

WHITE MAN

By
George
Agnew
Chamberlain

"Home," "Through Stained Glass," "John Bogardus," etc.

Copyright, 1919, The Bobbs-Merrill Company

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Andrea Peller, handsome daughter of Lord Peller, impetuous aristocrat, is doomed to marry an illiterate but wealthy middle-aged diamond mine owner. She disconsolately wanders from her hotel, and, in a fit of pique, covers an aviator about to fly from the beach. Impulsively, of course imagining that the trip will be merely a pleasant excursion, and a welcome relief from thoughts of her impending loveless marriage, she begins to be taken for a flight, although she does not know him. He somehow unwillingly agrees, and they start.

CHAPTER II.—When she realizes her mistake, the aviator is not going back. Andrea in desperation tries to choke him with one of her stockings. He thwarts her and they sail into the very heart of Africa. Landing in an immensely craggy land, they find themselves in a ship to her mysterious companion. She is a slave boy, "Bathub," and the White Man sets about building a hut for her.

CHAPTER IV.—Andrea is awakened from sound sleep next morning by loud pounding on her doorway and is told to prepare for a day's hunt with White Man. She thoroughly enjoys the excitement and begins to understand more of his "noble" character and the reason for his apparently ruthless slaughtering of animals. He is providing for the force of blacks he employs and who look to him for sustenance.

CHAPTER V.—Andrea, worrying over her deplorable lack of change of clothing, is surprised and delighted when Trevor, armed with everything in the way of clothing dear to the feminine heart, is dropped at her doorway by stalwart natives and she is told by White Man that they are hers. White Man by a signal shot saves her from the attack of a savage bull and she is fast becoming reconciled to her fate after eight days in the crag.

CHAPTER VI.—On another expedition the donkey on which Andrea is mounted runs away with her and she is for a moment made ridiculous. White Man explains the African method of "one shot, one pool." She is horrified. Afterward she listens to the report of native runners that a herd of elephants is encamped near their crag, but when she declares she would like to see him, White Man warns her she must not try to see or communicate with the strangers. He refused to give his reasons, and Andrea resolves to meet the other man.

CHAPTER VII.—After a tedious tramp three bull elephants are sighted and Andrea is transfixed by the excitement of the chase. Overcome by the spectacle of the killing of two elephants Andrea suddenly finds herself in the warm embrace of White Man. She is surprised to find he is by no means indignant. Andrea feels that another white man is encamped near their crag, but when she declares she would like to see him, White Man warns her she must not try to see or communicate with the strangers. He refused to give his reasons, and Andrea resolves to meet the other man.

CHAPTER VIII.—White Man announces that his work is ended, and preparations are made for the shipment of the material on hand. One rainy night Andrea allows herself to become despondent. She gives the signal agreed on between them to summon White Man to her in case of danger. With a mixture of ridicule and comfort he coaxes her from her despondent fit. His strong character and his ideas of usefulness are something of a revelation to Andrea. She is to the frivolous existence common to most "aristocrats," and she begins to realize with a little alarm that she is beginning to care deeply for him.

CHAPTER IX.—Next day Andrea is seized with a violent attack of pernicious malaria and for three days White Man wages a desperate fight for her life. He succeeds in the incident results in the death of their love for each other. Andrea learns that her companion is Robert Oddman Trevor, once famous victim of nervous shock and sunstroke, participated for years in the war. The trip to the coast where he met Andrea was undertaken through necessity, and he is afraid to risk her safety in another ascent.

CHAPTER X.

From that day Andrea's health began to mend with tremendous rapidity. Trevor never tired of watching her; never ceased to wonder at a recovery so rapid that its daily transitions were visible. It reminded him of one of the marvels of his boyhood. An old man had said to him one day, "Hear the corn growing, sonny?" and he laughed, whereupon the granddad had taken him by one ear and marched him to the nearest furrow. "Pick out a stalk and watch it, you little egg-sucker," he commanded. "See it grow, if you can't hear."

Andrea was like that; she was unfurling as though in the morning of a new youth. Never had her eyes been brighter; never her cheeks so quick to play with fire. Incidentally, she was full of a devil of mischievous reminiscent innuendo.

"It's all a great joke now, young lady," Trevor would defend himself, "but if you'd seen what I have of pernicious malaria, you'd keep grave for a year. I've seen three Swahilis that had nourished mosquitoes from their youth up, fall like dogs; one after another, within a mile and a half of an infected camp and the best of them went stone blind for a month."

"Did you nurse them, White Man? Did you see them through?"

These were the questions that drove him nearest to desperation, but the gleam in the eyes above the demure mouth from which they issued invariably warned him of the trap in time. He was on his guard; he knew that there were things between him and

WE WANT a man or woman in every state to represent us, to introduce BROWN HERBS TABLETS guaranteed remedy for Consumption, Indigestion and Diabetes. Over 100% profit. Easy seller, repeat orders. Permanent income. Write for pamphlets, FREE SAMPLES and terms. BROWN HERBS CO., 66 Murray St., New York City.

Andrea that speech would turn into ghastly skeletons walking by day and which only consistent silence could entomb. But so deep had grown his sympathies that even in this he understood her. It was not that she was perverse, but that her pride demanded a constant test of his loyalty to her other self—that internal self that had lain bared, revealed and helpless in his arms.

About those things which might have aroused a legitimate curiosity, she asked few questions. Without a word of inquiry she saw him despatch twelve picked men on some mysterious mission whose intricacies and importance necessitated a preliminary palaver of an hour's duration. Equally silent, she watched his detailed preparations of a well-appointed safari. Tents were brushed and set to air; cots and mattresses put out for sun-bath; provisions of all sorts packed in one-load cases; water boiled, filtered and hung in canvas coolers. Only a few days before, just such signs as these had made her heart heavy with unanswered questionings, but her illness had changed all that. The successive moments of the throbbing present each in its turn filled her whole horizon.

She knew instinctively that he had something big up his sleeve, and that he would shake it out on the slightest provocation. She also had a long memory, and had no difficulty in recalling his exact boast as to what he would do when she was well. He was going to take her in free fight. She was well now, she reflected; she had never felt better in her life, and if there was one thing she hungered for more than another, it was the promised combat.

There is no telling how long Andrea's innate stubbornness would have held out, nor at what point Trevor's exasperation would have driven him, for their wordless contest was interrupted by an event which he had foreseen and feared. They were sitting at table after dinner on a cloudless night, brilliant under a full moon, when a far-away sound came to disturb their purposeful silence. Trevor straightened in his chair and leaned forward, his whole body tense in the effort of listening. It came again, a ghost of a sound that gradually assumed substance and rhythmic form until after five long minutes it was recognizable as the cadence rumble of an African river chantey.

Instantly Trevor was on his feet. He issued orders to Bathub, who immediately began to clear the table and eliminate every item of furniture that would indicate a dual occupancy of the white portion of the camp. They had dressed that night for dinner, not as a celebration or any special event, but because they were both bored with too much time on their hands. Trevor now excused himself to Andrea and withdrew to his room. In a few minutes he reappeared garbed in his roughest khaki shirt and trousers. His face was grave as he advanced on Andrea with a nod toward her but, "MacCloster will be here in half an hour," he stated. "I ask you to go to your room, close and bar both doors and stay there until I call you."

Without waiting for her comment, he turned and left her. She sat on, with narrowed eyes, until she had finished her cigarette, and then, with a glance around to see if Trevor were watching, she arose and walked slowly across the open court of the crag. In her breast was a great rebellion at the curt manner in which he had made his request, but she had to admit to herself that no other form of address, coming from him, could have impressed her so deeply, moved her so quickly.

She went to her room, closed the front door, but did not bar it, chose a book and sat down to make a pretense of reading. The sound of the chantey rumbled near and then waivered afar according to the bends of the river, but in spite of this variation the sum of its volume swelled steadily in an ominous approach until it died quite suddenly at the boat landing.

There was a distant rattle of a dozen punting-poles dropped across the thwarts, a spoken word or two that carried marvelously across the still night, and then a long silence suddenly shattered by a bellowing voice: "Ship ahoy! Show your port and starboard lights, d— you. How in the h— d'you think I'll make the chan—?"

Andrea rose quickly and laid her ear to a crack in the door. Her pulse was beating fast, but she was smiling. She heard Trevor come out and presently she heard him speak. His voice was almost unrecognizable, it was so cold and so incisive, like sharpened steel. In strange incongruity, the words he let fall were like drops of molten metal.

"Hello, MacCloster, you dirty, drunken brute! What's your price to go away from here tonight? I can offer you a case of Bol's and all the kaffir dogs in the crag to see you off."

The words and their manner astounded Andrea; for a moment it seemed to her that these two men must be joking. Then she felt the impact of an undercurrent of malevolence such as she had never in her life imagined, much less encountered. She quivered to the thought that here was Trevor absolutely without gloves at last, every word an intentionally naked blow.

"Trevor," said MacCloster in an oily voice that was strangely softened and indescribably aggravating, "I like you. I can't help likin' you; you're so d— unblibical. Not a whisper about a sanguinary fatted calf. You go right to my heart with a case of gin. I accept; bring it out."

"No," said Trevor, "I'll send it up. I'll have it waiting for you by the time you get back if you don't rot and fall apart on the way."

"There you go," said MacCloster, pleasantly, "always cheerful, warm welcome on your tongue." Then, with a change that was like a thunder-clap: "Send it up, you dunghill bantam! Why the h— haven't you sent my music box?"

Andrea pressed her hands, her face and her whole body against the door. She was trembling slightly, but she was not frightened; her intelligence was too busy. It had leaped to an understanding of Trevor's part in what was going on outside. She forgot that she had ever thought it a mere battle of tongues. She could imagine this man, MacCloster, as a mountain of brawn and sinew against which Trevor was deliberately opposing all the moral weight of the old fighting slogan, "Bully a bully!"

More than that; she could now feel that the suppressed hatred she had guessed at their words had come boldly into the open and that it was in a sense labored and forced only because its intensity was beyond actual expression.

These men were stripped to almost unbelieveable nakedness—rapier and broadsword, lapping, thirsting mightily for heart's blood and nothing less. In comparison with her own little struggle with Trevor, the encounter assumed the proportions of a meeting of elements.

"I didn't send it," said Trevor softly, "because I didn't want to remind myself you were still unburied. Besides, it looks so clean—"

"I know," interrupted MacCloster. Once more his astonishingly flexible voice changed its tone to one of unforgiven calm. "I can understand, of course," he remarked conversationally, "you dislike the idea of carnage in conjunction with the virgin polish of a mahogany box. Well, let's have a look at the thing."

"I don't remember having seen you so sober before," said Trevor, in the same easy tone, and from its sound she knew he had turned toward his room.

"Enforced, I can assure you," replied MacCloster. "Been strapped on the wagon by lack of the necess—"

The sound of his voice was cut short by the closing of Trevor's door.

Andrea opened her eyes, just a crack, and looked out. In the very center of the circular court squatted in

knew better than another, it was the accurate valuation of every operatic voice that had sung in Europe during the last decade. She had been taken to Covent Garden regularly before she was out, as a matter of education, and no less regularly after her eighteenth birthday, as a matter of matrimonial business.

She knew instantly that this extraordinary apparition in the wilderness was nothing less than the solution of a world mystery. He could be but one man and that a person whose tremendous triumph had been so short as to leave him with fame but without a name. She was hearing the Great Voice—the voice of the star that had shone for a single night; resounded but once through the Scala, set as swiftly as it had risen and disappeared forever, leaving behind no trace beyond a memory so short that it had become a recollection almost unbelievable to the few that had heard it.

Now her ears were filled with its music to the exclusion of thought or reason or consciousness of self. She became nothing more than a sentient channel. The easy power of the Voice lifted it beyond the common standards of vocal classification and gave it the allure and the terror of the superhuman. Its tenacity seemed a thing incorporated apart, an actual substance with beckoning arms and hands. It drew her slowly, steadily out into the quivering moonlight, held her, lifted her face with it toward the sky.

With her breath rising and falling in aching accompaniment to the mounting rhythm, cheeks pale, lips parted, eyes staring in vain pursuit of the incredible flight of sound, she stood, a slim tense figure for once made free of that domain that is beyond art, beyond genius and is called quite simply, Gift of God. With a toss and a backward shake of the man's great head, the voice climbed smoothly to that stupendous high C that has wrecked the reputation of many pygmies and brought fame to a daring few. It held and still held until earth and moon and stars seemed little things that paused to listen, obstructed in unimportant courses. Breath suspended until her lungs were near to bursting, Andrea waited for that note to come down into the range of normal belief, but to her mind at least it was destined to hang eternally in the heavens, for the man had turned.

Her eyes knew horror for the first time. The man's face was half obliterated. It had been plowed by confluent smallpox and destroyed by a worse disease. The nose was gone, leaving an ignoble ruin or stripped cartilage, dried in the air till it was like weathered parchment. One ear had been ravaged in a clean cut so that it rose to a needle-point. That the wounds were healed only added an inexorable finality to their repulsive nature.

Only the man's thick red lips and his blazing eyes seemed to have escaped the pestilence. As his startled gaze fell upon Andrea his mouth opened to a wide, soundless laugh. With broad shoulders stooped, his abnormally low-hanging hands curved up like monstrous talons and his shaggy beard wagging to that silent laughter, he advanced upon her, encircled her waist with his fingers and shot her up lightly so that she fell doubled across his back and chest. He gave a low whistle and sped from the crag at an incredible pace. The boat-boys arose stealthily and flitted after him.

To Andrea's transfixing terror was added a memory—a fleeting glimpse—of Trevor, standing, hands in pockets, before his door. On his face was anger—cold, white, unforgiving anger. She thought she cried out to MacCloster to stop, to give her but one moment to explain, to beg forgiveness, to grovel at the feet of the one man in all the world, but no sound came from her lips.

Not until she stood tottering on the canted bottom of MacCloster's boat did life come back to her heart and veins and lungs. She threw up her head and screamed as she had never known mortal could scream—wild, terror-winged wail of desperate appeal. MacCloster snatched tiller from rudder, struck her across the shoulders, knocked her face down, into fetid bilge-water.

The stench of the stale water produced in her a reaction; it was so nauseating that it momentarily drove thoughts of all other things from her mind. She drew away from it and, crawling to the grated floor of a small cockpit, crouched in the corner formed by the gunwale and the after thwart. Just to her left, so close that even with head bowed she could not avoid seeing his enormous feet, sat MacCloster.

He talked to her steadily in a muttering undertone, but a long time passed before she began to distinguish one word from another. The muttering swelled slowly to a clear and liquid enunciation; the voice became like music undefined. But no longer could it drug her senses; she shuddered, cringed under its terrible caress. Its beauty had become forever leprosy.

"Dear, lovely, vile and sullen person," it was saying, "who would have thought it? Who would have imagined that you, a Helen among women, possessed of beauty, youth and a really lovely evening frock, should have come so far for a man? Cheer up! You've found two; one dunghill bantam and—me."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Copper is the best alloy of gold. In Sicily the language of signs is universal. It is perfectly possible for a Sicilian to carry on a long conversation from a distance with hands, eyebrows, lips and even nostrils.

MILLIONS IN U. S. OWN RAILROADS

Wage Earners Directly and Indirectly Affected by Roads' Solvency.

DIVISION OF SECURITIES.

Mutual Savings Banks Owned Entirely by Depositors Hold Large Amount of Railway Bonds.

R. R. RATES MUST BE ADJUSTED

Dean of the Wharton School of Finance on the Need of Good Railroad Credit.

TO MAKE INVESTMENT SAFE.

National Authority on Railroad Transportation Says Roads Must Be Self-Supporting or Become Bankrupt.

In an address on "The Railroad Puzzle," delivered in Philadelphia, January 8, Dr. Emory R. Johnson, dean of the Wharton School of Finance, and one of the nation's leading authorities on railroad transportation, declared that "after the first of March the companies must be self-supporting or become bankrupt." Continuing, he said:

"Can the railroads be successfully financed and operated when they are returned to their owners? For two years the government has drawn upon the public treasury to sustain the credit of carriers.

"If the carriers avoid failure their income must cover operating expenses, maintenance and capital charges; if the companies succeed to the extent that is demanded in public interest, they must not only be able to meet unavoidable expenses, they must have some surplus revenue.

"If there is no income to be used in part for betterments and in part for building up a surplus or reserve fund, the public will not invest in the railroads, their credit cannot be re-established and maintained and corporate ownership and operation of the railroads will fail.

"The income of the carriers is determined by public regulation, and properly so; but from this it follows that the country must decide between a policy of adequate revenues to the railroad corporations of the future and a policy of government ownership.

"The government is entitled to credit for having given greater unity to railroad operation, both line and terminal. It has done much that the carriers were prohibited from doing. The public now realize that co-operation of the carriers in the joint use of equipment and terminals should be encouraged, instead of prevented.

"The railroad legislation now pending in Congress must solve many difficult questions, but the most critical one is that of providing for the future regulation of railroads in accordance with a policy that will cause the carriers to secure revenue sufficient to enable them to perform their services adequately and with progressive efficiency. The railroad business must be made attractive to private investments or the country will have to adopt government ownership and operation of the railroads. There is no other alternative."

INCREASED WAGES TOOK 97% OF INCREASED RATES.

Increases in freight and passenger rates made during federal control amounted to \$1,835,000,000 when applied to the traffic moved up to July 31, 1919, while the increases in wages applied to the number of employees and the hours or days worked in July, 1919, amounted to \$1,774,800,000, or 97 per cent of the revenue from the increased rates, according to a statement compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission at the request of Senator E. D. Smith of South Carolina and presented by him in the Senate on December 20.

AMERICANS BIGGEST USERS OF RAILROADS; SERVICE HERE FAR OUTSTRIPS EUROPE

The railways of the United States in point of actual railway service lead the world. Americans buy more railway service, and a greater amount of transportation is supplied and used in the United States than in any other country.

According to statistics prepared by the Bureau of Railway Economics, the ton miles per capita carried by United States railroads in 1918 were almost five times the ton miles per capita carried by Germany, which was second to the United States in this respect. The ton miles per capita carried by the United States railroads in 1918 were 3,101. In Germany the ton miles per capita carried by the railroads were 631 and in France 447.

Since 1918 the increase in ton miles per capita carried by the railroads of the United States was more than the total carried by either of the two other countries in that year. In comparison with the total of 631 carried by the railroads in Germany and the total of 447 carried by the railroads in France the increase carried by the railroads in the United States since 1918 was 759 ton miles per capita.