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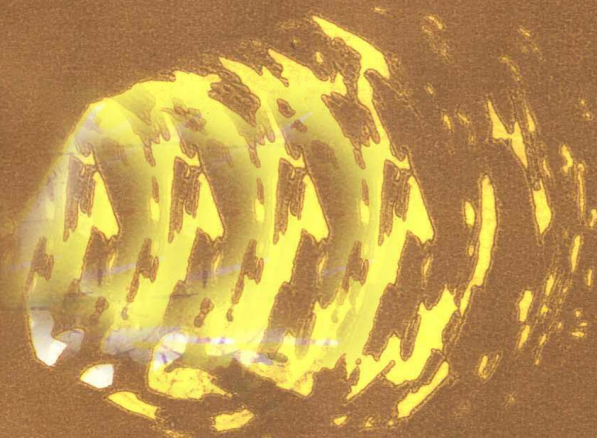
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外语教学与研究出版社

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简易英语注释读物

King Solomon's Mines

所罗门王的宝藏

(简写本)

Sir H. Rider Haggard 原著

Michael West 简写

胡曰健 注释

外语教学与研究出版社

1982年·北京

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本书简介

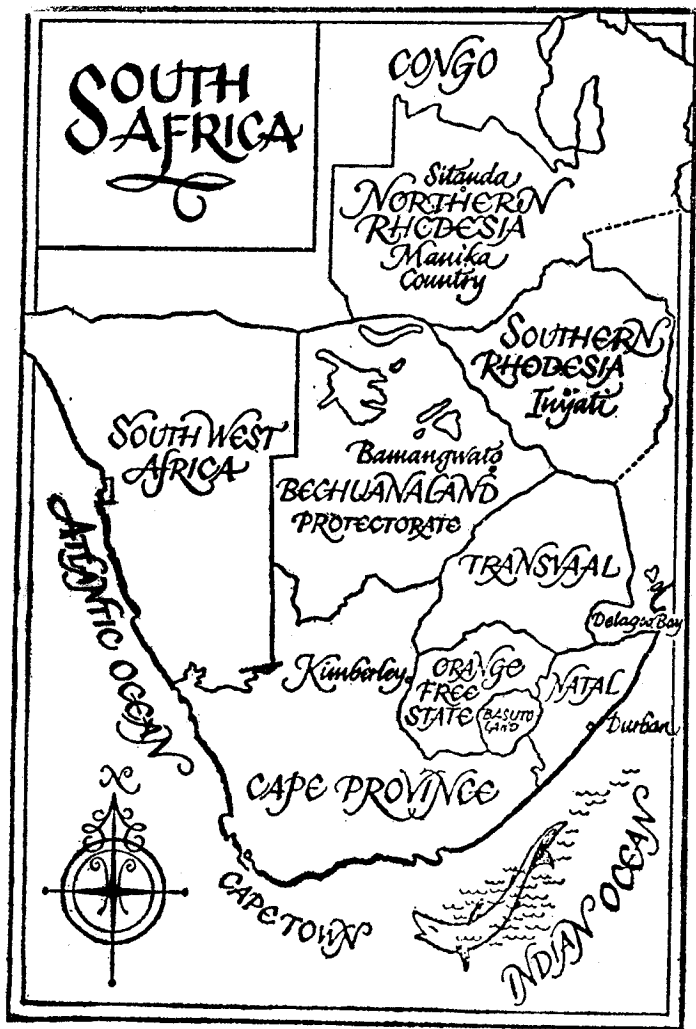
《所罗门王的宝藏》一书的原作者赖德·哈格德 (Rider Haggard) 是二十世纪初英国著名的冒险故事作家。他当时曾在南非德兰士瓦 (Transvaal) 政府司法部门工作过。除本书外，他还写过《艾伦·奎特梅恩》 (Allan Quatermain)，《晨星》 (Morning Star)，《蒙特祖玛的女儿》 (Montezuma's Daughter)，《她》 (She) 等书，深为青少年所喜爱，其简写本几十年来都是畅销书，具有广泛影响。

《所罗门王的宝藏》描写三个英国人为寻求所罗门王的宝藏而在非洲的奇遇。内容惊险曲折，引人入胜。简写本用一千八百个英语词撰写，句法结构简单，语言流畅，通俗易懂。现对书中较难的语言现象作了必要的注释，附于书末，可供具有中等水平的广大英语学习者作为泛读材料。

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One

I MEET SIR HENRY CURTIS

It is a curious thing that at my age—fifty-five last birthday¹—I should find myself taking up a pen to write a history.² I wonder what sort of a history it will be when I have finished it, I have done a good many things³ in my life, which seems a long one to me—perhaps because I began work so young. At an age when other boys are at school, I was working for my living as a trader in Africa, I have been trading, hunting, fighting, or working at the mines ever since. And yet it is only eight months ago that I made a lot of money. It is a lot of money—I don't yet know how much; but I do not think that I would go through the last fifteen or sixteen months again for it, no, not even if I knew that I should come out safe at the end.⁴

Now to begin. I, Allan Quatermain, of Durban, Natal,⁵ Gentleman, promise to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.⁶

It is eighteen months ago since first I met Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good. After spending a week at Cape Town,⁷ I determined to go back to Natal by ship. Among the persons who came on board were two who interested

me. One, a gentleman of about thirty, was the largest and strongest-looking man I ever saw. He had yellow hair, a thick yellow beard, a clear-cut face,⁸ and large grey eyes set deep in his head.⁹ I never saw a finer looking man. His face seemed to me familiar: it made me think of someone I had seen before; but at the time I could not remember who it was. The big man's name was Sir Henry Curtis.

The other man who stood talking to Sir Henry was short and dark and of quite a different cut.¹⁰ I imagined that he was an officer on a ship. I was right, for I learnt that he was an officer who had just left the King's employment after seventeen years' service at sea. His name, I found out, was Good—Captain John Good. He was broad, of the usual height, had dark hair, and was rather a curious man to look at. He was so very much in order, so smooth, so clean, so polished,¹¹ and he always wore an eye-glass in his right eye: it seemed to grow there, for it had no string, and he never took it out except to clean it. At first I thought that he used to sleep with it, but afterwards I found that this was a mistake. He put it in his pocket, when he went to bed, together with his teeth. (For he had lost his real teeth and he had had a very fine set of teeth¹² made to take their place.)

Captain Good and I went down to dinner together, and there we found Sir Henry Curtis already seated. The

Captain and I soon fell into talk about shooting and such things;¹³ after some time he began to talk about elephants.

"Ah, sir," called out somebody who was sitting near me, "you've reached the right man for that; 'Hunter' Quatermain should be able to tell you about elephants if anybody can."

Sir Henry, who had been sitting quite quiet listening to our talk, showed signs of surprise.

"Pardon me, sir," he said, leaning forward across the table and speaking in a low deep voice, "Pardon me, sir, but is your name Allan Quatermain?"

I said that it was.

The big man said nothing more; but I heard him murmur "Fortunate" into his beard.¹⁴

Dinner came to an end. As we were leaving the dinner-table, Sir Henry approached me and asked if I would come into his room to smoke a pipe. I accepted; so we three sat down and lit our pipes.

"Mr. Quatermain," said Sir Henry Curtis, "the year before last, about this time, you were, I believe, at a place called Bamangwato to the north of the Transvaal."¹⁵

"I was," I answered, rather surprised that he should know my movements so well.¹⁶

"You were trading there, were you not?" put in Captain Good in his quick way.

"I was. I took up a wagon-load of goods¹⁷ and made a camp outside the place, and stopped until I had sold them."

Sir Henry was sitting opposite to me, his arms leaning on the table. He now looked up, fixing his large grey eyes full upon my face.¹⁸ There was a curiously anxious look in them, I thought.

"Did you happen to meet a man called Neville there?"

"Oh, yes; he stopped just beside me for a few weeks to rest his cattle before going on. I had a letter a few months ago, asking me if I knew what had happened to him. I answered it as well as I could¹⁹ at the time."

"Yes," said Sir Henry, "your letter was sent on to me.²⁰ You said in it that the gentleman called Neville left Bamangwato at the beginning of May in a wagon with a driver and a native hunter called Jim, with the intention of going to Inyati,²¹ the last trading place. There he meant to sell his wagon and go on foot. You also said that he did sell his wagon; for six months afterwards, you saw the wagon in the possession of a Portuguese trader. This trader told you that he had bought it at Inyati from a white man whose name he had forgotten, and that he believed the white man with the native servant had started off on a shooting trip."

"Yes."

Then came a pause.

"Mr. Quatermain," said Sir Henry suddenly, "I suppose you know, or can guess, nothing more of the reason of my—of Mr. Neville's journey to the northward, or

as to what point that journey was directed.”²²

“I heard something,” I answered, and stopped. The subject was one about which I did not wish to speak.

Sir Henry and Captain Good looked at each other, and Captain Good nodded.

“Mr. Quatermain,” went on the former, “I am going to tell you a story, and ask your advice, and perhaps your help. The gentleman who sent me your letter told me that I might place perfect faith in it, as you were well known and respected by all in Natal.”

I bowed—and Sir Henry went on.

“Mr. Neville was my brother.”

“Oh,” I said, for now I knew of whom Sir Henry had made me think when I first saw him.²³

“He was,” went on Sir Henry, “my only and younger brother, and till five years ago I do not think we were ever a month away from each other. But just about five years ago we quarrelled, and I behaved unjustly to my brother in my anger.”²⁴

Here Captain Good nodded his head.

“It so happened that just at the time when we quarrelled, our father died and all his money came to me, as the eldest son. My brother was left without a penny. Of course it was my duty to provide for him, and my father would have wished me to do so.²⁵ But at that time, because of the quarrel between us, I did not offer to do

anything. To my shame I say it,²⁶ I waited for him to ask me; and he did not. I am sorry to trouble you with all this, Mr. Quatermain, but I must make things clear—eh, Good?”

“Quite so, quite so,” said the Captain. “Mr Quatermain will, I am sure, keep this history to himself.”²⁷

“Of course,” said I.

“Well,” went on Sir Henry, “my brother had a few hundred pounds. Without saying a word to me, he took this money and, using the name Neville, he started off for South Africa in the wild hope of gaining riches there. This I learnt afterwards. Some three years passed, and I heard nothing of my brother though I wrote several times. No doubt the letters never reached him. But, as time went on, I became more and more troubled about him. I began to make inquiries, and your letter was one of the results. At last I made up my mind to come and look for him myself, and Captain Good was so kind as to come with me.”

“Yes,” said the Captain; “I had nothing else to do. And now perhaps, sir, you will tell us what you know or have heard about the gentleman called Neville.”

Two

I SPEAK OF KING SOLOMON'S MINES

“What was it you heard about my brother's journey

at Bamangwato?" said Sir Henry, as I paused to fill my pipe before answering Captain Good.

"I heard this," I answered, "and I have never spoken of it to anybody till today. I heard that he was starting for Solomon's mines."

"Solomon's mines!" cried both my hearers at once. "Where are they?"

"I don't know," I said. "I know where they are said to be.¹ Once I saw the tops of the mountains that border them,² but there were a hundred and thirty miles of desert between me and them, and I do not know that any white man ever got across it—except one. Perhaps the best thing I can do is to tell you the story of Solomon's mines as I know it. But you must promise me that you will keep secret everything that I tell you. Do you agree to do so? I have my reasons for asking it."³

Sir Henry nodded, and Captain Good replied, "Certainly, certainly."

"Here and there," I began, "you meet a man who takes the trouble to collect the old stories of the natives. It was such a man who first told me of King Solomon's mines. His name was Evans.

"Did you ever hear of the Suliman Mountains?" said Evans. "Well, that's where King Solomon had his diamond mines. An old witch⁴ up in the Manica country told me about it. She said that the people who lived across those mountains were a branch of the Zulu people⁵ speak-

ing a language rather like the Zulu language, but they were finer and bigger men even than the Zulus. She said that there lived among them great wizards and that these wizards had the secret of a wonderful mine of "bright stones." This was Evans' story.

"Well, I laughed at the story at the time and thought no more of the matter. But twenty years later, I heard something more about the Suliman Mountains and the country which lies behind them. I was up at a place called Sitanda's Kraal,⁶ when one day a Portuguese gentleman arrived with a single companion, a 'half-and-half' (half native, half white). He seemed to be a fellow of good birth, tall and thin with large dark eyes. He told me that his name was José Silvestre. When he started out next day he said, 'Good-bye,' taking off his hat quite in the manner of the old nobles⁷ of Portugal. 'Good-bye, sir,' he said; 'if ever we meet again, I shall be the richest man in the world, and I will remember you.'

"I watched him set out towards the great desert to the west, wondering if he was mad, and what he thought he was going to find there.⁸

"A week passed. One evening I was sitting on the ground in front of my little tent and gazing at the red-hot sun sinking down over the desert. Suddenly I saw a figure on the slope of the rising ground⁹ opposite to

me, about three hundred yards away. It seemed to be a European, for it wore a coat. The figure crept along on its hands and knees;¹⁰ then it got up and ran forward a few yards on its legs, only to fall and creep again. I sent one of my native hunters to help him, and after a time he arrived. And who do you suppose it was?"

"José Silvestre, of course," said Captain Good.

"Yes, José Silvestre --- or rather his bones and a little skin. His face was bright yellow with disease, and his large dark eyes stood nearly out of his head. There was nothing but yellow skin and the bones holding it up beneath.

"Water! in God's name,¹¹ water!" he moaned, and I saw that his lips were cracked and his tongue was black.

"I gave him water with a little milk in it, two large glasses of it. He seized it and drank it fiercely without stopping. I would not let him have any more then for fear it might harm him. Then his illness took hold of him again. He fell down and began to talk wildly about Suliman's Mountains, and the diamonds, and the desert. I carried him into the tent, and did what I could for him—which was little enough.¹² About eleven o'clock he grew quieter, and I lay down for a little rest and went to sleep. At sunrise I woke again,

and in the half light I saw Silvestre, a strange, terrible form, sitting up and gazing out towards the desert. The first beam of sunlight shot right across the wide plain before us till it reached the far-away top of one of the tallest of the Suliman Mountains more than a hundred miles away.

"There it is!" cried the dying man, pointing with his long thin arm, 'but I shall never reach it, never. No one will ever reach it!'

"Suddenly he paused. 'Friend,' he said, turning towards me, 'are you there? My eyes grow dark.'

"Yes," I said. 'Yes; lie down and rest.'

"I shall rest soon," he answered; 'and then I shall rest for ever. Listen, I am dying. You have been good to me. I will give you the writing. Perhaps you will get there if you can live to pass the desert¹³ which has killed my poor servant and me.'

"He felt about inside his shirt and brought out a little bag made of deer-skin. It was fastened with a short leather string: he tried to loosen this, but could not. He handed it to me. 'Untie it,' he said. I did so, and took from it a bit of torn yellow cloth on which something was written in red-brown letters. Inside this cloth was a paper.

"Then he went on faintly, for he was growing weak: 'The paper gives all that is written on the cloth.

it took me years to read it. Listen: I am the descendant of a José da Silvestre who lived three hundred years ago. He was one of the first Portuguese who landed on these shores. He wrote that when he was dying on those mountains which no white foot ever pressed before or since.¹⁴ His slave, who waited for him on this side of the mountains, found him dead and brought the writing home to Delagoa. It has been in the family ever since, but none have cared to read it,¹⁵ till at last I did. And I have lost my life over it. But another may succeed and become the richest man in the world—the richest man in the world. Only give it to no one; go yourself!

“Then his mind began to wander again,¹⁶ and in an hour it was all over. He was dead—God rest him!¹⁷ he died very quietly. I made a deep grave for him and put two big stones on his breast. So I do not think that dogs can have got at him. And then I came away.”

“Yes, but the paper?” said Sir Henry with deep interest.

“Well, gentlemen, if you wish, I will tell you. I never showed it to anyone except to a Portuguese trader who had drunk more than was good for him.¹⁸ He told me the meaning of the writing, but I am sure he had forgotten all about it by next morning. The Portuguese paper is at my home, but I have the English of it here in my pocket, and a drawing of the map. Here it is.