

MAMBA'S DAUGHTERS

(Continued from page eight)

ne saw a way out. He placed his hand over his heart, as he had been taught to do in dancing school, bowed from the waist, and touched the rim of Valerie's glass with his own as he had done earlier in the evening—just that—a silent toast—something too beautiful and significant for words. She smiled and sipped her glass. He gave her a long look heavily freighted with meaning, and executed a dignified retreat. Only, when he was safely back at his mother's table, his exultation over his achievement commenced to give place to a vague doubt. Why, at the last, had Valerie caught her lower lip under her small white teeth, and why, as soon as his back was turned, had there been that suddenly hushed burst of laughter at her table?

After supper—dances—one that impinged upon his consciousness—the sixteenth. Out over the polished floor flowed the strains of "Auf Wiedersehen," weaving their old, sentimental spell about the feet of the callous new generation, deluging them with their flood of associations.

Mothers, grandmothers who had danced their sixteenth to that air, and had in turn endowed it with their own romances, watched with a happy mist in their eyes. Something strange and new seemed to enter into the boy, clearing his brain, sharpening his perceptions, infusing him with an illusion of grandeur. He knew that he would speak clearly that his thoughts would be brilliant, his logic irrefutable. He went confidently in search of his partner.

As she went into his arms, Valerie exclaimed: "What a perfectly gorgeous orgy! Isn't it marvelous to throw shame to the winds and revel in it once more with the old darlings? I never want to be young again. I want to die a rank sentimentalist."

"They plunged into the tide of music and movement. After the first measure the boy was no longer conscious of the floor's solidity beneath his feet. He circled through a rarefied ether, guided and sustained by the music. Around him again flowed the rainbow with its fringes of drifting faces. Now and then, cut of the blur, eyes, wide and eloquent, close to his own—poignantly intimate for a moment—gone—the sixteenth!

Later, when Saint kissed his mother good-night in the hall of the little brick house, he asked: "Well, dear, did I carry it off like a gentleman?"

She answered with a shadowy smile: "By a very narrow margin, dear boy; a shade too narrow, I would say. For a moment at supper you frightened me a little, but that was silly of me."

He turned toward the stairs. Polly had said her good-nights and had preceded them. Now for a moment, mother and son were alone together. He hesitated, turned, and saw her standing under the hall lamp. The girlish look was still upon her face, she was smiling faintly, and although her gaze rested upon him he realized that it was unaware of his presence because of its projection into some far place where her spirit had gone alone. He felt that shock of strangeness which comes with a sudden glimpse of the familiar from a new angle. In the down-flung light of the rose-hued lamp he saw his mother as a stranger might have, dissociated from all preconceptions; a woman still young, beautiful, and a thoroughbred in every line of her figure, a woman who had fought a lone cause with such dauntlessness of spirit that even the honourable scars of the combat were hidden from prying eyes.

Saint harked back to the earlier moment of revelation, and almost unconscious of the fact that he was speaking aloud, said tentatively: "Mr. Raymond—at supper?"

She came back to him slowly, as though returning by gradual stages from her far land. Finally she was there again under the rose lamp, beautiful still, but familiar. She did not answer the implied question that hung in the air between them, but beckoned the boy to her in silence. When he reached her side she took both of his hands in hers. Then she said: "Do you remember your father, Saint?"

"Sometimes, just barely—but tonight at supper—"

"Yes, I know. It was when Charles Raymond came to our table. I saw him then, too. You're a strange boy. Sometimes I'm glad, Charles's son would never have gotten that."

She stood for a moment considering, her glance lowered, then she looked him full in the eyes and con-

MENILIK II, THE ETHIOPIAN KING

(Continued from page nine)

Of cannon he had only 42, mostly old style; and 8,600 horses.

Italians Weaker

General Baratieri telegraphed Crispi making known his position, and saying that he hoped to be able to push back the enemy should it advance. Crispi, who wanted to strengthen his ministry by making a coup, sent back to say that Baratieri thought to suffer from "military rheumatism"; that he wanted "a decisive victory" and that unless Baratieri did something at once another would be sent to take his place.

On February 29, 1896, the Italians, 30,000 in number, advanced in three columns to occupy what Baratieri thought were important positions. But an old soldier like he ought to have known better. It was a trap especially prepared by Menelik, who, on the advance of the Italians had retreated in order to draw them on.

Now Menelik was lying in wait for them, and before Baratieri could concentrate or deploy his forces, Menelik had swept down on Baratieri's divided army with his 120,000 men.

Menelik Scores Victory

The result was the complete rout of the Italians, who finally threat-

ened: "You'll be wondering why we had that flash. You'll be thinking it strange, maybe, but it's not strange at all, really. You see at the first ball of the season twenty-three years ago both Mr. Raymond and your father proposed to me. I loved your father; everybody did. To-night everywhere I looked I seemed to see him again. That's all—that's the story."

Saint said huskily: "And these things that mean so much to you—things that you could have had—you let them all go—for him?"

Kate Wentworth's form stiffened. Saint felt her fingers tense in his grasp. "Certainly I did not give them up. You could not have said that if you had known him well. We were both willing to wait awhile, that was all, until he had won them for me. We were gambling with all the odds in our favour—there was only one thing that we did not count on—it happened—and we lost—that was all."

His hands gripped so that she flinched. "Listen," he said, and his voice came in an odd constricted whisper. "I don't know whether you've lost or not. I've been wasting an awful lot of time with my silly head in the clouds, but I'm not old yet—I am going to try."

She drew him to her and kissed him, holding him close for a moment, but when she spoke it was with her usual serenity. "Now run along," she said. "You'll only want coffee in the morning, and you may have it in bed."

END OF INSTALLMENT VI.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

down their arms and ran, while the Abyssinians cut them down with their swords and spears in the narrow pass.

There have been few such victories in history. Two generals were killed and one captain, 360 officers, and 11,000 men were killed and wounded; 6,000 prisoners were taken, as well as 72 cannon, and the entire supply of arms, ammunition, and food of the enemy. Several days later the debris of the Italian army, less than 3,000 men straggled back to the coast.

The Abyssinian loss was slight. The battle of Adowa, as it is known, produced a profound emotion in Europe. At last an African nation had looked Europe in the face and had won. The result in Italy was terrific: Crispi was mobbed in parliament and driven out of office; there were violent manifestations all over Italy calling for an end of the war, while the soldiers in several garrisons mutinied rather than go to Africa.

Abyssinian Government Recognized

General Baleiddera, who succeeded to the command, declared that it would take an army of 250,000 men five years to conquer Abyssinia at a cost of \$1,100,000,000. At this there was nothing else for Italy to do but to eat humble pie. She was compelled to pay a stiff price for the ransom of her soldiers and to acknowledge the absolute independence of Abyssinia.

Adowa Marked a New Day

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"The white man is no longer considered a superior being. He has lost his prestige. It is known that he is not invincible and the natives have ceased to fear him. That is why one cannot insist too much upon the importance of the battle of Adowa. It is an event which is for Africa the beginning of a new day."

(Continued on page eleven)

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