



The Rogue!

By CECIL FANSHAW

Adventures, fast and furious, keep Dick and his uncle company in a great elephant trail in wildest Africa!

THE FIRST CHAPTER The Trail of the Monster.

"It must be a whacking great brute, uncle!" gasped young Dick Pain, leaning forward from his saddle, to stare down at enormous footprints in the red sand. "It must be the biggest elephant in Africa—in the world! You surely won't chuck up the hunt now!"

Old Ben Pain, Dick's uncle, and an expert African elephant hunter, eyed the huge circular tracks anxiously.

They were as big round as hip-baths, and the fact that the scorching wind hadn't yet blotted them out proved that the monster which had made them couldn't be very far ahead.

"Yes, Dick, we're on the tracks of a giant bull, for sure, an' I reckon his tusks would scale above a hundred pounds apiece! But he's goin' strong. There's no knowin' when a rogue'll stop goin', and we're gettin' mighty short o' grub!"

The old hunter turned in his saddle, glancing back anxiously at the dozen tired-looking black porters, who had just emerged from a belt of thorn scrub.

They were headed by a sullen-faced native, wearing ragged khaki garments and a red fez, and carrying old Ben's heavy rifle. The whole bunch seemed a bit dejected, which was not surprising, for old

Ben and his nephew had been following the huge elephant for three weeks in terrible, sun-scorched bush country. Besides, they had seen no buck to shoot for meat.

"A rogue, uncle?" cried Dick. "I thought a rogue elephant didn't mix with the herd. This big fellow's trekking along on his own now, it seems, but the tracks showed us he was moving with a herd a few days ago."

"He was followin' th' herd, my lad, not movin' with it," corrected old Ben. "I bet he was out for a scrap with some young bull if he got a chance. Rogues are old, vicious elephants that have been cast out of the herd by the others; but they often hang around close, tryin' to kill any smaller beast they can catch."

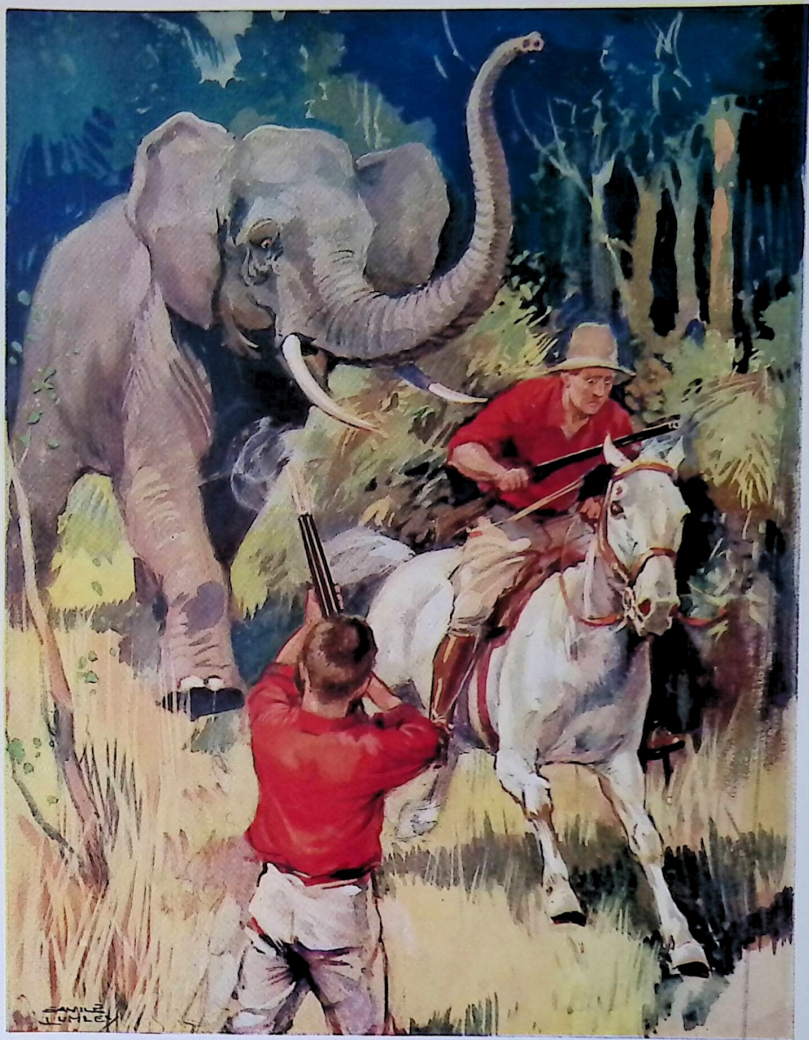
"The brutes!" exclaimed Dick. "Then you think we're following a rogue—a real savage killer?"

"I reckon so, my lad, but I'll make certain."

Old Ben beckoned to his gun-bearer, the native in the rags and red fez, who shambled forward, revealing teeth filed to sharp points through his slightly-parted thick lips.

"You think this feller elephant um rogue, Gobo?" old Ben asked, pointing to the tracks. "He no stop? He go trek, trek, trek altogether?"

For a moment Gobo stared hard at the ground, glanced at the surrounding bush,



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A TIGHT CORNER!

which showed no signs of the passage of a herd, then made clicking noises with his tongue and nodded.

"Yes, bwana, him rogue," croaked Gobo. "Him done leave um herd, march away to mountains, march for many moons mebbe. Me think no use follow any more."

Dick let out a sigh of disappointment.

"It's jest what I feared, my lad," muttered old Ben, rubbing his grizzled chin. "Th' porters ha' only got enough food for fourteen days—and 'twould take us quite ten to trek back from here to Nairobi. But we'll keep on for four more days, and maybe we'll shoot some buck for meat, which would sure help us. If we don't—" And old Ben broke off with an expressive gesture.

"Tell um porters"—he turned to his surly gun "boy"—"that we follow big feller elephant four more days, if we ne done shoot him then we go back one-time. If porters trek along fast now, I make um promise extra pay."

At once the trailing of the monster bull was resumed through the hot, sun-scorched thorn scrub; the hunters wary and alert, in case the brute should be standing hidden somewhere, waiting to charge out like a thunderbolt.

Old Ben and his nephew rode in front on their tough Somali ponies; close behind them slouched Gobo, with old Ben's heavy rifle, for the grizzled hunter found it a burden on account of his age, and carried only a light Mannlicher. Dick cast several glances back at Gobo.

"I don't quite take to that fellow, uncle," the lad said in low tones. "He's an awful surly kind of chap, always stirring up trouble with the porters."

"Gobo ain't as bad as he looks, my lad," laughed old Ben. "He's a Wakamba, and the porters are all Kikuyus. Th' two tribes don't mix well, consequently—"

He broke off abruptly.

"What's that?"

Old Ben whipped up his light rifle, Dick gripped his heavy Express tightly, and both reined in, to stare anxiously through the parched scrub.

To their ears had come the wild drum-

ming of galloping hoofs, growing rapidly louder. A second later, both saw a terrified horse burst through the bush and come dashing towards them, eyes bulging, nostrils wide, and with the stirrups of an empty saddle banging its flanks.

Dick spurred forward, caught the runaway's flying bridle, and brought the beast to a standstill.

"Just look at the gash on its flank, uncle!" the lad shouted in horror. "The poor brute's been wounded!"

"By a lion!" roared old Ben, charging up to his nephew. "Those are claw marks, m' lad, and mebbe th' fellow who owns this horse is lyin' close somewhere, bein' torn —"

He broke off, yelling to Dick to follow him, and dashed off at full speed. Dick slung the reins of the wounded beast to Gobo, rammed home his heels, and tore after his uncle at a hand-gallop.

Following the hoofprints left by the animal, nephew and uncle spurred through the bush, ducking under low branches, their khaki clothing catching every moment in the thorns. Suddenly they heard shouts, headed their mounts towards the sounds, then burst out into a large glade, to see a grim sight.

In the branches of a mimosa tree, which stood by itself, they saw a swarthy white man, who was gripping a bough for dear life, and letting fly shrill yells of fear.

Beneath the tree they saw a lion and lioness, glaring hungrily upwards; saw a second lioness making terrific bounds at the man above. Her leaps brought her slashing claws within a few inches of his dangling feet!

"Good heavens!" yelled Dick. "She'll drag that fellow from his perch in a second!"

At the sound of voices, all three lions whipped round, glared at the newcomers, then roared defiance. Away sprang Dick's horse, rearing in terror, but the plucky lad sprang to the ground, then levelled his heavy weapon at the black-maned lion.

"Don't shoot at th' lion, m' lad!" bawled old Ben, who knew all about lion-

hunting. "Plug a lioness—they're th' fiercest brutes!"

Things were happening at racing speed.

Even as Dick heard his uncle shout, he shifted his aim. He glared along the sights at the nearest lioness, saw the brute drop its head, yellow eyes agleam, saw its tail switching in fury. Came a shattering roar, then Dick saw the brute flying right at him, jaws wide.

Bang! Dick let fly with his right barrel, and reeled back at the shock of the discharge, almost deafened by the ringing explosion.

But his aim was good. Struck square between the eyes by the heavy bullet, the lioness collapsed in mid-air, and struck the ground, with a loose thud. Then lay motionless.

"Got it!" whooped Dick.

But the yell of triumph died on his lips, for out of the corner of his eye he saw the second lioness tearing up the ground in blind fury. Old Ben, also forced to dismount as his horse reared, had just wounded it. But he hadn't managed to kill it with his light rifle, and the horrified Dick saw the beast charge his uncle like a streak of lightning.

Bang! Old Ben fired again, inflicting a mortal wound.

It takes a knock-down blow, however, to stop a charging lioness, and the brute rushed on. But Dick's left barrel boomed like a cannon in the nick of time, and the second lioness turned a double somersault, landed in a heap, clawed the sand savagely for a second, and then collapsed within a yard of old Ben.

Dick whirled to see what the lion was doing, but the heavy-maned, fierce-looking monster had fled!

"Nailin' fine work, nevvyl!" cried the old hunter, snatching off his hat and mopping his forehead. "I reckon that beast would ha' mauled me badly in her death struggles if you hadn't let drive so smart! But always plug the lioness first, my lad—then th' chances are th' lion'll bolt. Th' lionesses always charge home."

"Bravo! You save my life!" broke



Dick spurred forward, caught the runaway's flying bridle, and brought the beast to a standstill. (See Chapter 1.)

in a harsh voice from the branches of the mimosa, then uncle and nephew saw the man they had rescued come slithering down.

He hurried towards the hunters, gabbling thanks, and Dick saw that he was a yellow-skinned, slightly-built man, but sinewy-looking, with a nose like an eagle's beak, and with alert, piercing eyes. He looked what he was, a Portuguese from the coast.

"Ah! I thank you both!" he repeated, reaching for their hands excitedly. "I am Gomez—Pinto Gomez from da South. Da

lions attack me, and one seize my 'orse, which just manage to escape. I droppa my rifle, but jump to da tree in time, and all my 'boys' climba da trees, too. If you 'ad not come, I thinka da lioness soon 'ook me out. But 'ow did you finda me?"

"Met your horse and caught it," laughed Dick. "Here it comes."

To the delight of Gomez, old Ben's gun-bearer, Gobo, came thrusting through the bush at that moment, leading the Portuguese's horse; and behind Gobo came the hunters' scared-looking porters, who had caught the hunters' terrified horses.

Gomez seized his mount's bridle, saw the wound on the flank was not severe, then turned back to old Ben and Dick with more thanks.

"But who are you?" he asked in his rasping voice. "Don' you know zis is da country of da Masai chief, Wembi? He is da most bloodthirsty savage in East Africa, and I advise you to makea da clear-out quick."

"Didn't know we were in Wembi's country," rumbled old Ben. "Anyway, me an' my nevey here ain't goin' back empty-handed if we can help it. We're close on th' trail of a mighty big rogue, and we're out to get his tusks. Nothin' but shortage o' grub'll turn us back."

"Bet your life it won't!" broke in Dick determinedly.

"Ah! You ees elephant-hunters," nodded Gomez. "Well, I don't thinka da rogue you hunt is anywheres close, and again I warn you against da Chief Wembi. Me—I 'ave founda da gold, and I hurry off with it fast, and I advise you to makea da haste back, too. It is vair dangerous here. Da scouts of Wembi is all around."

But neither old Ben nor Dick would be put off. They reckoned the huge rogue wasn't far ahead, and meant to bag the monster if their grub held out.

"Thanks for th' warnin', Mr. Gomez," rumbled old Ben. "But we're goin' on."

"You mus' do as you please." The meagre-framed Gomez shrugged his shoulders. "But you 'ave save me from da lions, so I give you da warning, and I 'ope

Wembi not catch you. But me—I go fast, vair fast, out of Wembi's country!"

The Portuguese picked up his fallen rifle, swung on to the back of his scarred horse, then started slating his "boys" in their own lingo. His "boys" had just descended from their perches, and were picking up their dropped bundles. Gomez was plainly in a mighty hurry to be off.

A few seconds later he rode off with his outfit, shouting farewells and warnings to his rescuers.

"He's a rotten sort of bounder to ride that horse of his after it got hurt," Dick exclaimed hotly, as he stared after the vanishing party.

"It was only scratched—more frightened than hurt, my lad," rumbled old Ben. "But you're sure right. Dagoes like Gomez ain't decent-natured fellers by any means. Well, let's get movin' after th' rogue, nevy. We can forget Gomez, but we'll keep our eyes skinned for Wembi's scouts in case they're about, which I don't quite believe. I guess Gomez is a scarey feller."

But old Ben Pain was making an error when he thought Gomez could be forgotten!

THE SECOND CHAPTER The Stampede.

"I HOPE the deuce Gobo didn't understand all that Porteygoose johnny was saying, uncle. You say that you don't believe Chief Wembi's men are anywhere close, but if Gobo tumbled to what that Dago said, he'll make trouble with our porters. He'll get the silly idiots so windy they'll want to bolt."

Dick voiced his uneasiness as he and his uncle sat over the glowing embers of their fire shortly after dusk. In vain they had followed the tracks of the giant rogue for hours, and had at last been forced to camp.

From the dark bush came the laughing cries of hyenas and wails of jackals. Close at hand sounded the jabbering of the porters, huddled over their own fire, listening to the red-fezzed Gobo spinning yarns.

"Gobo's all right, nevy," laughed old Ben, kicking the cinders with his boot. "I don't think he understood Gomez. Why would he want to scare th' porters, anyway?"

"To get 'em to demand more extra pay for going on, uncle," grinned Dick. "Part of which I bet he'd snaffle for himself."

"He might," old Ben rumbled, with a smile at Dick's sagaciousness. "But they'll get no more out o' me. I bargained with 'em to trek for four more days, and they'll thumping well have to! I reckon you're too set against Gobo, my lad. He's an ugly scoundrel, but you can't expect a 'Kamba gun-boy to have a face like a film-actin' dude!"

Dick laughed and said nothing more. He secretly thought that his uncle, being as straight as a die himself, thought everyone else equally honest, and was too trusting.

Time passed. The two hunters turned in; the croaking of Gobo ceased, and soon all the porters were sleeping, too.

Dick awoke suddenly, to hear an alarming crackle, to see half the sky glowing a fiery red, and to smell the pungent odour of vegetation burning.

"Fire, uncle!" he yelled, leaping up and

What the dickens could have started the blaze!" Dick yelled. "By gosh, the porters'll hook it soon!"

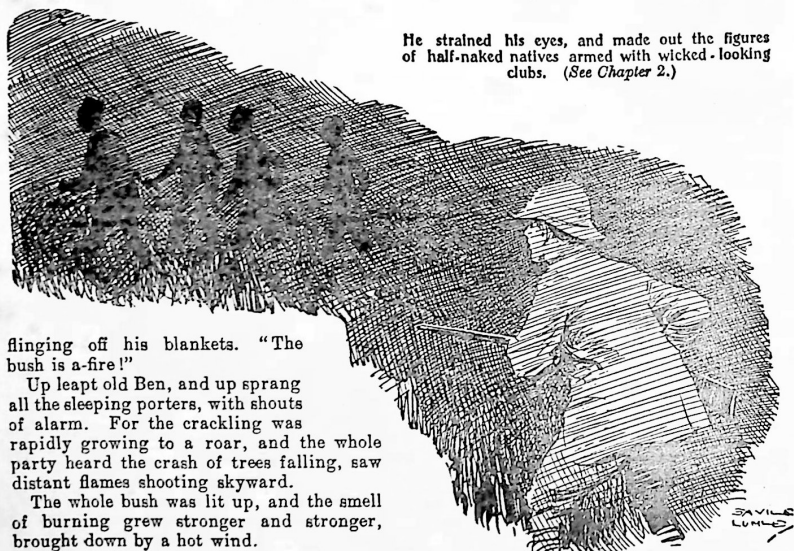
Dick could see the panic-stricken natives grabbing up their bundles. He started towards them, to urge them to retreat calmly, but old Ben's booming voice was already assuring them that they could stop where they were.

"Th' fire won't reach us, Dick!" he shouted to his nephew as both ran towards the porters. "I've just remembered sight-in' a river down yonder before we camped. No bush blaze could cross that stretch o' water. A bush blaze ain't like a forest of big trees burning."

And such was old Ben's power of persuasion, so effective was his calm assurance, that the scared porters squatted down again, watching the orange glow in the sky.

All at once, however, came a new sound. It was the drumming of vast feet, a thunderous tattoo that made the ground shake, and old Ben was alive to the danger.

He strained his eyes, and made out the figures of half-naked natives armed with wicked-looking clubs. (See Chapter 2.)



flinging off his blankets. "The bush is a-fire!"

Up leapt old Ben, and up sprang all the sleeping porters, with shouts of alarm. For the crackling was rapidly growing to a roar, and the whole party heard the crash of trees falling, saw distant flames shooting skyward.

The whole bush was lit up, and the smell of burning grew stronger and stronger, brought down by a hot wind.

"Elephants, Dick!" he roared. "A herd's been stampeded by th' blaze—head-in' this way, too! Run, my lad!"

"Leave yo' loads, Kikuyus!" he bawled to the porters. "Elephants comin'! Run!"

There was really no need for the order. The porters, too, had heard the dreadful drumming, and took to their heels like one man.

But panicking elephants move like galloping horses. Even as old Ben and Dick dashed back to their rifles, which were lying by their blankets, they heard the leaders of the stampede splashing through the river.

The night rang with sound. The blazing bush crackled fiercely; the elephants made thunder with their feet, and their shrill trumpeting seemed to split the air.

The din increased, changing from the dull roll of muffled drums to the roar of ocean breakers smashing on rocks. It was a tempest of sound, pounding rhythmically.

Dick saw the porters go flying past, black scattering figures whooping with fear. He snatched up his rifle, looked round, to see the maddened herd come bursting from the bush.

By the light of the blaze beyond, he saw a shadowy mass rollicking and tossing like a wild sea, saw gleaming tusks, countless upflung trunks.

"No use tryin' to shoot, my lad!" roared old Ben. "You couldn't turn that mob! Run for your life!"

Indeed, it was each man for himself, for the wild herd thundered down on the camp like an avalanche. Dick saw the two horses break away, saw his uncle running, then found himself running, too, half-deafened by the din.

In a second the lad was in the bush, heard the smashing of great bodies against trees, heard a wild trumpeting. Then he heard a jangling roar as the elephants stormed through the deserted camp, stamping chop-boxes flat, crushing cooking-pots and stores.

The whole bush seemed bursting with life, elephants everywhere. Dick, gripping his heavy rifle, didn't know how long he ran, ducking and stumbling; but at last the herd drove on and the sounds ceased.

The frenzied trumpeting died away; to Dick's ears came only the dull boom, boom of the panicking herd, sweeping westward, growing fainter, then vanishing.

"Gosh! What a storm!" gasped Dick to himself. "The fire wasn't dangerous, thanks to the river, but it drove that mad mob clean on top of us. I never got much chance to see if the big rogue was with 'em!" He laughed shortly. "But I hope uncle and the porters got scot free all right."

Sweating, scratched, his clothes rent by great thorns, the plucky lad started to make his way back to the wrecked camp.

It was now dark in the bush, for the fire, checked by the river, had swept away northwards, and Dick could hardly see his way. But he guessed the direction of camp, and struggled forward, halting every few yards to listen.

"I can't be far off now," the lad muttered at last. "I guess I'll try shouting."

He opened his mouth, but no sound burst from his lips. That very instant he saw dim, shadowy shapes creeping ahead of him, strained his eyes, and made out the figures of half-naked natives, armed with wicked-looking clubs.

"Are those some of the Masai bounders Gomez warned us about?" Dick gasped, clutching his rifle. "I'll give that bunch of black beggars beans if they reckon they're going to loot our gear!"

He stole foward, but just then he heard the natives laughing amongst themselves, speaking in a lingo he understood.

"All done finished!" one chuckled grimly. "Old feller white man and him white youth not live for hunt any more. Elephant catch 'um for sure, me think, so—"

A gasp of horror rose in Dick's throat. Despite the darkness, he felt sure he recognised the speaker. Wasn't it Gobo, his uncle's surly, red-fezzed gun-bearer? If so, what was the scoundrel doing with these savages?

"Gobo, you rotter!" Dick howled, and charged forward, forgetting caution.

At once the four natives swung round abruptly, and Dick saw gleaming teeth,

flashing eyeballs, saw upraised clubs. But he rushed on, thinking he had caught Gobo leading savages to loot the wrecked camp.

A yell of fury greeted his approach.

"The white cub lives! Kill 'um!"

"Come on and try, then!" yelled Dick.

He saw the natives rushing at him, heard fierce hisses, then fancied he saw the first speaker dashing off. Was it Gobo, in his red fez? Owing to the bad light, Dick was not quite certain, and at that moment was savagely attacked.

A flung club sang through the air. Dick ducked, heard the missile whistle past his head, then leapt up, brandishing his rifle.

Crack! The heavy weapon came down on a woolly head, and Dick saw its owner stagger back with a howl; saw another come at him, felt a painful thud on his shoulder, then lashed out again with his butt.

Full into the teeth of the second scoundrel smashed Dick's steel-shod wood, knocking the fellow endways, to reel against his staggering comrade.

"Hyenas! Rob a wrecked camp, would you?" roared Dick.

Plainly the lad's hurricane attack surprised the ruffians, for the one who looked like Gobo had fled immediately, and now the damaged pair bolted as well; but the fourth, a strapping big savage, leapt on Dick with a blood-curdling yell.

Dick saw the fellow tower above him, saw the whirling club; tried to guard with his rifle-barrel. He saved his head; but the terrific blow beat his weapon down, and the head of the club thudded on his chest.

"Gosh! Ugh!"

With a strangled shout, the lad staggered backwards; saw the big savage come on with a whoop, and dodged sideways in the nick of time. There was a rush of feet, but the half-naked ruffian missed his aim, and stumbled past Dick blindly.

"Take that, you big brute!" gasped Dick, and lunged with the muzzle of his Express, heard a thick grunt, then saw his attacker double up, winded.

Determined to capture one of the scoundrels, the plucky lad leapt in to grapple. But the savage, though winded, proved a

powerful ruffian, and Dick found himself gripped by steel-like hands.

In vain the lad tried to wield his rifle. The savage had dropped his club, but he seized Dick's rifle-barrel with one hand and gripped the lad's left shoulder with the other.

For a few seconds they wrestled grimly, gasping, churning up the sand with their feet. Dick saw a ferocious, scarred face close to his own, felt the rifle being torn from his grasp, felt himself being forced to his knees. The plucky lad was really no match for a steel-muscled savage.

With a mighty wrench he tore himself free, stood gasping, and the savage leapt in with a shout of triumph.

But at that instant sounded shouts, the hoarse shouts of old Ben searching for his nephew, and promptly Dick's assailant whipped round and made off.

"This way, uncle!" the lad yelled in relief, and tried to give chase.

But he was breathless and battered from the fight, and the hefty savage, running like a stag, vanished in the darkness.

Swiftly the pattering footfalls faded, and the baffled Dick was forced to give up pursuit. He swung round, making towards his uncle, shouting to make his whereabouts known.

"But I've seen that big brute somewhere before," he told himself fiercely. "I recognised that scar on his cheek! Who? Where? Why, I've got it! He was the head porter of that Dago's outfit—of Gomez, the Porteygoose, whom we saved from those lions!"

"Then that bunch, sneaking towards our camp, must have all been the Dago's men—and Gobo was with 'em! Yep, I'm nearly sure I spotted Gobo. What the thump does it mean?"

His brains in a whirl, Dick struggled on to meet his uncle, and soon saw the grizzled old hunter striding through the dim bush towards him.

"Thank goodness you're O.K., uncle! Did all our porter johnnies escape that mad mob of elephants? By gosh, it was like forty earthquakes and an avalanche happening at once!"

"Everyone's safe, m' lad," boomed old Ben. "Though th' brutes made hay o' our camp, an' I'm afraid your hoss has gone for keeps."

"My horse gone!" yelled Dick, in dismay.

Old Ben nodded.

"I fear so, my lad," he rumbled. "My grey beast has come back, but there ain't a sign o' yours anywhere. I thought I heard you bawlin' at somebody, Dick," he went on, but stopped abruptly, then shouted in surprise: "Great guns! What's happened to you, m' lad? You sure look as though you'd been in a gosh awful scrap!"

"You bet I have, uncle," Dick replied, with a grim smile.

"Who with? Did you run against any of those Masai blackguards that Gomez warned us against, my lad? Did you beat off a bunch of Masai single-handed?"

Dick shook his head.

Since thinking to have recognised his hefty assailant to be the Dago's head man, the lad had been racking his brains. And suddenly he thought he had solved the problem which had baffled him; but he asked his uncle a strange question to make sure.

"What sent that mad mob of elephants down on us, uncle?" he cried. "D'you think they'd have come for us if the fire hadn't started?"

"I'm sure they wouldn't have come, my lad," was the surprised reply. "Of course, th' big rogue might ha' stirred 'em up and made 'em fightin' mad if he'd been there, but he wasn't. No, th' fire stampeded th' brutes on us."

"And what started the fire?" cried Dick.

"Blowed if I now, m' lad!" old Ben exclaimed irritably. "Mebbe some wanderin' natives started it by accident. Oh, by gosh! Mebbe Masai blackguards did it a-purpose, to blot us out!"

"You're wrong, uncle!" cried Dick. "I bet 'twas Gomez!"

"Gomez! That Portuguese feller we rescued!"

"Yes, Gomez!" Dick nodded grimly. "I reckon he wants us out of the way for some

rummy reason, uncle. What's more, I'm almost certain that Gobo—your gun-boy—is in with the bounder!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER

The Bullet Speaks True!

THERE was a moment's dead silence. Old Ben stared blankly at his dishevelled nephew, wondering if the lad had been hurt in the awful stampede, and his brain been affected. Then he burst out:

"What in thunder makes you think Gomez is hangin' about, an' tryin' to fix us, Dick? As for Gobo, I've just seen th' fellow at our camping-ground, tryin' to clear up th' mess and round up th' porters."

"Because he hooked off when I spotted him, uncle!" cried Dick. "But the other beggars came for me. The biggest was a hefty black scoundrel, and I'm sure I recognised as the Dago's boss 'boy.' I recognised a scar across one cheek. I tried to hang on to him, but he was as strong as an ox, and made a bolt when he heard you shouting."

Dick described the scrap, relating how he had seen the natives creeping towards the wrecked camp, and how at first he had thought they were out for plunder.

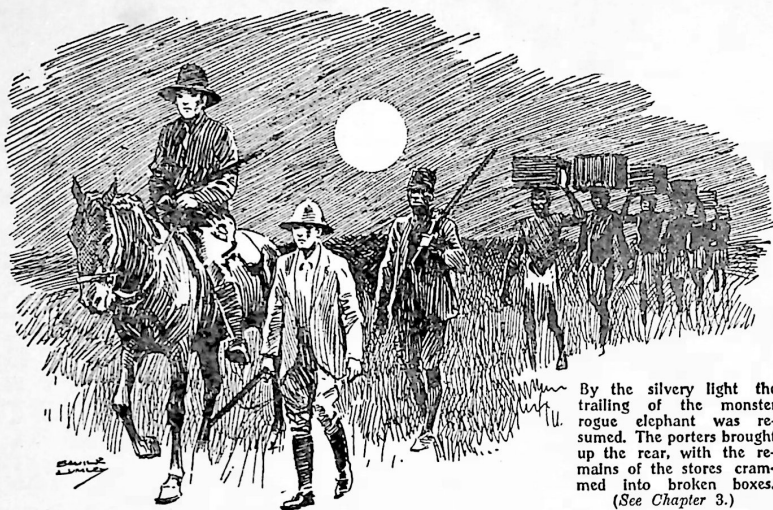
"But I heard one rotter laughing because he reckoned the elephants had scuppered us both," the lad ended angrily. "So it's plain the herd was driven down in hopes that it would smash us. And the rotter I heard laughing was Gobo!"

Old Ben uttered a gasp of anger, then he swung round and beckoned Dick to follow him.

"If you're right, my lad," he barked, "I'll give Gobo a thunderin' good hiding and sack him instanter."

Hastily, both forced their way back to their camping ground through the dim, spiked thorn-bush. Soon they heard voices, then emerged to see the porters amongst the wreckage of broken cases, dismally trying to pick up the pieces. And they saw the red-fezzed Gobo in the midst, snarling, and growling to the fellows to hustle.

"Oh, yes, you do um plenty fine work



By the silvery light the trailing of the monster rogue elephant was resumed. The porters brought up the rear, with the remains of the stores crammed into broken boxes. (See Chapter 3.)

now, Gobo," Dick yelled, leaping forward. "But what for you skulk along bush with um Porteygoose's fellers?"

Round spun Gobo, and Dick fancied he saw a look of alarm and surprise on the scowling gun-boy's face. Doubtless, he told himself, Gobo thought the other natives had settled him in the bush.

But Gobo's face became a blank mask in a second.

"Me go along bush, master?" he croaked. "Me no understand. No see Porteygoose's men. Me run from elephants along with um porters; bring um back here, then live for work one-time."

Dick glared at the gun-boy, wondering if he could possibly have made a mistake.

"You see, my lad?" broke in old Ben. "Gobo denies your charges. Can you swear you saw him?"

"It was too dark to be dead certain, uncle," Dick growled in perplexity. "But I'm almost certain! I reckon Gobo spotted Gomez hanging on our tracks while we were still trailing the big rogue, and he guessed the Dago was up to some monkey tricks.

It would be easy for him to slip off while we slept, and tell the bouncer just where we had camped. And I'm plumb sure I recognised the Dago's boss 'boy.'"

"But you can't swear to Gobo, my lad," old Ben persisted. "So you can't accuse him on chance. As for th' ruffians who attacked you, they may ha' been Masai, after all. Plenty o' Masai ha' got scars on their faces, an' Gomez warned us against th' beggars.

"Anyway, Dick," he ended decisively, "why should Gomez want to blot us? Th' fellow can't have any grudge against us. Why, we saved him an' his outfit from th' lions!"

Dick couldn't answer that question. Although he racked his brains, he could think of no reason why the Portuguese should want to get rid of them. Without a motive, the charge against Gomez seemed indeed thin.

Nevertheless, Dick secretly felt certain that Gomez was up against them, that he knew of the presence of the elephants, and had sent his men to start a bush fire to

windward of the herd. He told himself that Gobo was in the Dago's pay, had sold information of the exact locality of the camp, and had brought the fellow's men round after the stampede to make sure that himself and his uncle had been crushed to death.

But Dick could prove nothing, so he resolved to hold his tongue at present.

"But you'd best watch Gobo, uncle," he declared. "I've got a hunch he means to play us a trick the first chance he gets."

"I guess you made a mistake owin' to th' darkness, my lad," rumbled old Ben. "Gomez can't have anythin' against us either. It looks to me as though you were attacked by Masai—scouts o' Chief Wembi's—so th' sooner we bag that big rogue and clear out o' this country th' better."

Dick was all for pushing ahead again on the monster rogue's trail, so the wreckage of the camp was cleared up as fast as possible. With some of the porters, Dick made a frantic search for his horse, but the terrified beast had plainly gone for good.

Old Ben, meanwhile, scouted round for the rogue's tracks, and soon picked them up. Then hurried back to his nephew.

"It's just as I told you, nevvie," he boomed. "Th' big rogue never went near th' herd—must ha' been miles from here when they stampeded on us."

"Rogue elephants seldom mix with herds, as I told you before; and the one we're after is sure a surly, vicious old brute, sloggin' off on his own. But he must be a whopper!"

"Then let's get on, uncle!" Dick whooped eagerly.

The big African moon had risen, hanging low in the blue-black sky, like a Japanese lantern; by the silvery light the trailing of the monster rogue elephant was resumed.

In front rode old Ben, his light rifle ready across his saddle, Dick walking at his uncle's side, gripping his heavy double-barrelled Express. Close behind the hunters slouched Gobo, carrying old Ben's heavier weapon, his black face absolutely expressionless. The porters brought up the rear with the remains of the stores crammed into broken boxes.

There was even greater need for haste now, for some of the party's food had been ruined in the stampede. Also old Ben feared that Masai might be on their tracks; but Dick told himself that Gomez was the only enemy. He was sure that Gobo was a traitor, and cast several glances back at the gun-boy.

The rest of the night passed uneventfully, however. The tracks of the huge rogue elephant were quite easy to see by moonlight, and the party trailed on at a smart pace.

Towards dawn they found themselves nearing mountainous country. The bush gave place to belts of thick jungle, with broad grass-covered glades in between. Trampled grass and broken trees told of the rogue's passage, and suddenly old Ben pulled up with a warning hiss.

"I reckon we're gettin' close to th' brute now, Dick," he whispered. "These tracks look quite fresh to me, so keep your eyes and ears skinned, my lad. Th' brute might be waitin' for us!"

Old Ben twisted in his saddle, took his heavy elephant gun from Gobo, chucked over his light rifle, and motioned to the porters to keep well back.

Stealthily the hunters went on again, and young Dick thrilled in every nerve. They were close on the monster's heels. Gomez, Gobo, and possible Masai raiding parties were temporarily forgotten.

In a few minutes the eastern sky grew grey, then pink. Then the African sun shot above the tree-tops like a ball of fire, revealing patches of dense jungle all round.

"I shouldn't be surprised if th' brute's skulkin' in yonder patch," old Ben breathed softly. "Rogues are mighty cunning!"

A wild scream of pain cut old Ben short. It rang out from behind a clump of trees on the hunters' right, wild and hair-raising.

"Great guns!" roared old Ben. "Th' brute must be circlin' round, an' has collared a native. 'Come on, Dick!'"

Away galloped the old hunter, Dick pounding alongside as hard as he could, with Gobo panting in the rear. Louder grew the wild screams, sounding as though the

rogue elephant had caught some native and was tussling him to death.

Horrified, Dick tore on, rounded the belt of trees almost together with his uncle; then came on a sight that made him shout.

For the two hunters saw no elephant at all! Instead, they saw half a dozen miserable natives, tied together with ropes round their necks, being flogged along by two fierce-looking savages.

And behind the roped natives strode a swarthy little man in white man's clothing, beating the prisoners on with his rifle-butt. It was the screams of the prisoners that had drawn Dick and his uncle that had also drowned the sounds of the hunters' approach.

At the latter's shouts, however, the "white" man spun round, revealing a yellow, hawk-like face.

"Gomez!" howled Dick.

"Gomez it is! You were right, my lad!" boomed old Ben. "And the scoundrel's a slave-driver! He's hooked those poor wretches out o' some kraal."

Gomez, the Portuguese, it indeed was, and he let fly a yell of fury.

The cat was out of the bag with a vengeance. Plainly Gomez was a slave-hunter, raiding kraals, selling his captives to wandering Arabs—hence his keen desire to remove Dick and old Ben from his path.

"Aha! You 'ave come!" he screamed.

Even as he yelled the swarthy Dago whipped up his rifle, aimed swiftly at Dick, and pulled the trigger. But Dick ducked, the bullet whistling past his head. Dick took a pot-shot at the Dago's legs, missed by an inch, then charged on, together with his uncle.

Immediately the two spearmen fled, and Dick saw the rescued prisoners turn on the Dago with fierce yells. But Gomez evaded them, took to his heels and ran like a hare.

"Great guns! He's running up th' rogue's trail!" shouted old Ben. "If th' brute's in there, he'll— Stop! Stop, you fool, Gomez! I guess there's a rogue elephant in those trees!"

But Gomez tore on, not listening to a

word. Old Ben thundered in pursuit, determined to catch the scoundrel if possible, and Dick pounded along in the rear.

Hrrmph! Hrrmph! The shrill trumpeting of a furious elephant sounded from the trees, followed by a mighty crashing; then Dick saw the jungle burst apart, saw a giant slate-grey monster come charging out. Then it sighted the Dago, and thundered down on him.

Dick heard Gomez shriek, saw him twist aside, bolting for his life like a hunted rabbit. He saw the monster charge down relentlessly, tusks gleaming, his great feet making thunder on the earth. Then—

A last yell burst from Gomez's lips. But before uncle or nephew could fire, the rogue was on its victim. Dick saw the trunk sweep down, saw it wrap round the Dago like a steel cable, then saw the wretch swung skyward, arms and legs kicking helplessly.

Crash! Gomez was hurled far, struck the ground with a thud, and then lay motionless.

Old Ben reined in, whipping up his heavy rifle. Dick, still running on, got his own ready. That very instant the rogue swerved, sighted new victims, and began a fresh charge.

"Plug the brute, uncle!" roared Dick, breathlessly.

And Dick saw his uncle raise his weapon, saw the great beast thundering down, but—heard no report!

Something seemed wrong with old Ben's rifle, and the horrified Dick saw his uncle was helpless!

For a second old Ben's grey horse seemed spellbound with fear, then whipped round, to come galloping back towards Dick, with old Ben helpless on its back!

It was a nerve-racking sight, for the screaming monster was gaining on the old hunter at every stride.

"Out o' th' way, Dick!" bawled old Ben. "I'm done! Climb a tree!"

But Dick stood his ground, teeth clenched, eyes flashing! He saw horse and rider whirl up abreast of him, saw the terrible monster within a few yards of the horse's heels.

Boom! A dull thud told of the hit. It was a blow delivered by a modern Express cordite rifle, and the monster was checked, stricken through his lungs.

Boom! Again thundered Dick's rifle, the shock of recoil causing the lad to stagger.

But the bullet sped true. With a dull crash the elephant stumbled to his knees, rolled over, then lay motionless. Dick's second bullet was in his brain, and he was stone-dead before he hit the ground.

"Got him!" yelled Dick. "Got the rogue, uncle! By gosh, look at his tusks!"

The rogue's tusks were enormous, and old Ben swung to the ground and came running to grip his nephew's hand and thump him on the back.

"Fine, Dick! If you hadn't stood your ground I'd ha' been a goner, my lad! An' you've bagged th' biggest elephant in Africa—in the world!"

"But what happened to your gun, uncle?" Dick cried.

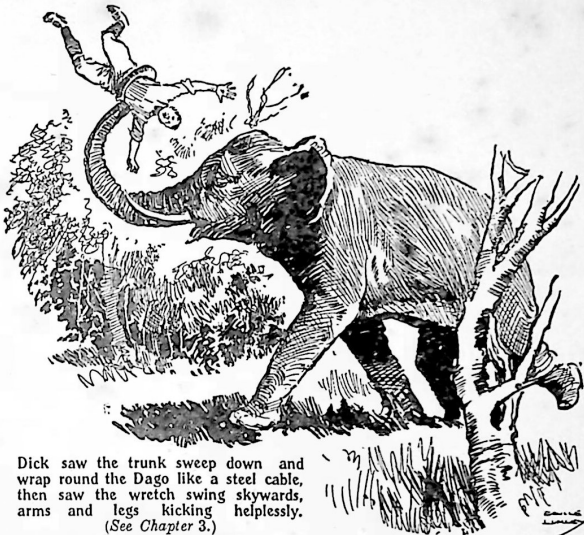
Old Ben broke his heavy weapon open, revealing an empty breech!

"Look there! No cartridges, my lad!" he roared. "Gobo took 'em out before he gave me the gun, for I know I loaded it. You must ha' been right about Gobo all along, as you were about Gomez. He was a rotten traitor, and wanted me to be done in."

"And, of course, the reason for Gomez wantin' to get rid of us is plain. Being a slave-raider, he feared we'd queer his games,

and his yarns about Chief Wembi and Masai scouts were all lies. You were right all along, my lad, and I wish I'd believed you. It nearly cost me my life that I didn't!"

But not until the two hunters had gone back and found Gobo's body did they find proof of Gobo's treachery. A number of Portuguese coins trickling from the



Dick saw the trunk sweep down and wrap round the Dago like a steel cable, then saw the wretch swing skywards, arms and legs kicking helplessly. (See Chapter 3.)

wretch's pockets told that he must indeed have been bribed by the Dago, who had accidentally shot him!

"To give away our campin'-ground, Dick," snorted old Ben. "And to hocus my gun. Of course, Gomez sent th' herd down on us, too!"

"No matter! Africa's well rid of a slave-raider's Dago, and you've bagged th' biggest rogue that ever walked!"

Then they rounded up the porters, hacked out the mighty tusks, and started back for Nairobi with enough elephant meat to see them through, thanks to Dick's pluck and smart shooting.

The Battle of Greyfriars!



It was a summer evening ;
Old Gosling's work was done.
Glum and morose, he walked the Close,
Watching our schoolboy fun.
Then he perceived that he was beckoned
By Master Nugent, of the Second.

" Oh, Gosling, look what I have found ! "
Exclaimed the little fellow.
And Gosling took a pensive look
At something hard and yellow.
" 'Tis some poor fellow's tooth," said he,
" Who fought in that great victory.

" I find them often in the Close,
For there's many hereabout ;
An' when I sweep in snowdrifts deep,
My broomstick turns 'em out.
For many an ivory tusk," said he,
" Was lost in that great victory."

" Now tell me what 'twas all about ! "
The eager fag, he cries ;
And there he stands, with outstretched hands
And wonder-waiting eyes.
" Now tell me all about this war,
And what they fought each other for ! "

" 'Twas the Removites," Gosling said,
" Who put the Fifth to rout ;
But why they fought, an' fiercely wrought,
I could not well make out.
" But everybody said," quoth he,
" It was a famous victory !

" I watched the battle from my lodge ;
The Fifth were soon in trouble,
For eyes were blacked an' heads were cracked,
An' noses swollen double !
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

" They say it was a shockin' sight
After the Fifth's surrender,
An' Doctor Locke had such a shock
He birched each chief offender.
A painful sequel, you'll agree,
To that most famous victory ! "