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In making up your list of papers
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don't neglect to include The Scio
Tribune in the number.

FATIMA

A Romance
of the
Sahara Desert

By

F. A. MITCHEL

Hendricks was cut out for a globe
trotter and was furnished by inher-
itance with the wherewithal to be a
world traveler. By the time he was
twenty-five he had traveled in every
civilized land on the face of the earth,
and with many of them was quite fa-
miliar.

Then came the semicivilized coun-
tries. He determined to begin with
north Africa. He had read much of
the great Sahara desert, its ocean of
sand spread out with all the infinite
sameness as the waters of the deep,
the glare of day, the splendor of the
starry dome above it at night. But it
was the danger of traveling among the
treacherous, cutthroat people who in-
habit it that made Hendricks long to
travel there. As soon as he had be-
come familiar with peoples similar to
his own countrymen he went to Moroc-
co, intending to plunge down into the
desert.

Leaving Paris he made for Gibraltar,
crossed the strait and found himself
in Tangier. The transition across this
narrow water was like going to sleep
in England and waking up in Bagdad.
On the one hand were officers of the
English army surrounded by the peo-
ple of Spain. On the other were Arabs
dressed in the white baranca univer-
sally worn, a swarthy people of diabol-
ical countenance; snake charmers, with
their snakes; indeed, such a people as
one would meet in any Mohammedan
country. It seemed to Hendricks that
he had suddenly left the protection of
civilized law to be subject to uncivilized
plunder.

The first thing to procure for a trip
into the desert was camels, which
must be bought outright. Hendricks
purchased several of these beasts and
hired a couple of dozen natives, includ-
ing a man to manage them who had a
number of names, among which was
Ali, and Hendricks at once seized upon
it to designate the man. Ali attended
to the purchase of the rest of the out-
fit, including tents, arms, ammunition,
estables, drinkables, etc. The arms
and ammunition were about the most
important articles, for the principal
occupation of the denizens of the desert
was robbery. The large through cara-
vans were so well protected that little
plunder was to be gained from them.
The little force supporting a rich
American having many tempting ar-
ticles was a different matter. Ali in-
formed the master that they would be
subject to all sorts of stratagems for
stealing purposes, but would not be
likely to any open attack. To be robbed
at wholesale they would doubtless
be led into an ambush, in which case
they would all be murdered.

All this lent zest to the expedition.
Among the American's reasons for
plunging into such an unattractive
country one was to outwit the Bedouins.

He had not got well into the desert
before the performance commenced.
Of course a guard was established at
night. The third night after leaving
Moroccan territory a sentinel was shot.

"Why did they do that?" asked Hen-
dricks of Ali. "It seems to me murder
for nothing."

"Don't deceive yourself, master," said
the black. "Tonight another watcher
will fall, and the next night another,
and so on until our force is reduced to
so small a number that they may
overpower us."

Hendricks thought much during the
day as to how this prospective killing
might be eliminated. Before time for
posting the guard for the night he said
to Ali that the men were too stupid to
be trusted on a watch; he would do
guard duty himself that night. Tak-
ing his rifle he stationed himself be-
hind a heap of sand and kept a sharp
lookout for an enemy. The party had
traveled all day without seeing a hu-
man or an inhuman being. It seemed
impossible that some one should rise
up out of the sand at dead of night to
kill a guard. Nevertheless Hendricks
kept awake and, what was equally
important, kept his eyes open.

Just before dawn he spied some sort
of an animal in the distance wander-
ing about as though searching for food.
Hendricks watched the beast for
awhile and made up his mind that
there was a man under its skin. Go-
ing into his tent, he brought out a rifle,
strook the muzzle into the sand and
hung a baranca over the butt. Having
done this, he again took position be-
hind his sand hill. It was not long
before he saw a dash from where the
animal stood, and a ball passed
through the baranca. Hendricks fired
at the beast, and it made off, ap-
parently mingling with the sand.

That was the end of picking off sen-
tinel. The party traveled for some
days without further molestation to an
oasis, where they passed from the
sand ocean to earth, trees, flowers,
houses, and, above all, to water, for
this article, so common elsewhere and
therefore regarded of so little impor-
tance, is a chief necessity on the des-
ert.

Hendricks, leaving his outfit and his
men in care of Ali, put up at a hotel
to enjoy the comfort of living in a
house surrounded by tropical shrub-
bery. Directly opposite lived an Arab.

A trader, and when Hendricks was sit-
ting by his window a woman, young
and somewhat comely in appearance,
was to be seen in a room on the same
floor as the American. She saw him
looking at her and smiled at him.

Hendricks, though in the heyday of
life, was averse to interfering with a
woman belonging to a Mohammedan
and went away from the window. The
next morning a caravan started from
the trader's house, and since Hendricks
was prepared to move his own outfit,
he left an hour later. When he went
into camp in the evening the trader's
more pretentious encampment was not
a mile away. During the evening the
Arab called on the American, appear-
ing desirous of making his acquaint-
ance. Indeed, before he left he seem-
ed to have taken a great liking to
Hendricks.

He had no sooner departed than Ali
came to his master and warned him,
declaring that the man might be a
trader, but if he could overpower a
smaller caravan than his own in the
desert, kill every one connected with
it and possess himself of the loot he
would not scruple to do so. Hendricks
assured his man that he would be very
careful what he did, but said nothing
of the woman who had smiled at him
through her window.

Hendricks had promised the trader,
or robber, or both, that he would re-
turn his call in the morning, breakfast-
ing with him. Had he been warned by
Ali earlier he would possibly have de-
clined the invitation on the ground that
he intended to move early. He did not
fear a complication with the woman,
for an Arab does not usually introduce
his women to his men friends. In this
case Hendricks was mistaken. The
trader had three wives and they were
all at breakfast with him and his
guest. One of them was the woman
who had smiled at Hendricks from a
window, and she was the most attrac-
tive in appearance of them all.

She behaved decorously at table, but
when Ali arose with his other wives
to go into the living tent this woman,
whom he called Fatima, kept her seat.
When Hendricks started to rise she
gave him a look that indicated she
wished him to remain. After a mo-
ment's hesitation he decided to accept
her invitation. She spoke Spanish in-
differently and Hendricks spoke a lit-
tle of all the romance languages. Con-
sequently with a mixture of French,
Spanish and Italian they managed to
make themselves understood.

Though the trader did not appear to
object to his wife's tete-a-tete with the
American, Hendricks felt uneasy. The
woman seemed desirous of keeping
him with her; but, seeing that he de-
sired to get away, she at last arose,
and they joined the others. Before he
took his departure, while unobserved,

she thrust a bit of paper into his hand.
On reaching his camp he read it.

Remain in your present camp. Meet me
after dark midway between your tents
and ours.

No one but a fool or one ready for a
desperate adventure would have ac-
cepted this invitation. Hendricks was
not a fool, but he was ready to take
any risk to gratify his curiosity, and
he liked adventure. However, since he
knew he would be risking his life and
did not wish to leave the world with-
out some provision therefore he took
Ali into his confidence.

Ali said at once that the woman was
acting under the orders of her hus-
band; that Hendricks would meet a
bullet instead of a woman, after which
the trader would swoop down on the
others, murder them all and take pos-
session of the effects. He begged his
master not to keep the appointment.

His pleadings were of no avail. Then
Ali asked him to permit him to go in
advance. He would make it known
that he was not the American, but an
Arab, which he knew well how to do,
and would thus discover the plot with-
out getting killed. Hendricks was
tempted by this plan, but could not
bring himself to permit any of his
men to take a risk that he would not
take himself.

"No, Ali," he said, "I will keep this
appointment, but I will go with a rifle
at my shoulder and cocked."

"Your figure will be seen against the
sky," replied Ali, "while one who meets
you cannot be distinguished from the
sand."

Hendricks profited by this advice and
wore a light gray suit with a handker-
chief tied over his head instead of a
hat. Half an hour after dark he sail-
ed forth, taking care not to expose
his silhouette against the sky. Pres-
ently he saw a figure thus revealed.
The Arab dress is such that he could
not distinguish whether it was man or
woman. He watched it advance to-
ward him, Hendricks taking care not
to present a mark for a bullet. But no
bullet came, and presently he heard a
woman's voice say:

"Follow me; I will guide you to my
mistress."

Hendricks decided to take the risk.
He followed the woman to a point a
few hundred yards from the women's
quarters in the trader's camp, and there
stood the woman he was to meet.

"I am a white woman," she said.
"My complexion is stained. I was cap-
tured with a caravan that was attacked
and looted, the women being sold as
slaves. Save me!"

"How?"

"Take me to your camp. Move on at
once in a direction that will avoid this
caravan."

"Why did your husband permit you
to talk with me alone?"

"I offered to decoy you, agreeing to
get you in my toils tomorrow."

Hendricks thought a few moments,
then said:

"Come with me."

The next morning when the trader
arose the American's camp was seen
faintly on the horizon and but a short
distance from an oasis. Fatima was
missing.

Inverse Eugenics

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are always equal."

"Yes, one of my ancestors worked
himself to death and on the next
day a Pittsburgh dispatch

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