet the Ugly One. I had hoped that Dian would have a kind word to say to me before she went, for she must have known that I was going to my death for her sake; but she never so much as bids me good-by; and it was with a heavy heart that I strode through the flower-bespangled grass to my doom.

When I had come close enough to Jubal to distinguish his features I understood now it was that he had earned the sobriquet of Ugly One.

Apparently some fearful beast had ripped away one entire side of his face. The eye was gone, the nose, and all the flesh, so that his jaws and all his teeth were exposed and grinning through the horrible scar.

Formerly he may have been as good to look upon as the others of his handsome race, and it may be that the terrible result of his encounter had tended to sour an already strong and brutal character. However this may be, it is quite certain that he was not a pretty sight, and now that his features, or what remained of them, were distorted in rage at the sight of Dian with another male, he was indeed most terrible to see and much more terrible to meet.

He had broken into a run, and as he advanced he raised his mighty spear, while I halted and fitting an arrow to my bow, took a steady aim as I could. It was somewhat longer than usual, for I must confess that the sight of this awful man had wrought upon my nerves to such an extent that my knees were anything but steady.

What chance had I against this mighty warrior for whom even the fierce cave bear had no terrors? Could I hope to best one who slaughtered the sadok and the dyrath single-handed?

I shuddered but, in fairness to myself, my fear was more for Dian than for my own fate.

CHAPTER XIV.
THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

AND then the great brute launched his massive stone-tipped spear, and I raised my shield to break the force of its terrific velocity. The impact hurled me to my knees, but the shield had deflected the missile and I was unscathed.

Jubal was rushing upon me now with the only remaining weapon that he carried—a murderous-looking knife.

He was too close for a careful bow shot, but I let drive at him as he came, without taking aim. My arrow pierced the fleshy part of his thigh, inflicting a painful but not disabling wound.

And then he was upon me.

My agility saved me for the instant. I ducked beneath his raised arm, and when he wheeled to come at me again he found a sword's point in his face. And a moment later he felt an inch or two of it in the muscles of his knife arm, so that thereafter he went more warily.

It was a duel of strategy now—the great, hairy man maneuvering to get inside of my guard where he could bring those giant thighs into play, while my wits were directed to the task of keeping him at arm's length.

Three he rushed me, and thrice I caught his knife blow upon my shield. Each time my sword found his body—once penetrating to his lung. He was covered with blood by this time, and the internal hemorrhage induced paroxysms of coughing that brought the red stream through his hideous mouth and opening where his nose had been, covering his face and breast with bloody froth.

He was a most unlovely spectacle, but he was far from dead.

As the duel continued I began to gain

confidence, for, to be perfectly candid, I had not expected to survive the first rush of that monstrous engine of unprovoked rage and hatred. And I think that Jubal, from utter contempt of me, began to change to a feeling of respect, and then in his primitive mind there evidently loomed the thought that perhaps at last he had met his master and was facing his end.

At any rate it is only upon this hypothesis that I can account for his next act, which was in the nature of a last resort—a sort of forlorn hope, which could only have been born of the belief that if he did not kill me quickly I should kill him.

It happened on the occasion of his fourth charge, when, instead of striking at me with his knife, he dropped that weapon, and, seizing my sword blade in both hands, wrenched the weapon from my grasp as easily as though I had been a babe.

Plunging it far to one side he stood motionless for just an instant, glaring into my face with such a horrid leer of malignant triumph as to almost unnerve me—then he sprang for me with his bare hands.

But it was Jubal's day to learn new methods of warfare. For the first time he had seen a bow and arrow, never before that duel had he beheld a sword, and now he learned what a man who knows may do with his bare fists.

As he came for me, like a great bear, I ducked again beneath his outstretched arm, and as I came up planted as clean a blow upon his jaw as ever you have seen.

Down went that great mountain of flesh, sprawling upon the ground. He was so surprised and dazed that he lay there for several seconds before he made any attempt to rise, and I stood over him with another dose ready when he should gain his knees.

Up he came at last, almost roaring in his rage and mortification; but he didn't stay up. I let him have a left fair on the point of the jaw that sent him tumbling over on his back.

By this time I think Jubal had gone mad with hate, for no sane man would have come back for more as many times as he did. Time after time I bowled him over as fast as he could stagger up, until toward the last he lay longer on the ground between blows, and each time came up weaker than before.

He was bleeding very profusely now from the wound in his lung, and presently a terrible blow over the heart sent him reeling heavily to the ground, where he lay very still, and somehow I knew at once that Jubal the Ugly One would never get up again.

But even as I looked upon that massive body lying there so grim and terrible in death I could not believe that I, single handed, had bested this slayer of fearful beasts—this gigantic orge of the stone age.

Picking up the sword I leaned upon it, looking down on the dead body of my foe, and as I thought of the battle I had just fought and won a great idea was born in my brain—the outcome of this and the suggestion that Perry had made within the city of Pnura.

If skill and science could render a comparative rummy the master of this mighty brute, what could not the brute's fellow accomplish with the same skill and science? Why, all Pannular would be at their feet—and I should be their king and Dian their queen.

Dian!

A little wave of doubt swept over me. It was quite within the possibilities of Dian to look down upon me even were I king. She was quite the most superior

person I had ever met—with the most convincing way of letting you know that she was superior.

Well—I would go to the cave, and tell her that I had killed Jubal, and then she might feel more kindly toward me, since I had freed her of her tormentor. I hoped that she had found the cave easily. It would be terrible had I lost her again, and I turned to gather up my shield and bow, to hurry after her, when to my astonishment I found her standing not 10 paces behind me.

"Girl!" I cried. "What are you doing here? I thought that you had gone to the cave, as I told you to do."

Up went her head, and the look that she gave me took all the majesty out of me, and left me feeling more like the palace-janitor—if palaces have janitors.

"As you told me to do!" she cried, stamping her little foot. "I do as I please. I am the daughter of a king, and, furthermore, I hate you."

I was dumfounded—this was my thanks for saving her from Jubal! I turned and looked at the corpse.

"Maybe I saved you from a worse fate, old man," I said, but I guess it was lost on Dian, for she did not seem to notice it at all.

"Let us go to my cave," I said. "I am tired and hungry."

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

THE ARTIST'S REVEAL

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XIV—(Continued)

She followed along a pace behind me, neither of us speaking. I was too sorry, and she evidently didn't care to converse with the lower orders.

I was mad all the way through, as I had certainly felt that at least a word of hers should have rewarded me, for I had done a very wonderful thing to have killed the redoubtable Jubal in a hand-to-hand encounter.

We had no difficulty in finding my lair, and then I went down into the valley and dragged up the steep ascent to the ledge above the door. Here we ate in silence, occasionally I glanced at her, thinking that the slight of her tearing of raw flesh with her hands and teeth like some wild animal would cause a revulsion of my stomach toward her; but to my surprise I found that she ate quite as daintily as the most civilized woman of my acquaintance, and finally I found myself in foolish rapture at the beauty of her strong, white teeth. Such is love.

After our repast we went down to the river together and bathed our hands and faces, and then after drinking our fill went back to the cave. Without a word I stepped into the furthermost corner and setting up was soon asleep.

When I awoke I found Dian sitting in the doorway looking out across the valley. She came out she moved to one side to let me pass, but she had no word for me. I wanted to hate her, but I couldn't. Every time I looked at her something came up in my throat, so that I nearly choked. I had never been in love before, but I did not need any aid in diagnosing my case.

After we had eaten again I asked Dian if she intended returning to her tribe now that Jubal was dead, but she shook her head sadly, and said that she did not care. She was still Jubal's brother to be for three generations—his oldest brother.

"What has he to do with her?" I asked. "You be, too, wait you, or has the option on you become a family heirloom, to be passed on down from generation to generation?"

"She was not quite sure as to what I meant." "It is probable," she said, "that they will wait revenge for the death of Jubal—there are seven of them—seven terrible men. Some one may have to kill them all, if I am to return to my people."

"I'm commended to look as though I had secured a contract much too large for me—about seven sizes, in fact."

"Did Jubal any cousin?" I asked.

"It was just as well to know the worst of him."

"Yes," replied Dian, "but they don't want. They all have mates. Jubal's brothers have no mates because Jubal got none for himself. He was so ugly that women ran away from him. Some have even thrown themselves from the cliffs of Amor into the Dard. As rather than mate with the Ugly One."

"But what had that to do with his brothers?" I asked.

"I forget that you are not of Peludaca," said Dian, with a look of pity mingled with contempt, and the contempt seemed to be laid on a little thicker than the circumstances warranted—as though to make quite certain that I shouldn't wonder. It.

"You see," she continued, "a younger brother may not take a mate until all his older brothers have done so, unless the older brother waives his prerogative, which Jubal would not do, knowing that as long as he kept them single they would be all the keener in adding him to secure a mate."

Noticing that Dian was becoming more communicative I began to entertain hopes

that she might be warming up toward me a bit, though upon what slender thread I hung my hopes I soon discovered.

"As you dare not return to Amor," I ventured, "what is to become of you, since you cannot be happy here with me, hating me as you do?"

"I shall have to put up with you," she replied coldly, "until you see fit to go elsewhere and leave me in peace, then I shall get along very well alone."

I looked at her in utter amazement. It seemed incredible that even a prehistoric woman could be so cold and heartless and ungrateful. Then I rose.

"I shall leave you now," I said haughtily. "I have had quite enough of your ingratitude and your fanaticism."

Then I turned and strode majestically down toward the valley. I had taken a hundred steps in absolute silence, and then Dian spoke.

"I hate you," she shouted, and her voice broke—in rage, I thought.

I was absolutely miserable, but I hadn't gone far when I began to realize that I couldn't leave her alone there without protection, to hunt her own food amid the dangers of the savage world.

She might hate me, and revile me, and heap indignity after indignity upon me, as she already had, until I should have hated her; but the pitiful fact remained that I loved her, and I could not leave her there alone.

The more I thought about it the madder I got, so that by the time I reached the valley I was furious, and the result of it was that I turned right round and went up that cliff again twice as fast as I had come down.

I saw that Dian had left the ledge and gone within the cave, but I bolted right in after her. She was lying upon her face on the pile of grasses I had gathered for her bed. When she heard me enter she sprang to her feet like a tigress.

"I hate you," she cried.

Coming from the brilliant light of the moonday sun into the somberness of the cave I could not see her features, and I was rather glad for I disliked to think of the hate that I should have read there.

I did not say a word to her at first. I just strode across the cave and grasped her by the wrist, and when she struggled I put my arm around her so as to pinion her hands to her sides.

She fought like a tigress, but I took my left hand and pushed her head back. I imagine that I had suddenly turned back to that I had gone back a thousand million years, and was again a veritable caveman, taking my mate by force.

And then I kissed that beautiful mouth again and again.

"Dian," I cried, shaking her roughly, "I love you. Can't you understand that I love you? That I love you better than all else in this world or my own? That I am going to have you? That love like mine cannot be denied?"

I noticed that she lay very still in my arms now, and as my eyes became accustomed to the light, I saw that she was smiling—a very contented, happy smile.

I was thunderstruck. Then I realized that, very gently, she was trying to disengage her arms, and I loosened my grip upon them so that she could do so. Slowly they came up and stole about my neck, and then she drew my lips down to hers once more and held them there for a long time. At last she spoke.

"Why didn't you do this at first, David? I have been waiting so long."

"What?" I cried. "You said that you hated me!"

"Did you expect me to run into your arms and say that I loved you before I knew that you loved me?" she asked.

"But I have told you right along that I love you," I said.

"Love speaks in acts," she replied. "You could have made your mouth say what you wished it to say, but just now when you came and took me in your arms your heart spoke to mine in the language that a woman's heart understands. What a silly man you are, David!"

"Then you haven't hated me at all, Dian?" I asked.

"Or have loved you always," she whispered, "from the first moment that I saw you, though I did not know it until that time you struck down Hoola the Sly One, and then spurned me."

"But I didn't spurn you, dear!" I cried. "I didn't know your ways—I doubt if I do now. It seems incredible that you could have reviled me, and yet have cared for me all the time."

"You might have known," she said, "when I did not run away from you that it was not hate which chased me to you. While you were battling with Jubal I could have run to the edge of the forest, and when I had learned the outcome of the combat it would have been a simple thing to have eluded you and returned to my own people."

"But Jubal's brothers—and cousins," I reminded her, "how about them?"

She smiled and hid her face on my shoulder.

"I had to tell you something, David," she whispered. "I must needs have some excuse for remaining near you."

"You little sinner!" I exclaimed. "And you have caused me all this anguish for nothing?"

"I have suffered even more," she answered simply, "for I thought that you did not love me, and I was helpless. I couldn't come to you and demand that my love be returned, as you have just come to me."

"Just now when you went away hope went with you. I was wretched, terrified, miserable, and my heart was breaking. I wept, and I have not done that before since my mother died."

There was the moisture of tears about her eyes. It was near to making me cry myself when I thought of all that poor child had been through. Motherless and unprotected; hunted across a savage, unpopulated world by that hideous brute of a man; exposed to the attacks of the countless ferocious denizens of its mountains, its plains, and its jungles—it was a miracle that she had survived at all.

To me it was a revelation of the things my early forebears must have endured that the human race of the outer crust might survive. It made me very proud to think that I had won the love of such a woman.

Of course she couldn't read or write; there was nothing cultured or refined about her as you judge culture and refinement; but she was the essence of all that is best in woman, for she was good and brave and noble and virtuous. And she was all these things in spite of the fact that their observance entailed suffering and danger and possible death.

How much easier it would have been to have gone to Jubal in the first place! She would have been his lawful mate. She would have been queen in her own land—and it meant just as much to the cave woman to be queen in the stone age as it does to the woman of today to be a queen now.

It is all comparative glory, any way you look at it. If there were only half-naked savages on the outer crust today, you'd find that it would be considerably glory to be the wife of a Dahomey chief. I couldn't help but compare Dian's action with that of a splendid young woman I had known in New York—I mean splendid to look at and to talk to. She had been head over heels in love with a chum of mine—a clean, manly chap, but she had married a broken-down, disreputable

old debauchee because he was a count in some dinky little European principality that was not even accorded a distinctive color by the atlas-makers.

Yes, I was mighty proud of Dian. After a time we decided to set out for Sari, as I was anxious to see Perry and to know that all was right with him. I had told Dian about our plan of emancipating the human race of Peludaca, and she was fairly wild over it.

She said that if Dacor, her brother, would only return he could easily be King of Amor, and that then he and Ghak could form an alliance. That would give us a flying start, for the Sarians and Amozites were both very powerful tribes. Once they had been armed with swords and bows and arrows, and trained in their use, we were confident that they could overcome any tribe that seemed distinguished to join the great army of federated States which we were planning to march upon the Mahars.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

AT THE EARLY HOUR

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XIV—(Continued)

I explained the various destructive engines of war which Perry and I could construct after a little experimentation—cannon, rifle, cannon and the like, and Dian would clap her hands and then her arms about my neck, and tell me what a wonderful thing I was. She was beginning to think that I was omnipotent, though I really hadn't done anything but talk—but that the way with women when they love. Perry used to say that if a fellow was one-tenth as respectable as his wife or mother thought him he would have the world by the tail with a downy pull.

CHAPTER XV. BACK TO BIRTH.

THE first time we started for Sari I stepped into a nest of poisonous vipers before we reached the valley. A little fellow stung me on the ankle, and Dian made me come back to the cave. She said that I mustn't exercise or it might prove fatal; if it had had been a full-grown snake that stung me, she said, I wouldn't have moved a single pace from the nest—I'd have died in my tracks, no wonder it is the poison.

As it was I must have been laid up for quite a while, though Dian's position of herbs and leaves finally reduced the swelling and drew out the poison.

The episode proved most fortunate, however, as it drew out the virus which added a thousandfold to the value of my arrows as missiles of offense and defense. As soon as I was able to be about again I sought out some adult vipers of the species which had stung me, and, having killed them, I extracted their virus, smearing it upon the tips of several arrows.

Later I shot a hyendon with one of these, and though my arrow inflicted but a superficial flesh wound, the beast crumpled in death almost immediately he was hit.

We now set out once more for the land of the Sarrians, and it was with feelings of sincere regret that we bade good-bye to our beautiful garden of Eden, in the comparative peace and harmony of which we had lived the happiest moments of our lives. How long we had been there I did not know, for, as I have told you, time had ceased to exist for me beneath that eternal noonday sun. It may have been an hour or a month of earthly time; I do not know.

We crossed the river and passed through the mountains beyond, and finally we came out upon a great level plain which stretched away as far as the eye could reach.

I cannot tell you in what direction it stretched even if you would care to know, for all the while that I was within Pellucidar I never discovered any but local methods of indicating direction—there is no north, no south, no east, no west.

To is about the only direction which is well defined, and that, of course, is down to the south of the outer crust. Since the sun neither rises nor sets there is no method of indicating direction beyond visible objects such as high mountains, forests, lakes, and seas.

The plain which lies beyond the white cliffs which flank the Darul Az upon the shore nearest the Mountains of the Clouds is about as near to direction as any Pellucidarian can come. If you happen not to have heard of the Darul Az, or the white cliffs, or the Mountains of the Clouds, you feel that there is something lacking, and long for the good, old north-east or southwest of the outer world. We had barely entered the great plain when we discovered two enormous animals approaching us from a great distance. So far were they that we could not dis-

tinguish what manner of beasts they might be, but as they came closer I saw that they were enormous quadrupeds, 50 or 100 feet long, with tiny heads perched at the top of very long necks. Their heads must have been quite 40 feet from the ground. The beasts moved very slowly—that is, their action was slow—but their strides covered such a great distance that in reality they traveled considerably faster than a man walks.

As they drew still nearer we discovered that upon the back of each sat a human being. Then Dian knew what they were, though she never before had seen one. "They are lills from the land of the Thorian," she cried. "Thoria lies at the outer verge of the Land of Awful Shadow. The Thorians alone, of all the races of Pellucidar, ride the lill, for nowhere else than beside the dark country are they found."

"What is the Land of Awful Shadow?" I asked. "It is the land when lies beneath the Dead World," replied Dian, "the Dead World which hangs forever between the sun and Pellucidar above the Land of Awful Shadow. It is the Dead World which makes the great shadow upon this portion of Pellucidar."

I did not fully understand what she or my friend Ja meant, nor am I sure that I do yet, for I have never been to that part of Pellucidar from which the Dead World is visible; but Perry says that it is the moon of Pellucidar—a tiny planet within a planet—and that it revolves about the earth's axis coincidentally with the earth, and thus is always above the same spot within Pellucidar.

I remember that Perry was very much excited when I told him about this Dead World, for he seemed to think that it explained the hitherto inexplicable phenomena of mutation and the procession of the two equinoxes.

When the two upon the lills had come quite close to us we saw that one was a man and the other a woman. The former had held up his two hands, palms toward us, in sign of peace, and I had answered him in kind, when he suddenly gave a cry of astonishment and pleasure, and slipping from his enormous mount ran forward toward Dian, throwing his arms about her.

In an instant I was white with jealousy, but only for an instant; since Dian quickly drew the man toward me, telling him that I was David, her mate.

"And this is my brother, Dacor the Strong One, David," she said to me.

It appeared that the woman was Dacor's mate. He had found none to his liking among the Sari, nor further on until he had come to the land of the Thoria, and there he had found and fought for this very lovely Thorian maiden, whom he was bringing back to his own people.

When they had heard our story and our plans they decided to accompany us to Sari, that Dacor and Ghak might come to an agreement relative to an alliance, as Dacor was quite an enthusiastic about the proposed annihilation of the Mahars and Sagoths as either Dian or I.

After a journey which was, for Pellucidar, quite uneventful, we came to the first of the Sarrian villages, which consists of between 100 and 200 artificial caves cut into the face of a great chalk cliff.

Here, to our immense delight, we found both Perry and Ghak. The old man was quite overcome at sight of me, for he had long since given me up as dead. When I introduced Dian as my wife he didn't quite know what to say, but he afterward remarked that with the pick of two worlds I could not have done better.

Ghak and Dacor reached a very amicable arrangement, and it was at a council of the head men of the various tribes of the Sari that the essential form of government was tentatively agreed upon.

Roughly, the various kingdoms were to remain virtually independent, but there was to be one great overlord, or emperor. It was decided that it should be the first of the dynasty of the emperors of Pellucidar.

We set about teaching the women how to make bows and arrows and poison poisons. The young men hunted the vipers which provided the virus, and it was they who mined the iron ore and fashioned the swords under Perry's direction.

Rapidly the fever spread from one tribe to another until representatives from nations so far distant that the Sarrians had never even heard of them came in to take the required oath of allegiance and to learn the art of making the new weapons and using them.

We sent our young men out as instructors to every nation of the federation, and the movement had reached colossal proportions before the Mahars discovered it.

The first intimation they had was when three of their great slave caravans were annihilated in rapid succession. They could not comprehend that the lower orders had suddenly developed a power which rendered them really formidable.

In one of the skirmishes with slave caravans some of our Sarrians took a number of Sagoths prisoners, and among them were two who had been members of the guards within the building where we had been confined at Phutra.

They told us that the Mahars were frantic with rage when they discovered what had taken place in the cellars of the building. The Sagoths knew that something very terrible had befallen their masters, but the Mahars had been most careful to see that no inkling of the true nature of their vital affliction reached beyond their own race. How long it would take for the race to become extinct it was impossible even to guess; but that this must eventually happen seemed inevitable.

The Mahars had offered fabulous rewards for the capture of any one of us alive, and at the same time had threatened to inflict the direst punishment upon whoever should harm us. The Sagoths could not understand these seemingly paradoxical instructions, though their purpose was quite evident to me. The Mahars wanted the Great Secret, and they knew that we alone could deliver it to them.

Perry's experiments in the manufacture of gunpowder and the fashioning of rifles had not progressed as rapidly as we had hoped. There was a whole lot about these two arts which Perry didn't know. We were both assured that the solution of these problems would advance the cause of civilization within Pellucidar thousands of years at a single stroke.

Then there were various other arts and sciences which we wished to introduce, but our combined knowledge of the matter did not embrace the mechanical details which alone could render them of commercial or practical value. "David," said Perry, immediately after his latest failure to produce gunpowder that would even burn, "one of us must return to the outer world and bring back the information we lack. Here we have all the labor and materials for reproducing anything that ever has been produced above. What we lack is knowledge. Let us go back and get that knowledge in the shape of books. Then this world will indeed be at our feet."

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

AT THE EARTH'S CORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

AND so it was decided that I should return to the prospector, which still lay upon the edge of the forest at the point where we had first penetrated to the surface of the inner world. I was sure that Dian would not listen to any arrangement for my going which did not include her, and I was not sorry that she wished to accompany me, for I wanted her to see my world, and I wanted my world to see her.

With a large force of men we marched to the great iron mole, which Perry soon had hoisted into position with its nose pointed back toward the outer crust. He went over all the machinery carefully. He replenished the air tanks and manufactured oil for the engine. At last everything was ready, and we were about to set out when our pickets, a long thin line of which had surrounded our camp at all times, reported that a great body of what looked like the Sagoths and Mahars were approaching from the direction of Fhutra.

Dian and I were ready to embark, but I was anxious to witness the first clash between two fair-sized armies of the opposite races of Polduudar. I realized that this was to mark the historic beginning of a mighty struggle for possession of a world, and as the first Emperor of Polduudar, I felt that it was not alone my duty, but my right to be in the thick of that momentous struggle.

As the opposing army approached we saw that there were many Mahars with the Sagoth troops—an indication of the vast importance which the dominant race placed upon the outcome of this campaign, for it was not customary with them to take active part in the sortles which their creatures made for slaves—the only form of warfare which they waged upon the lower orders.

Ghak and Dacor were both with us, having come primarily to view the prospector.

I placed Ghak with some of his Sarians on the right of our battle line. Dacor took the left, while I commanded the centre. Behind us I stationed a sufficient reserve under one of Ghak's head men.

The Sagoths advanced steadily with menacing spears, and I let them come until they were within easy bow shot before I gave the word to fire.

At the first volley of poison-tipped arrows the front ranks of the gortillians crumpled to the ground; but those

behind charged over the prostrate forms to their comrades in a wild, mad rush to be upon us with their spears.

A second volley stopped them for an instant, and then my reserve, springing through the openings in the firing line to engage the rear, sword and shield.

The clumsy spears of the Sagoths were no match for the swords of the Sarians and Amosites, who turned the spear thrusts aside with their shields and leaped to close quarters with their lighter, handier weapons.

Ghak took his archers along the enemy's flank, and while the swordsmen engaged them in front, he poured volley after volley into their unprotected left.

The Mahars did little real fighting, and were more in the way than otherwise, though occasionally one of them would fasten his powerful jaws upon the arm or leg of a Sarian.

The battle did not last a great while, for when Dacor and I led our men in upon the Sagoths right with naked swords they were already so demoralized that they turned and fled before us. We pursued them for some time, taking many prisoners, and recovering nearly a hundred slaves, among whom was Hooja the Sly One.

He told me that he had been captured while on his way to his own land, but that his life had been spared in hope that through him the Mahars would learn the whereabouts of their Great Secret.

Ghak and I were inclined to think that the Sly One had been ending this expedition to the land of Sar, where he thought that the book might be found in Perry's possession; but we had no proof of this and so we took him in and treated him as one of us, though none of us liked him. And how he rewarded my generosity you shall presently learn.

There were a number of Mahars among our prisoners, and so fearful were our own people of them that they would not approach them unless completely covered from the sight of the reptiles by a piece of skin.

Even Dian shared the popular horror regarding the evil effects of exposure to the eyes of angry Mahars, and, though I pretended to laugh at her fears, I remembered what I had seen in the Mahar temple and was willing enough to humor her if it would relieve her apprehension in any degree. So she sat apart from the prospector, near which the Mahars had been chained, while Perry and I again inspected every portion of the mechanism.

At last I took my place in the driving-seat and called to one of the men without to fetch Dian.

It happened that Hooja stood quite close to the doorway of the prospector, so that it was he who, without my knowledge, went to bring her; but now he succeeded in accomplishing the fiendish thing he did I cannot guess unless there were others in the plot to aid him. Nor can I believe that, since all my people were loyal to me and would have made short work of Hooja had he suggested the heartless scheme, even had he time to acquaint another with it.

It was all done so quickly that I may only believe that it was the result of sudden impulses, aided by a number of, to Hooja, fortuitous circumstances occurring at precisely the right moment.

All I know is that it was Hooja who brought Dian to the prospector, still wrapped from head to toe in the skin of an enormous cave lion which had covered her since the Mahar prisoners had been brought into camp. He deposited his burden in the seat beside me.

I was all ready to get under way. Good-by had been said.

Perry had grasped my hand in the last long farewell. I closed and barred the outer and inner doors, took my seat again at the driving mechanism, and pulled the starting lever, as I had on my first journey.

As before on that far-gone night that had witnessed our first trial of the iron monster, there was a frightful roaring beneath us—the giant frame trembled and vibrated—there was a rush of sound as the loose earth passed up through the hollow space between the inner and outer jackets to be deposited in our wake.

Once more the thing was off.

But on the instant of departure I was nearly thrown from my seat by the sudden lurching of the prospector. At first I did not realize what had happened, but presently it dawned upon me that just before entering the crust the lowering body had fallen through its supporting scaffolding, and that instead of entering the ground vertically we were plunging into it at a different angle. Where it would bring us out upon the upper crust I could not even conjecture.

Then I turned to note the effect of this strange experience upon Dian. She still sat aloof in the great skin.

"Come, come," I cried, laughing, "come out of your shell. No Mahar eyes can reach you here."

CONCLUDED MONDAY.

AT THE EARTH'S CORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, Author of "Tarzan."

CHAPTER XV.—Continued

I LEANED over and snatched the lion skin from her. And then I straggled back upon my seat in utter horror at the sight that met my gaze.

The thing beneath the skin was not Dian—it was a hideous Mahar. Instantly I realized the trick that Hoola had played upon me and the purpose of it. Bid of me, forever, as he doubtless thought, Dian would be at his mercy.

Practically I tore at the steering wheel in an effort to turn the prospector back toward Pellucidar, but, as on that other occasion, I could not budge the thing a hair.

It is needless to recount the horrors or the monotony of that journey. It varied but little from the former one which had brought us from the outer to the inner world.

Because of the angle at which we had entered the ground the trip required nearly a day longer, and brought me out here upon the sands of the Sahara instead of in the United States as I had hoped.

For months I have been waiting here for a white man to come. I dared not leave the prospector for fear I should never be able to find it again—the shifting sands of the desert would soon cover it, and then my only hope of returning to my Dian and her Pellucidar would be gone forever.

That I ever shall see her again seems but remotely possible, for how may I know upon what part of Pellucidar my return journey may terminate?

And how, without a north, or a south, or an east, or a west, may I hope ever to find my way across that vast world to the tiny spot where my lost love lies grieving for me?

CHAPTER XVI

DOUBT.

WHAT is the story as David Innes told it to me in the gossamer tent upon the rim of the Great Sahara.

The next day he took me out to see the prospector. It was precisely as he had described it. So huge was it that it could have been brought to this inaccessible part of the world by no means of transportation that existed there.

It could only have come in the way that David Innes said it came—up through the crust of the earth from the inner world of Pellucidar—that realm of wonder.

I spent a week with him, and then, abandoning my lion hunt, returned directly to the coast and hurried to London, where I purchased a great quantity of stuff which he wished to take to Pellucidar with him.

There were books, rifles, revolvers, ammunition, cameras, chemicals, telephones, telegraph instruments, wire, tools and more books—books upon every subject under the sun. He said he wanted a library with which they could reproduce the wonders of the 20th century in the stone age, and if quantity counts for anything I got it for him.

I took the things back to Algeria myself, and accompanied them to the end of the railroad; but from here I was recalled to America upon important business.

However, I was able to employ a very trustworthy man to take charge of the caravan—the same guide in fact who had accompanied me on the previous trip into the Sahara—and after writing a long letter to Innes, in which I gave him my American address, I saw the expedition leave for the South.

Among the other things which I sent to Innes was over 500 miles of double, insulated wire of a very fine gauge. I had it packed on a special reel at his suggestion, as it was his idea that he could fasten one end here before he left and paying it out through the end of the prospector lay a telegraph line between the two worlds.

In my letter I told him to be sure to mark the terminus of the line very plainly with a high cairn, in case I was not able to reach him before he set out, so that I might easily find it and communicate with him should he be so fortunate as to reach Pellucidar and again find his Dian.

I received several letters from him after

I returned to America—in fact, he took advantage of every northward passing caravan to drop me word of some sort.

His last letter was written the day before he intended to depart. Here it is:

My Dear Friend:
Tomorrow I shall set out in quest of Pellucidar and Dian. That is, if the Arabs don't get me. They have been very nasty of late. I don't know the cause, but on two occasions they have threatened my life.

One more friendly than the rest, told me today that they intend attacking me tonight. It would be unfortunate should anything of that sort happen now that I am so nearly ready to depart.

However, maybe I will be as well off, for the nearer the hour approaches the slenderer my chances for success appear.

Here is the friendly Arab who is to take this letter north for me, so good-by, and God bless you for your kindness to me.

The Arab tells me to hurry, for he senses a cloud of sand to the south—he thinks it is the party coming to murder me, and he doesn't want to be found with me. Good-by again.

Yours,

DAVID INNES.

A year later found me at the end of the railroad once more, headed for the spot where I had left Innes.

My first disappointment was when I discovered that my old guide had died within two weeks of my return; nor could I find any member of my former party who could lead me to the same spot.

For months I searched that scorching land, interviewing countless desert sheiks in the hope that at last I might find one who had heard of Innes and his wonderful iron mine.

Constantly my eyes scanned the blinding waste of sand for the rocky cairn beneath which I was to find the wires leading to Pellucidar. But always was I unsuccessful.

And always do these awful questions harass me when I think of David Innes and his strange adventures.

Did the Arabs murder him, after all, just on the eve of his departure? Or did he again turn the nose of his iron monster toward Pellucidar of the inner world?

Did he reach it, or lie somewhere buried in the heart of the great crust?

And if he did come again to Pellucidar was it to break through into the bottom of one of her great inland seas or among some savage race far, far from the land of his heart's desire?

Does the answer lie somewhere upon the bosom of the broad Sahara, at the end of two tiny wires, hidden beneath a lost cairn?

I wonder.

(THE END.)