

the Black Cat

A Monthly Magazine of Original Short Stories.

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No. 38.

NOVEMBER, 1898.

5 cents a copy.
30 cents a year.

Entered at the Post-Office at Boston, Mass., as second-class matter.

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The Pillow of Justice.*

BY E. S. INNET.



STEPHEN ROGERS was riding through a jungle in Ceylon, meditating upon the vanity of human wishes when concerned with coffee planting. He had sent his coolie on ahead with his kit, with orders to await him at the next Government Rest-house, which was not far distant, so the fact that it was raining tropical torrents did not in the least disturb him. With an immediate change of raiment in prospect the rain was a godsend, for it banished the myriads of insects which ordinarily make life in the jungle a burden.

Rogers was attired in regular plantation garb, thin white clothing and the planter's double hat. On reaching the Rest-house he dismounted and shouted for his coolie. The latter did not appear but the man in charge did, and to him Rogers committed the care of his horse and entered, riding whip in hand. He meant to use it when he found the delinquent native, but that worthy was nowhere to be seen, and the keeper, returning from putting up the horse, said no such person had arrived there that night.

Rogers exhausted his vocabulary, which was varied and expressive, in voicing his opinion of the coolie, the climate, the country,

*This is one of two stories that won the \$500 prize in the competition ending March 31, 1898.

and coffee planting. Having thus relieved his mind, he turned on the keeper, now reduced to a state of tremulous humility, and demanded clothes. "Sahib clothes" the man had not, but there were certain rags—if the Sahib would deign? The Sahib would, for he knew the peril of letting his clothing dry on his back, so presently he was arrayed in a new and gaudy dress, consisting of a sort of kilt, a coarse white shirt and a species of jacket embroidered in various colors. Being a large man and the Rest-house keeper small even for a native, the young planter was not unaware that he looked supremely ridiculous as he strode into the big eating room.

He had scarcely been served when a door leading into one of the little rooms opened, and a lady entered and seated herself at the same table. She was not Indian, not European, but of that degree known as Eurasian, and Rogers, when he came to himself sufficiently to be observant, saw that she was strikingly beautiful. Now, despite the rough and ready life he had been leading, he was a gentleman at heart, and it horrified him to think she must have heard his remarks in regard to the coolie.

"Thank you," said the young woman in English, as he awkwardly passed her something.

Rogers colored under his bronze skin and became acutely conscious of the five or six inches of muscular arm which showed beyond the abbreviated sleeves of his jacket. But his companion's self-poise was perfect, and he was soon chatting with her quite at his ease. It seemed that she was waiting for her escort, which had been delayed.

The young planter naturally regarded her with some curiosity. She was of queenly stature, and was gowned in soft draperies of spun silk of many colors, in which crimson predominated. The bodice was gracefully swathed about her form and caught upon the shoulder and at the breast and waist by curiously shaped dragons of yellow gold set with fine rubies. It was impossible to guess her age. A strange perfume hung about her, diffusing itself with every movement. Unlike anything he had ever experienced before, it yet had a slight similarity to the odor of the Champak flower; it was subtile, fresh, and indescribably soothing.

After the repast the Rest-house keeper announced that the

Sahib's clothes were dry, and Rogers retired. When he reappeared half an hour later, attired in his own garments and feeling much more at his ease, he found the young woman still sitting in the big eating room. She did not seem averse to continuing the conversation, looking approvingly at the young man, who was, indeed, a fine-looking fellow, with plenty of those two qualities so admired by women —self-reliance and strength. She asked him many questions; he remembered afterward that they all related to English modes of governing, and regulations regarding mines.

They were thus mutually entertained when suddenly there came a horrible cry, a cry choked in the gurgle of blood. Ghastly and unnatural as it was, they yet recognized it as the voice of the Rest-house keeper.

Rogers was a man trained to action and emergencies. The cry had not died upon the shuddering air before he had thrust the woman into one of the little rooms, caught the table and dragged it after him, put his back against the door, the table before him, and prepared to defend himself and her. These precautions only took seconds, but ere they were completed the entrance was thronged with evil brown faces and hands brandishing native swords and daggers. Rogers had his revolver going before they had well seen him, and it checked the first impetus of their attack, but he knew he could not hold them long, for though they evidently had no guns, one determined rush would overwhelm him. It was a brief fight, for while his shots told, his assailants were many. The rush came. He fired his last shot full into the breast of the nearest man, who fell across the table, caught the dying wretch's sword out of his hand, his dagger out of his sash, gave a shout — and they were upon him. He cut, and slashed, and thrust, with his back to the door and his face ever to the foe; he was wounded in a dozen places, despairing courage flamed in his eyes. The odds made hope vain, but the lust of battle was on him, and behind him, sheltered only by his courage, a defenseless woman trembled.

The scene swam before his eyes in a crimson haze. He felt a needle-like pain in his sword arm, and perceived the ring of his blade on the floor as it fell from his nerveless hand. Something red hot seemed to pierce his throat, and he knew he was done.

He choked and went down with a last consciousness of a terrible crash, before which his assailants vanished. "This is death," he thought. And then there was a calm.

Rogers's coolie was the first on the scene. He stayed only to discover that his master was alive, then mounted his horse and rode away for help. In the outer room they found the Rest-house keeper stabbed through the jugular vein with a dagger.

The room where the young man lay was like a shamble. There were ten dead men there, hardly one of whom was not slashed and cut. He had made a good fight, the surgeon said grimly, and hoped to be able to pull him through, though his sword arm was terribly cut at the elbow joint, in such a fashion that although he could afterward use it well, it was never quite straight again, and his shoulder was pierced by a vicious blow evidently aimed at the throat. He also had a deep cut on the head and twenty or more lesser wounds. He was months in recovering, lying for weeks in delirium, fighting the battle over again, tormented always by one malignant face which seemed to have been fixed upon his retina when he fell, and which was imaged upon his poor, disordered brain in fantastic visions.

When he came to himself he said nothing about the woman. He was vaguely afraid of doing her harm, as he fancied her presence there might have been a secret she would wish preserved. The facts of the fight indicated simply that ill-disposed natives had attacked the Rest-house and had been in turn attacked and shot through the door from behind. This explained the crash Rogers had heard as he fell, and the vanishing of his assailants, who had been swept down by bullets as growing grain is leveled by hail. In his own mind he was convinced that the men who had so opportunely arrived were the lady's escort, and this gave him hope that she had escaped.

By the time he was up and about his coffee plantation was a thing of the past. It was the beginning of the fungoid disease which ruined the Ceylon coffee planters, and he was among the first to feel its effects. He was a true citizen of the world, however, and lost no time in repining, but shook the dust of Ceylon from his feet and went tea-planting in Japan.

He took little from Ceylon with him, but one article in his scanty luggage was strangely out of keeping with the rest of his utilitarian outfit. This was a gorgeous silken pillow embroidered in pure gold thread, and emitting a faint, delicate perfume, the same odor, vaguely suggestive of the Champak flower, which had distinguished the mysterious woman at the Rest-house. It had been found in one of the chambers, and those who cared for him concluded it was his,—some souvenir that he was sending home,—so they put it among his belongings. Rogers appropriated it, feeling he had the best right to it.

It was embroidered with the winged dragons which had clasped the woman's robe, and had an outer cover with the same symbol upon it.

By the time he got to Japan the pillow had imparted its strange perfume to all the clothing in the trunk. People remarked upon it, and ladies begged to be told its name. He developed a certain innocent conceit over it, such as he felt about his cat's-eye ring and the thin, hand-spun silk shirts he always wore; but as these were his only bachelor vanities, they were, perhaps, excusable in such a gallant, big-souled fellow. He grew tea in Japan and made more money out of the curiosities he sent to London auctioneers than he did out of his plantations. He grew raisins in California, and was ruined because an expected import duty on the Spanish product was not put on. He grew coffee in Mexico and the Fiji Islands, and finally landed back in Ceylon, this time to raise tea, for the soil, which is too poor to grow healthy coffee trees, produces first-class tea, and tea is rapidly rehabilitating Ceylon.

During all his peregrinations he still retained the memory of the mysterious woman of the Rest-house. She was his standard of beauty, by which he judged all other women and found them wanting; and he carefully cherished the embroidered pillow, which, gorgeous enough for a queen's boudoir, he always kept safely in its outer cover. At times, too, he was haunted in his dreams by the malignant face which had so tormented him in his delirium after the fight.

He had a partner in his new tea venture, a young man named Paxton, to whom he had taken a strong fancy. One night as

they sat smoking and drinking rickys, Rogers, being in an expansive mood, related the story of the battle more fully than he had ever done before.

Paxton was intensely interested. "By Jove!" he said, "did you never hear about the fabulous ruby mine and the beautiful white woman who governs the tribe that owns it?"

"No," said Rogers. "Fire away."

"Why, that's all. They say there's a ruby mine up in the hills somewhere, and that the men who work it are ruled by a woman of remarkable beauty and wealth. Their religion and government are different from those of the other tribes, and they are tremendously rich. You never can tell, of course, when the natives are lying and when they're not, but I've heard great yarning over it in the Bazars. When any of the dealers got hold of a fine ruby there was always gossip over it. I was told that the 'white woman' is really an Eurasian, the daughter of an Indian princess and a Certain Somebody very high up in the government. Anyhow, they say this woman pays the taxes for the whole tribe and brings them down herself, so that the collector never goes near their settlement. I've heard all kind of yarns; that she comes dressed like a princess, disguised as a pauper, alone, with a queenly retinue, and, in fact, there is no conjecture too wild to tack onto the ruby mine in the hills. But, mind you, I wouldn't wonder if there was some truth in it."

Rogers puffed reflectively at his pipe. "It was just about tribute time when I saw the woman at the Rest-house," he said. "I remember I had been considerably worried over the tax question that year."

"Really!" exclaimed Paxton, who had spent all his life in India and Ceylon, and knew enough to treat seriously what newcomers are wont to scoff at. "Well, there's more truth than fable in some of these Indian tales. Wouldn't it be great if the mysterious woman of the Rest-house and the queen of the ruby settlement were one and the same?"

"I could do nicely with a ruby mine," said the young planter reflectively. "And she was a fine woman."

"The price of a virtuous woman is above rubies," quoted his partner chaffingly, "but personally I prefer the rubies."

"Just wait a bit," said Rogers oracularly. "You'll fall head over heels in love some day. As for me, I'd be jolly well satisfied with the 'white woman' without the ruby mine."

"Swallow your own pills!" laughed Paxton. "But suppose there is some truth in the ruby mine business? Let's make inquiries." And they did.

At length, by means of bribes, questions, and conjectures, they pieced out a half-believable story about an isolated hill tribe, over which a woman ruled and which was reputedly very wealthy. But the hillsmen were fierce, there were wild beasts in the jungle, and the supine natives of the lower levels had enough to eat without much exertion. What strange creatures were Sahibs who exerted themselves so unnecessarily! Yet if the Sahibs wanted a guide, surely the whole district would question his brother or his friend and spread the news abroad, that one might be found. Was it the will of God to keep the Sahibs on the plantations to exact so many hours' work a day when they themselves desired to be looking for a "lost feather" many days' journey hence? No, assuredly not! The bread-fruit was ripe. Its odor filled the air. They had but to pluck and eat. A sickness had taken the coffee plants; what more likely than that it should take the tea? So if the Sahibs complained, why, who can fight against the Evil One who spoiled the coffee? Besides, that was away in the future; meantime the Sahibs clamored to be gone. Finally a man was found in a neighboring village who said he could guide the Sahibs to the hidden kingdom in the heart of the mountains. But he sent word by the go-between that the passes leading to the isolated community were guarded and the country dangerous. He could not guarantee the safety of the Sahibs.

The Sahibs sent a message to say that they were going on a friendly mission, not for plunder, and therefore expected to pass unchallenged. To this the guide sent back word that the lonely tribe spoke a different tongue from the plains people, and might not understand. The Sahibs replied that they would look after their own safety, and that what they needed was a guide, not a guard. Apropos of this, however, Paxton suggested that they take the perfumed pillow along, as the winged dragons upon it might be an insignia of the woman's royalty, and that in the

event of their language proving unintelligible it would serve as a sort of passport. So they packed it up with the rest of their kit; it went into little bulk and added practically nothing to the weight.

So one morning the two set forth to "seek a lost feather," as the natives said, meeting their guide at a Rest-house some twenty miles away. The moment Rogers saw him he had a sense of familiarity, and was also conscious of a feeling of repulsion.

The man was in no particular respect unprepossessing. His eyes were shifty and his mouth a little cruel, but these expressions are not unusual in natives. His most noticeable peculiarity, however, was his nostrils, which were wide and flexible, like those of an animal. Rogers looked at his partner to judge of the impression their guide had made upon him. Paxton said nothing till the man had left the room, then he declared himself. "So that's Doonga! Well, I could eat all of him I like!"

Rogers felt oppressed at hearing his own inexplicable prejudice put into words, but he laughed and said: —

"Oh, well, 'in for a penny, in for a pound.' I don't doubt he'll bear watching; but Lord! most of them will. If my gentleman tries any tricks there will be one more in Nirvana in short order."

They stayed that night at the Rest-house, and set forth the next morning, their guide maintaining an attitude of respectful humility. Their next stage took them to the next Rest-house, where their horses were left. Here their packs were made up into three, and they struck off through the jungle, where they journeyed three days without notable adventure. Upon the third day, the way being very arduous, their guide, with much submission, asked if he should carry their guns. He was well used to such journeys, he said, and the Sahibs were not.

"No," said Rogers sardonically, "you need not take the guns, but since you are able, you can take an extra pack."

For the next few hours, till sundown, Doonga toiled on with his double burden. He found abundant reason for pitching camp early, and Rogers, who was good-natured, had not the heart to prolong the march.

"He won't be so quick offering to take the guns another time," he said to Paxton. "I'm keeping tabs on him. Did you hear him singing this morning?"

“I heard him *yowling*!”

“Well, it’s all the same thing, only he was chanting, ‘Follow, follow, follow, we go — we go — to the land of precious stones !’ He thought I didn’t know the lingo, and when I asked him what he was making such a row for, he said it was a prayer-song, and very holy. It didn’t sound very sanctified to me, it sounded more like a tip to some one.”

“Jove !”

“Yes, I think we are probably being followed by some of Doonga’s pals, so after this we won’t both sleep at once. We’ll take turns at watching; not a sentry go, you understand, just a still watch.”

This they did. In the small hours of the morning Paxton, who was on guard, saw Doonga leave his mat and disappear in the jungle, and immediately awakened Rogers. In an hour the guide reappeared and approached the two men stealthily, and as they were both seemingly asleep, he beckoned toward the jungle, from which crept a man, who waited at a little distance. Doonga bent silently over the packs, drew out something from them, and going to his companion, seemed to exhibit it, after which he brought it back. As he returned, a glint of moonlight shone upon the broderies of the perfumed pillow.

The stranger disappeared in the jungle, and the guide, having replaced the pillow, went placidly to sleep.

Next morning Rogers asked Doonga how far they were from the mountain pass which led into the hidden valley. One day’s journey, he said; by the next day, at noon, they would arrive. That day the traveling was terrible, the pathless jungle seeming more impenetrable, more impassable than ever. Early in the afternoon Paxton tripped over a peculiarly twisted creeper and came down full length, landing in a nest of ground-partridge eggs, which bedaubed him finely. He said evil words under his breath, and Rogers could hardly keep his face straight. They toiled on for two hours, Indian file, after the guide, then Rogers plucked his comrade by the sleeve, pointing to where, near a grotesquely gnarled creeper, there was a nestful of broken eggs. The guide was leading them in a circle, probably giving time for his confederates to come up with them.

A very ugly look came into the young planter's eyes. "Collar Doonga," he said briefly, "and hold him."

Paxton obeyed with alacrity, the native starting nervously as he felt a vigorous hand close upon his arm. Rogers tightened his belt, took the knapsack from his shoulders and began to climb a tall, slender tree. He went up slowly, but presently was well above the lesser growths, and when he got among the higher branches he saw the hills for which they were aiming, a few hours' journey away. They must try to reach them at all costs that night, for whatever welcome awaited them there was safer than to trust to the hospitality of the jungle with Doonga's friends as hosts. He descended, explained briefly to Paxton, and then they struck out at right angles through the jungle, fixing their path from point to point by aid of trees and holding an unswervingly straight course, while they kept Doonga between them, telling him now and then what they thought of him. Night was falling when the jungle began to grow less dense. They were nearing the plain at the foot of the hills.

"Hurry, you black hound!" said Rogers to his captive, who was doing everything possible to retard their progress, and who now set up piercing cries for mercy. His captor whipped out his revolver, and the shrieks subsided.

"Well, he has effectually warned his pals," he remarked. "I don't know what holds my hand that I don't put a bullet through him."

"A prejudice against cold blood," replied Paxton. "It's a great hamper to decent men."

At that moment from all around them came the melancholy cries of the moonbird. The two travelers paled slightly, and looked at each other. The cry of the moonbird is the signal of a murderous society after the order of Thugs, only they stab their victims through the throat instead of strangling them, and this fact was well known to both men.

A malignant spark glowed in the eyes of the guide, an evil pride shone balefully upon his countenance, while his nostrils dilated like those of a beast of prey when he scents blood. At that moment a recollection came to Rogers that almost unnerved him. He knew now why Doonga looked so familiar. This was

the malignant face which had so long haunted his dreams, and which had tormented him in his delirium after the Rest-house battle.

They hastened on, Rogers clutching Doonga with one hand and his revolver with the other, knowing by a rustle now and then in the underbrush that they had an unseen malevolent escort.

When at length they reached the little strip of plain some two miles broad it was too dark to see clearly, but the mountain facing them seemed to be cleft in two. They knew that if they attempted to cross that plain the assassins would surround them and rush them into the open, and that a stand for the night must be made. A tree stood at some little distance from the last fringe of underbrush, and here they decided to camp. One of them guarded Doonga and watched the jungle while the other made preparations for the night, which were simple, as they did not propose to erect the little tent; and in place of the usual evening meal they took a light lunch standing. They then bound Doonga hand and foot, and removed his weapons, which consisted of a dagger of peculiar shape, and a revolver marked with Rogers's name—the same which he had hurled into the faces of the ruffians at the Rest-house. When these were taken from him the guide set up a howl. Rogers, standing on guard beside the packs, caught up the perfumed pillow and threw it over to his partner.

"Clap that on his ugly face," he said, "and keep it there till he shuts up."

Paxton caught it. As the native realized his purpose fear crept over his face, distorting his features, and he uttered an involuntary scream. In an instant his voice was stifled by the pressure of the perfumed pillow. At first he struggled violently, then his muscles relaxed, when the pillow was instantly removed. Doonga lay smiling up, his face strangely livid in the light of the tiny fire.

"Lord!" said Paxton. "I hope I haven't smothered him."

"Small odds," replied Rogers, "only it's been too quick. Something slow is what he needs."

He broke off suddenly, for Doonga was beginning to talk in a low, dreamy voice. Paxton leaned over to listen.

"He's gabbling all sorts of things," he said, "about a 'pillow of justice' and so on. Whatever is the matter with him?"

"Watch out," said Rogers; "he's up to some deviltry, you may be sure."

"Only the good rest well upon the pillow of justice," said Doonga distinctly.

"Well, that lets you out," said Paxton. "You're not one of the holy, are you?"

"I am of the Sacred Seventh Circle of the Slayers," replied the guide.

Paxton shuddered. "I say," he said, "are they—"

"Yes," said Rogers, "they are the beauties who stab through the throat; Thugs, simply, with another method. That devil's in a trance, though goodness only knows what threw him into it. Maybe he'll answer questions. Come here and keep guard, and let me have a try with him. There are two men in the shadow of that clump of mimosas," he added. "Just keep a bead on them. It won't harm if you bag one." Then he said, addressing the guide: "Doonga! Where is the road to the hidden valley?"

"Between the two white rocks," said the native promptly.

"Is it guarded?"

"Yes."

"By whom?"

"By those who kill strangers."

"At whose command?"

"It is the law."

"Whose law?"

"The law of the hidden valley."

"How may we enter?"

"By showing the winged dragon."

"Why did you come hither?"

"To gain entrance with my friends to the hidden valley."

"How?"

"By aid of the pillow of justice."

"What is the pillow of justice?"

"It is a charm which makes the dumb speak, it is the possession of the rulers of the hidden valley. It was left by the Queen in a Rest-house, and taken away over seas by a devil Sahib. But our soothsayers said he would return again with it, and so we believed and waited till he came, and lo! he is in the hands of my brothers. He goes about perfumed with the sacred scent of hidden kings, but I, Doonga, have delivered him into the hands of the slayers."

At that instant Paxton fired. "Bagged him!" he exclaimed. "Good!" said Rogers laconically. "Where are the White Rocks?" he asked Doonga. The native was silent. "Doonga!" he called sharply, "where are the White Rocks?"

"Here, near at hand, straight as the bird flies." His voice died away to a whisper, nor could he be aroused to further speech.

Rogers left him and went to his friend. A dozen flitting figures hovered in the shadow of the mimosas. "Paxton," he whispered, "you heard what he said. We are in a desperate strait, and must resort to a desperate expedient to get out of it. I am sure what the beggar said was true. I want you to crawl away through the grass and try to get to the sentries at the foot of the mountain. Take the pillow with you, and use it for all it is worth. Try to get them to come and help me, and if they won't, get access to the Queen. She will help me on the double quick. You must see that it's our only chance. They'll rush us after a bit, and you know what that means!"

"But, Rogers—"

"Go!" was the answer; and Paxton suddenly felt very young and weak before the force of this man's character. "You'll have to crawl a long way through the grass, so you'd better tie the pillow on your back."

Paxton did so. It was now so dark that these preparations could not be seen by their enemies, but this advantage was offset by the fact that the movements of those in ambush were equally invisible. The young man had barely started on his perilous mission when he turned back for an instant.

"Rogers, old man!" His voice was thick; their hands found each other in the dark.

"Be off!" said Rogers, authoritatively but gently. "And if they do me up—tell Her what I thought of her."

"You shall tell her yourself," replied Paxton stoutly, and set forth once more.

His journey seemed long. He crawled painfully forward, and when some hundreds of yards from the camp was startled by the sound of breathing close beside him. He paused and held his breath; then, loud and clear, came the call of a moonbird, which was answered by some one upon the other side. He knew then

they were surrounding Rogers, and that he must be through the circle. He rose and ran as he had never run before, and his breath was like flame in his throat. At length he saw a faint glimmer of light, and rushed headlong toward it, when suddenly he was brought to a halt.

“Who goes? Stand and speak!”

“The pillow of justice,” he gasped, turning to a sentinel who had apparently risen from the earth, with leveled gun.

“Come,” said the sentinel.

In ten minutes Paxton stood in the midst of a throng of natives, and unloosening the pillow held it out. They salaamed and fell back, and presently an old man richly clad appeared, for whom all made way. He also salaamed at sight of the pillow.

“Do you bring tidings of the battle of the Rest-house?” he asked in excellent English.

Paxton gasped. “Yes, yes!” he cried. “The man who saved the ‘white lady’ is out there on the plains by the peepul tree, surrounded by murderers, led by one who escaped from the Rest-house.”

The old man turned to his followers, a fiery indignation in his eye. “You hear,” he said. “Fly to the rescue! The peepul tree shelters the savior of the Queen.”

In an instant they had all fallen into line, fully armed, a young native with a crimson headdress in command, and in three minutes they were leaping across the plain. As Paxton endeavored to follow he was restrained by the old man.

“No, pardon, Sahib, you will stay!” he said.

“But—”

“He will be saved if it be the will of God to save him,” said the old man gravely, and led the way through a narrow portal into a street of a garrison village at the foot of the mountain. Dozens of soldiers were swarming out into the highways.

“I am glad to see thee,” said the old man. “The Queen has ever said that the Sahib would return bringing the precious pillow of justice, and for these years past I have abode at the foot of the mountain ready to give a fitting welcome. It has been weary waiting. I shall be glad to get back to the mountain.”

In an hour the rescuers returned with Rogers. The two friends wrung each other's hands. "They had me tree'd," said the young planter. "They were just surrounding me when you left. They hadn't any guns, you know, so I shinned up the tree and popped away at them. Doonga didn't have a very good time of it when the rescuers arrived. I didn't look any more than I could help. It was horrible!"

"Served him right," said Paxton, who hadn't seen the wretch's death and could not comprehend the horror of it.

It is many years now since the two travelers were carried triumphantly up the long defile which gives entrance to the hidden valley; many years since Rogers's eager eyes searched a woman's face for a sign and found in her sweet eyes the promise of perfect happiness; many years since he was told the properties of the pillow of justice, upon which no person could lay his head and withhold the truth, but must needs answer every question asked, even to the secrets of his soul, so strange and subtile was the perfume prepared by the ancestress of the Queen, a perfume sacred to the rulers of the hidden valley.

The wealth of the valley was no fable. Its people were contented and happy, and glad to receive Rogers as co-ruler with their queen, in whose veins flowed the best blood of Ceylon and England. He found it easy to secure the claims of his wife and her people, and their possessions are now duly attested.

Paxton remained with them for a long time, but there was no beautiful queen to complete his paradise, so after a bit he wandered afield to England, Holland, and America, seeking markets for the gems. Upon one of these journeys he met his fate, and a very gay couple they are; the rubies worn by the young wife are the envy of every one.

Far away in the East Rogers rules a little kingdom wisely and well. There is no shadow of inequity in his realm, for judgments are given solely upon testimony elicited by the subtile magic of the pillow of justice. But even its enchantment cannot find one thought of distrust or unhappiness in the hearts of Rogers and his beautiful wife.