

# KING DON:

A STORY OF MILITARY LIFE IN INDIA.

....BY MAJOR ALLAN....

**CHAPTER I.**

Don Gordon came out of the mess-room of the regiment at Rawal Pindi and, vaulting the horse his native servant held in readiness for him, took his way through the balmy Indian spring evening toward the pretty bungalow of Capt. Derwent of the Gordon Highlanders.

Don's pale cheek was flushed, and he carried his slim young figure, in its Kharki uniform, with more of its old majestic swagger than had characterized it for many weeks, for he had been twice in hospital since he had volunteered from home for active service on the frontier with the first battalion of the Sherwood Foresters.

He had only now just recovered from a severe gunshot wound from an Afridi rifle, received whilst leading a score of his brave Derbyshire company on a foraging expedition.

But the exhilaration of hope more than of renewed health was accountable for his springing step and the light in his large brown eyes.

The British maid had brought him a letter from his cousin Roddy, which afforded him much satisfaction, for it contained the announcement of Roddy's engagement to Don's sister, Diana, thereby setting at rest forever a lurking fear in Don's heart that Roddy's thoughts were centered on Capt. Derwent's fair daughter, Lillie.

The "White Lily," she was not inaptly called in the cantonment, whither she had accompanied her father from Aldershot some months gone by.

Don rode at a brisk canter through the lines toward the green compound, where teak and peupul trees rose darkly against the clear blue sky, and the red fireflies flashed in and out among the slender shafts of the graceful bamboos.

But in the mind's eye of the soldier it was another scene which suddenly rose before him.

He seemed to see a beloved and lovely landscape in fair Aberdeenshire. He heard the murmur of a river and the song of thrushes from the privet hedges. He looked upon the lordly Scottish home of Gadie Ha', to which he had grown up from infancy to believe himself the heir, and his grip on his mare's rein tightened, and the still unconquered bitterness of fierce disappointment swept his heart anew.

His mother's deathbed confession had proved his foster-brother, Roddy, to be the heir; but it was not against Roddy that Don felt any personal grievance—Roddy, one of the gay Gordon Highlanders with whom he had fought side by side through the recent campaign of the Tirah field force, and who had heroically saved Don's life in the deadly thick of battle.

No; it was against the cruelty of circumstances which had robbed him at one fell blow of rank and wealth and that natural case so dear to his inmost soul.

For "King Don," as his brother officers jokingly termed him, was born to rule with a high-handed self-righteousness, and to his proud spirit disinclination had well-nigh been more bitter than death. His uncle, the present Laird of Gadie, might still allow him ample means out of the Gadie revenues; but to Don it were small compensation for his forfeited rights of heirship.

He might yet succeed in winning the peerless, heiress, Lillie Derwent, for his bride; but as Don knew in his secret heart, it was only when Lillie Derwent had unexpectedly become an heirless his thoughts had ever turned to her with anything akin to love, and once already he had well merited her rejection of his proposal.

Alas! and alas! for it was love's acutest suffering alone was to prove to Don at last.

Not to understand a treasure's worth Till time has stolen away the slightest good,

Is cause for half the poverty we feel, And makes world the wilderness it is.

As Don neared his destination he rode forward more slowly, for he was now conscious of a little quickening of his pulse.

In the circle of home society, an already disappointed man would scarcely return to his fair one, like a moth to a candle, after a lapse of months; but circumstanced as he and Lillie were, now cast for the time being together in a foreign land, matters seemed very different.

Capt. Derwent was absent with the field force; Lillie was alone in a strange country, at present sharing her bungalow with the young widow and baby boy of an officer recently killed on the front, and to whom Lillie's heart had gone out in deepest sympathy.

Don was subtly conscious that the Lillie Derwent of to-day was a very different Lillie from the coquette who had toyed in the past with his Cousin Roddy's boyish love, or even the Lillie who had repudiated his own offer of marriage with such scorn. For he realized now that Lillie had come to know the solace of reliance upon that Divine Anchor, whose storm-tossed souls are never shipwrecked.

Don knew himself to be but a rudderless barque, drifting on a shoreless sea; but though faith awoke no responsive echo in his own heart, he admired Lillie none the less for the change which had made her a truer

and nobler woman than the thoughtless, somewhat heartless maiden of the past.

The interest she had manifested in his—Don's—convalescence, and his career altogether, lent impetus to the thought that she would not refuse him her hand a second time.

Marriage with Lillie would mean to him affluence equal to the rent rolls of Gadie, and—well, he admired Lillie as much as Don felt it incumbent upon him to admire any one, to the exclusion of the overruling idol of his life, and that was self.

But it was almost with the air of an ardent lover Don drew rein before the spacious white house surrounded by a cool veranda, between whose slender columns green blinds of split bamboo excluded the heat of the sun by day.

"Yes, the memsahib was at home," he was informed by the durwan—door-keeper—who hurried to his summons.

A gong was banged to announce a visitor, and thereupon another native, red-turbaned and white-caftaned, appeared on the threshold and salaamed Don Gordon through the white vestibule toward a delightful apartment, which proved to be untenanted. It was a veritable lady's boudoir, furnished with European taste and Oriental splendor combined.

On the walls were dotted valuable prints in English frames, which Don remembered to have adorned Capt. Derwent's private quarters at home. They had a touch of pathos as seen in conjunction with the great gilded punkah which hung overhead.

About the room were scattered the books and thousand and one knick-knacks which betrayed that even in far northeastern India an English lady must have her drawing-room. It is her own especial kingdom, where she can gather together and enshrine in constant remembrance all the pretty trifles which make up the larger comforts of the mother country.

Don Gordon, standing in the center of the room for an instant irresolute, took in all the details at a glance. Then he walked to the large window opening into a garden. It was still light enough for the lamps to be unlit, and the scent of the orange blossoms and the tuberoses stole softly in on the air.

He was usually self-governed to a fault; but the sight of this English room had stirred anew deep thoughts of that distant Scottish home he took himself he could never bear to look upon again.

A silk curtain which draped the door suddenly rustled, and, turning quickly, Don found the girl he had come to see advancing to meet him.

Lillie Derwent wore a simple gown of washing silk, which came close about her slender throat; but it was of spotless white, and the fine mold of her sloping shoulders and rounded arms showed dazlingly through its delicate texture, and her abundant golden hair formed a coronet with which no jewels could have vied.

As he looked at her Don felt his heart stirred with admiration, for she was a vision of loveliness of which any man might be proud, much more a would-be lover.

And Lillie, who shall say what were her swift thoughts of the tall, slim soldier, looking doubly handsome at that moment in his Kharki uniform, one hand holding his helmet, the other resting lightly on the hilt of his sword.

The next instant the helmet was laid on the floor, and he was taking both her hands and retaining them, with an unmistakable emotion.

"I hope you don't mind me coming so awfully late, Miss Derwent; but I was on duty off and on till mess, and then some fellows detained me so long till I had simply to rush away and ride here post haste."

She smiled as she seated herself on a divan and motioned him to a chair near her.

"But, indeed, it is not at all late, and I am very pleased to see you, Capt. Gordon." Then she added, with a spice of her old coquetry: "And what urgent necessity that could not wait another day brought you here post haste?"

Don felt his breath come quicker, for, despite those visits and presents of fruit and invalid dainties with which she had honored him in hospital, he was not at all sure how high in her esteem he had reached.

"I fear I made it a point of necessity," he answered bluntly; "but I had a letter from home today, Miss Derwent, and—and the fact is I couldn't sleep till I'd had five minutes' private conversation with you. You won't refuse me it?" he broke off, with a look in his dark eyes she could not mistake.

She flushed and looked down before that ardent gaze.

"Mrs. Franklin is always engaged with Cecil and his ayah just now," she said softly. "We shall not be disturbed."

Don rose and drew his chair nearer hers; but the tete-a-tete was disturbed in a very commonplace way neither had thought of at that tense moment.

Darkness had suddenly set in, for there is no twilight in India. A servant was noiselessly lighting the lamps, and the huge punkah had begun to swing to and fro overhead to temper the added heat.

It was when tea and coffee were be-

ing served Lillie broke the somewhat awkward silence which had fallen upon her visitor and herself by saying sotto voce:

"I think one thing that makes one appreciate Indian life is to have one's comforts attended to as these natives do it. Really, we cannot rely upon such faithful service from our own countrymen."

It was the keynote for Don's waiting eloquence.

"That's rather rough on present company, is it not?" he objected. "You know, or you ought to know, Miss Derwent, I am ready to serve you anywhere in the wide world."

She blushed crimson.

"Oh, but you misconstrue my meaning altogether, Capt. Gordon. I was only talking of hired service, not—"

She stopped in some confusion and hurriedly added: "Not friendship," whilst she blushed deeper than ever.

Don put up his right hand with a little gesture of languid beseeching as he poised his tiny cup of coffee in his left palm and leaned back restfully in his softly cushioned chair, for that bright blush, which made his hostess look so bewitching, had added much to his composure and confidence.

Yes, she was really very pretty, and he was not sure but that he loved her very deeply indeed.

"Don't throw the devotion of your slave back in his face by calling it friendship," he said. "Lillie!" He laid down his cup now, and leaned toward her to get a glimpse of the fair face behind the fan she had opened and was fluttering nervously.

"Lillie, won't you believe me? You hold my happiness in your hands; my life is yours to do what you will with; but I want my wages as much as any one of your natives—I want the gift of this hand and the heart that owns it!"

He had risen now, and standing over her, had imprisoned the white fingers that held the fan with a masterful air that bespoke all the ardor of a determined lover. Did Lillie's thoughts fly back to another night in the far past, when thus another Gordon had stood over her and claimed the love he believed to be his?

But this was not the same Lillie who had allowed Roddy Gordon to think her heart won to his keeping who looked up now in the eyes of Roddy's kinsman.

Love had taught her its mystic lesson, and she knew now that it was to Don Gordon alone her heart must be surrendered for all time.

**CHAPTER II.**

And Don must have read that unspoken confession, for suddenly he sank down on the divan beside her, and his arm went round her and drew her golden head to his shoulder.

"You will promise to be my wife, Lillie?" he whispered.

Despite its tenderness, the question lacked the passion for which her own great love clamored, and she answered it with another, of shy hesitation:

"Don, do you really, truly love me?"

Don bent his lips to hers with an ardor that carried conviction with it, for the moment was full of intoxicating sweetness, and till now he had cherished his freedom too dearly to know anything of the rapture of "love's young dream."

"My darling," he spoke, reproachfully, "don't shame me with the remembrance of that day when I asked you to be the future mistress of Gadie Ha'!"

The ignominy of that hour, when Don knew he justly deserved her repudiation, was too indelibly branded upon his memory to be ever altogether effaced. Lillie's eyes filled with quick tears for having caused her lover that momentary pang.

"Oh, indeed, I never meant to do that, Don!" she cried, generously, "only—"

"Only?" he repeated, with a jealous note of inquiry. "Don't tell me, Lillie, for pity's sake, that you care a scrap for that happy fellow, Roddy?"

(To be Continued.)

**BASELESS FABRIC OF A DREAM.**

Conviert's Illusion of Freedom and Wealth Ruthlessly Dispelled.

The day of my discharge has come. How happy I am. How proud I feel as I stand with my face to the wall near the cellulose door, awaiting the summons to go to the storeroom to change my clothes. It seems that the men will never cease their tramp, tramp, as they file from the cellulose on the way to the shops. But the last of them finally goes out the door and I am hustled to the storeroom. I array myself in my "store" clothes, then make my way, eager and trembling with excitement, to the front office. There, after a few preliminaries, I am handed my discharge and my money and joyfully go forth to battle once more with the world. How brightly the sun shines. How fresh and invigorating the air. It actually smelled better than the air behind those ugly frowning walls. And now that I am once again free where will I go and what will I do? Ah! a thought strikes me. I have not yet breakfasted. Where is there a good restaurant? Right down the street. I enter and give an order that makes the waiter stare in astonishment. Ha, ha! He will stare harder than that when he sees me get outside of that breakfast. Beefsteak, fried potatoes, eggs, ham, hot rolls, butter, coffee, and— But while the cook is hustling around making ready the feast I will take a drink. Is there a saloon near? Yes. Just two doors below. Thither I go and feeling rich enough (for haven't I twenty-five big American dollars in my pocket?) I ask everybody up to drink. All accept. The drinks are placed on the bar. The barkeeper is making change for a ten, we raise the glasses to our lips, and— Clang! Clang!! Clang!!! goes the gong, and I rise and dress, and, as usual, go to my daily grind.—Minnesota Prison Mirror.

**A DIVORCEE AT ELEVEN.**

A Child-Wife Who Had a Sad Experience.

A curious matrimonial case came the other day before the district court at Simferopol. A bride of a few months' standing and of eleven years of age sued her husband for desertion and the non-fulfillment of a pre-nuptial contract. Both parties were Tartars. The child-wife is described as a prepossessing girl of shy demeanor.

Although desertion was proved, the court held that the marriage was, in the eyes of Russian law, invalid, but it pronounced for the pre-nuptial contract, under which the plaintiff was to receive a dower of £1,000. The defendant was a well-to-do farmer and sheep breeder, and was just three times the age of his repudiated wife.—London Mail.

**The State Defined.**

The state is not organized, nor is it used primarily to protect capital and oppress and enslave the masses. The state is legalized government, which came into existence and has been constantly subject to modification, to protect the community or country from molestation from without and to maintain order and protect the interests and rights as evolved by the character development and consensus of opinion of the people. The state does protect capital and property; it has perhaps been oppressive to the masses, and has sometimes legalized slavery; but these acts are always incident to order and in accordance with the consensus of opinion and development of character of the people in that community or country where they are enacted; and just as fast as this consensus of opinion changes the laws are modified.—Guntson's Magazine.

**Some Visual Measurements.**

"When I watch a new building going up day by day, from foundation to flag-staff," said the city salesman, "I get so muddled by the time it is completed that I cannot tell for the life of me whether it is 50 feet wide or 500 feet. So far as mere visual measurements go, the size varies so much in the course of construction that confusion is unavoidable. When the excavation seems so enormous that I could take oath it covers a ten-acre lot. After the steel framework goes up the building shrinks amazingly, and I say to myself, 'Well, that isn't going to be such a big affair, after all. How could my eyes have deceived me so when looking at the excavation?' But when the walls are finished and the windows in, and the decorations all stuck in place, the whole building swells out again prodigiously."—New York Times.

**PUTNAM FADELESS DYES** do not stain the hands or spot the kettle, except green and purple.

Many men boast of their honesty, but only women return borrowed umbrellas.

**Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup.** For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, soothes a bottle.

There is lots of love in the world, and people are as true and good as other people will let them be.

For "Timber and Stone" and "Homestead" claims in Idaho, Washington, Oregon or Utah, write West Coast Lumbering Co., 311 Sykes Bldg., Minneapolis.

Founders of large fortunes are usually too mean to enjoy them.



## Home Duties

The real heroines of every day are in our homes. Frequently, however, it is a mistake and useless heroism. Women seem to listen to every call of duty except the supreme one that tells them to guard their health. How much harder the daily tasks become when some derangement of the female organs makes every movement painful and keeps the nervous system unstrung? Irritability takes the place of happiness and amiability; and weakness and suffering takes the place of health and strength. As long as they can drag themselves around, women continue to work and perform their household duties. They have been led to believe that suffering is necessary because they are women. What a mistake!

The use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will banish pain and restore happiness. Don't resort to strong stimulants or narcotics when this great strengthening, healing remedy for women is always within reach.

**FREE MEDICAL ADVICE TO WOMEN.**

If there is anything in your case about which you would like special advice, write freely to Mrs. Pinkham. No man will see your letter. She can surely help you, for no person in America has such a wide experience in treating female ills as she has had. She has helped hundreds of thousands of women back to health. Her address is Lynn, Mass., and her advice is free. You are very foolish if you do not accept her kind invitation.

### For proof read the symptoms, suffering and cure recited in the following letters:

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I wish to express to you the great benefit I have derived from your advice and the use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. My trouble was female weakness in its worst form and I was in a very bad condition. I could not perform my household duties, my back ached, I was extremely nervous, and I could not eat or sleep, and the bearing-down pains were terrible. My husband spent hundreds of dollars to get me well, and all the medicine that the doctors prescribed failed to do me any good; I resorted to an operation which the physician said was necessary to restore me to health, but I suffered more after it than I did before; I had hemorrhages of the womb that nothing could seem to stop.

"I noticed one of your advertisements and wrote you for advice, I received your reply and carefully followed all instructions. I immediately began to get stronger, and in two weeks was about the house. I continued following your advice, and to-day I am a well woman. Your remedies and help are a Godsend to suffering women, and I cannot find words to thank you for what you have done for me."—Mrs. LOTTIE V. NAYLOR, 1328 N. J. Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I write to tell you what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me.

"I was suffering with falling of the womb and could hardly drag about, but after taking five bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I was completely cured. I am now a well woman and able to do all my work.

"I think your medicine one of the best remedies in the world."—Mrs. J. M. LEE, 141 Lyndal St., Newcastle, Pa.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done a great deal for me. I suffered so much from falling of the womb and all the troubles connected with it. I doctored for years with doctors and other remedies but received only temporary relief.

"I began taking your medicine, and had not taken it long before I was feeling better. My husband said that I should keep right on taking it as long as it gave me relief from my suffering, as I could not expect to be cured by one or two bottles. I did so and am now able to be on my feet and work hard all day, and go to bed and rest at night. Thanks to your Vegetable Compound I am certainly grateful for the relief it gave me. It is the mother's great friend. I would not be without it in my house, for when I feel tired or out of sorts I take a few doses and feel all right.

"I would recommend your medicine to all tired mothers, and especially to those suffering as I was."—Mrs. R. F. CHAMBERS, Bennet, Neb.

**\$5000 FORFEIT** if we cannot forthwith produce the original letters and signatures of above testimonials, which will prove their absolute genuineness.

Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass.

## THE MEN AND WOMEN

Who Enjoy the Choicest Products of the World's Commerce.

Knowledge of What is Best More Important Than Wealth Without It.

It must be apparent to every one that qualities of the highest order are necessary to enable the best of the products of modern commerce to attain permanently universal acceptance. However loudly heralded, they may not hope for world-wide preeminence unless they meet with the general approval, not of individuals only, but of the many who have the happy faculty of selecting, enjoying and learning the real worth of the choicest products. Their commendation, consequently, becomes important to others, since to meet the requirements of the well informed of all countries the method of manufacture must be of the most perfect order and the combination the most excellent of its kind. The above is true not of food products only, but is especially applicable to medicinal agents and after nearly a quarter of a century of growth and general use the excellent remedy, Syrup of Figs, is everywhere accepted, throughout the world, as the best of family laxatives. Its quality is due not only to the excellence of the combination of the laxative and carminative principles of plants known to act most beneficially on the system and presented in the form of a pleasant and refreshing liquid, but also to the method of manufacture of the California Fig Syrup Co., which ensures that uniformity and purity essential in a remedy intended for family use. Ask any physician who is well informed and he will answer at once that it is an excellent laxative. It is at all eminent in his profession and has made a special study of laxatives and their effects upon the system he will tell you that it is the best of family laxatives, because it is simple and wholesome and cleanses and sweetens the system effectually, when a laxative is needed, without any unpleasant after-effects. Every well-informed druggist of reputable standing knows that Syrup of Figs is an excellent laxative and is glad to sell it at the regular price of fifty cents per bottle, because it gives general satisfaction, but one should remember that in order to get the beneficial effects of Syrup of Figs it is necessary to buy the genuine, which is sold in original packages only; the name of the remedy—Syrup of Figs and also the full name of the Company—California Fig Syrup Co.—printed on the front of every package.

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