

lit. This, naturally enough, we were not all disposed to give him—for one thing there was no room, and for another we were a good deal suspicious of his real intentions. On our refusal to take him up the man made a rush for the coach and scrambled to get behind. As far as I could see in the darkness he was a rough-looking customer, but as to whether he was one of the convicts or not it was difficult to say. Anyway, he had no right where he was, and so I took the driver's revolver and, asking him to whip the horses up, ordered the interloper to get off. The man clung on, however, until we had gone about two hundred yards, and then dropped off and disappeared over a gate. Soon afterwards we came to an isolated inn, where two policemen were stationed. I told them what had happened, whereupon they immediately started off to try and track the man. This gave me an opportunity for another flashlight which shows the officers on the trail with their lanterns. The man got clean away, however, but the next day the two convicts were captured.

Returning home from my travels, my next flashlight work was done in London, where, as I was absolutely unknown to the Press and anxious to work up a connection, I looked about for a unique and difficult subject, and one, if possible, which no other photographer had succeeded in taking. This was in 1900, and I soon found what I wanted at the Earl's Court Exhibition of that year, which was "Savage South Africa." The chief attraction was a most realistic performance in the vast arena, called "Major Wilson's Last Stand." This depicted the massacre of the gallant band of Britishers by the Matabele, and although several flashlight photographs had been attempted they had all been failures. The reason, I imagine, was that no photographer had been able to make use of a flash sufficiently quick and powerful to cover such a large area. I at once approached the management, asking for permission to take a photograph of the scene. They refused to entertain my proposal, giving as a reason that it had already been attempted, but had been

found impossible of realisation. This only made me the more determined, and I submitted prints of my previous work. These, fortunately, impressed the authorities to such an extent that they gave me the desired facilities, but at the same time they informed me that they had very little hope of my being successful. They furthermore added, somewhat significantly, that the experiment would have to be made at my own expense, but that they would give me a special performance. I at once commenced operations. There was an immense amount of preparatory work to be done, as this was, at the time, the biggest undertaking of the kind that had ever been attempted. I decided that it would be necessary, in order to secure sufficient illuminating power, to use seven separate flashes, all of which would have to be fired simultaneously. The first thing I did, therefore, was to arrange for the laying down of electric cables from the main plant into the arena. This in itself was a considerable item, as to run the current to each of the seven flash points I had to use nearly two hundred yards of cable. In fact, before I had everything ready to take the photograph, I was twenty pounds out of pocket. This sum included in addition to many incidental expenses, the erection of stands to hold the flashlight powder, fitted with fuses and bright tin reflectors. To make doubly sure of success I used two cameras with twelve by fifteen plates. These I had to place in the front row of the auditorium, about two hundred feet away, to enable me to get in the entire scene. Finally I had everything ready; Major Wilson's party took up their positions, while the Matabele were just in front of me with their assegais, waiting to rush across the arena to the slaughter. As I stood with a pneumatic release in each hand I must confess that I felt not a little anxious as to the fate of my twenty pounds. The signal was given and the savages charged, brandishing their weapons, and just as they were in the act of massacring the intrepid Britishers I pressed both bulbs to expose my plates and touched the electric

button to ignite the powder. The combined flash went off magnificently, and I think it alarmed Major Wilson's gallant men a good deal more than did the Matabele. On developing my plates I was very glad to find that I had obtained excellent pictures, which, when submitted to the authorities, brought me a congratulatory letter, stating that "what they believed to be impossible had proved to be an entire success."

The picture next reproduced, showing Sir George Martin playing the organ in Westminster Abbey, is not particularly exciting to look at, but it is a very good example of the difficulties under which a flashlight photographer sometimes has to work. As the organ-loft was very small, there was not room to operate, and I was at my wife's end to know how to take the photograph, for I was unable to place my camera far enough away from my sitter. At length, however, I saw a way out of the difficulty. I fixed a rope to the top of the organ loft, and tied my camera on the end of it in such a position as to allow the lens to project through Sir George's nosehole. I then let off my flash with my camera in mid-air.

The fact that the flashlight photographer must needs be resourceful and prepared for eventualities is, I think fully proved by my experiences when I photographed the home-coming of General Sir Redvers Buller from South Africa. I went to Southampton to meet the ship, which I found had been delayed owing to fog, which made the time of her arrival very uncertain. Late at night I met a reporter running for the docks, who shouted out as he passed me that General Buller's ship was just coming in. I was quite unprepared, but knowing there was not a moment to be lost, I hurried back to my hotel, grabbed up a box of flash powder and a snapshot camera, and, dashing into the kitchen, commandeered a saucery lid in which to fire the powder. Then I set off post-haste for the docks, picking up en route a reporter to whom I gave the news. The ship was just coming alongside when we got there,


and as it was necessary for me to take a position well above the level of the ground, we climbed up into a loft of a convenient shed overlooking the scene. It was quite dark in the place, but as we could just see a door on the opposite side we made a rush towards it. Then without the slightest warning we both almost disappeared in a heaped-up pile of some soft, fluffy, choking substance. We had, it appeared, broken into a grain warehouse, the loft of which was being used to store some kind of fine middlings. The awful stuff was several feet deep all over the floor, and through it we floundered and struggled, gasping for breath and well-nigh suffocated. At length, however, we fought our way through and reached the door just as General Buller was stepping on the gangway; but, fortunately for me, an officer went up to speak to him and detained him for a little while. I hastily poised the powder into the saucery lid and gave it to my friend to hold, and told him to ignite it with a piece of lighted paper as quickly as possible. Then, steadying myself against the doorpost, I held the snapshot camera in my hands as firmly as possible and waited. At first my friend was unable to ignite the powder, and the anxious moments were flying all too rapidly when suddenly it flared up. My unfortunate companion, taken completely by surprise, was sent flying on his back with some badly burned fingers and a shock to his nervous system. The resulting photograph, however, was, all things considered, very satisfactory.

At a banquet held in a room the walls of which were adorned with many beautiful paintings, a well-known college president was called upon to respond to a toast. In the course of his remarks, wishing to pay a compliment to the ladies present, and designating the paintings with one of his characteristic gestures, he said:—  
"What need is there of these painted beauties, when we have so many with us at this table?"


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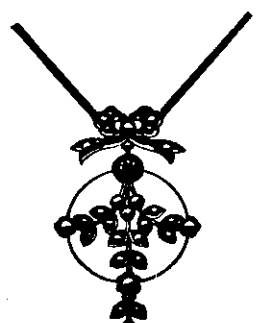


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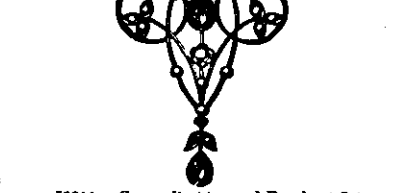
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