

UNDER AN AFRIC SUN.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER I.

"Well, pon my word, Fraser!"
"What's the matter now?"
"I'm staggered; I am, really."
"What about, boy?"
"To think I could be such an absolute noodle as to let you morally bind me hand and foot and bear me off into a desolate island in the Atlantic, to carry your confounded specimens; be dragged out of bed at ungodly hours to walk hundreds of miles in the broiling sun; to sleep in beds full of the active and nameless insect abhorred by the British housewife; and generally become your white nigger, cad, cancher, and—"
"Have you nearly done?" said Horace Fraser, with a grim smile upon his dry quaint countenance.
"No; that was only the preface."
"Then let's have the rest when we get home in the shape of a neatly printed book, a copy of which you can present to me with a paper-knife of white ivory, and I promise you I will never cut a leaf or read a line."
"Thanks, Diognes."
"Diognes indeed!" cried Fraser with a snort, as his crisp hair seemed to stand on end. "Now look, Tom Digby; you are about the most ill-conditioned, ungrateful, dissatisfied English cub that ever breathed."
"Go it!" said the good-looking young fellow addressed, as he flung himself down among the ferns and began to untie his shoes, after wiping his steaming brow, and taking off his straw hat, to let the hot dry breeze blow through his crisp wavy brown hair.
"I mean to 'go it,' as you so coarsely term it, sir," continued Fraser, crossing his arms on a roughly made alpenstock. "I came to you in your black and grimy chambers, where you were suffering from a soot-engendered cold. I said: 'I am off to the Canaries for a three months' trip. Leave this miserable London March weather, and I'll take you where you can see the sun shine.'"
"See it shine? Yes; but you didn't say a word about feeling it," cried the younger man. "Do you know the skin is peeling off my nose, and that the back of my neck is burnt?"
"Don't be a donkey, Tom! I ask, did you ever see anything so lovely before in your life?"
"Humph! 'Tis rather pretty," grumbled the younger man.
"Pretty!" echoed Fraser contemptuously, as he took off his hat, as if out of respect to Nature, and gazed around him at sea, sky, mountain, and hill, whose hues were dazzling in their rich colours. He then threw down his alpenstock, drew a large geological hammer from his belt, and seated himself upon the grass, while his companion brought out a cold chicken, some dark bread, and a number of hard-boiled eggs, finishing off with a bottle and silver cup.
"Look at that wonderful film of cloud floating toward the volcano, Tom! Look at the sun gleaming upon it! Just like a silver veil which the queen of mountains is about to throw over her head."
"Poetry, by jingo!" cried Digby. "Bravo old stones and bones, I say! Look at the golden yellow of the hard yolks lying within the ivory walls of this hard-boiled egg; and at the—There; I'll be hanged if I didn't forget to bring some salt!"
Tom Digby made a sound with his tongue as he tasted some of the wine he had poured into the cup; then he made a grimace.
"I say, Horace, old chap, it was all very well for the old people to make a fuss about their sack and canary; but for my part a tankard of honest English beer is worth an ocean of this miserable juice."
"Don't think it, then," said Fraser, eating mechanically, as he gazed about him at the glorious pines around, and then down at the tropical foliage of banana, palm, orange, and lime, two thousand feet below, where it glorified the lovely valleys and gorges which ran from the black volcanic sandy shore right up into the mountains.
Then a silence fell upon the scene, which continued till the *al fresco* repast was at an end, and Tom Digby deliberately lit up and began to smoke.
"What an enthusiastic young gusher you are, Horace!" cried Digby bantingly. "For a man of forty-one, you do rather go it."
"And for one of twenty-five, you assume the airs of a boy," said Fraser grimly.
"Well, I feel like one, old chap, out here. Why, it's glorious to breathe this delicious mountain air, to gaze upon the clouds above and below at that wonderful blue sea, and at the yellow pines which look like gold. Yes," he added, as he sprang up and gazed about him, "it is a perfect Eden! What a jolly shame that it should belong to the Spaniards instead of us."
"I daresay they appreciate it."
"Must have done, or else they wouldn't have taken it from the—the—the—what did you call the aboriginals?"
"Guanches."
"What a chap you are, Horace! You seem to know a bit of everything."
"I only try to go about with my eyes open, and take interest in something better than colouring a meerschaum pipe."
"Severe!"
"Well, you do annoy me, Tom, you indeed. A man with such capabilities, and you will not use them. Why, you haven't even tried to learn Spanish yet."
"What's the good? You know plenty for both. I'm well enough off not to bother my brains about Spanish."
"Ah, Tom, Tom! if you only had some aim in life."
"Rather have some of those delicious oranges."
"Eating again?"
"No, for drinking. Thirsty land, Horace, and I never knew what an orange really was before. And why should I

worry myself about languages? I've a lively recollection of your namesake at school, and Virgil and Homer and all the other dead-language buffers—I say, though, that's fine."
They had come suddenly upon one of the gashes in the island known to the Spaniards as barrancos—a thorough crack or crevice in the rocky soil, with perpendicular sides clothed with mosses, ferns, and the various growths which found a home in the disintegrating lava of which the place was composed. Here the various patches of green were of the most brilliant tints, and kept ever verdant by the moisture trickling down from above.
"Mind what you are doing!" said Fraser, after stooping to clip off a fragment of perfectly black lava from a bare spot.
"Yes; it would be an awkward tumble," said Digby, as he leaned forward and peered over the ledge. "Five hundred feet, I daresay."
"More likely a thousand," said Fraser. "The distances are greater than you think."
"Ah, well, don't make much difference to a man who falls whether he tumbles five hundred or a thousand feet.—Going along here?"
"Yes; the track leads to a steep descent. Then we can get up the other side, and round over the mountain, and so back to the part where, after dinner, we can go and call on Mr. Redgrave. I did send on the letter straight from London."
"All right, old chap, I'm ready.—How many miles down?"
"Not more than ten. You will not mind the climb down?"
"Well, if it's like this—yes. Hillo, what's he doing?"
Digby pointed across the barranco to where a couple of hundred yards away, upon the opposite rock-face, a man seemed to be slowly descending the giddy wall.
"After birds or rabbits, perhaps," said Fraser.
"Take care of yourself, old chap!" shouted Digby; and then, as his eyes were lost in the vastness of the place, he followed his companion seaward for a few hundred yards till the track led them to a zig-zag descent out in the wall of rock, down which they went cautiously and not without hesitation till they reached the little stream at the bottom, crossed it, and ascended the other side, a similar dangerous path taking them to the top.
"By George, this is a place!" said Digby as they paused for a few moments.
"Listen!" whispered Fraser, stopping short; and there beneath them was a panting and rustling, followed directly after by the appearance of a dark face with a band across the brow, a man with a basket supported on his back, climbing up from a hidden path among the ferns, and pausing before them to set down his load.
"What have you there?" asked Fraser in Spanish.
"Dust of the old people, senior Inglese," said the man, smiling. "That is one of the caves below there where they used to bury them; and the pointed to an opening just visible amongst the growth where the side of the barranco sloped.
"Buried? There?" said Fraser.
"Yes, senior; there are plenty of such places as this in the sides of the mountain."
"Curious," said Fraser, eagerly peering into the basket of brown dust, stirring it with the end of his alpenstock, and uncovering something gleaming and white.
"Why, it's a tooth!" said Digby, stooping to pick it out of the basket, and dropping it suddenly. "Ugh!" he ejaculated; "why, they're bits of bone."
"Yes; very interesting," said Fraser. "Dust of the Guanches' mummies. I knew there were remains to be found."
"Disgusting!" ejaculated Digby, recoiling.
"Why do you get this dust?" asked Fraser of the man.
"For my garden, senior. The potatoes and onions like it, and it is superb."
"What does he say?"
"They use it for manure for their gardens."
(To be Continued.)

OH! CAN IT BE TRUE?

The flowery white wedding is over, And over the rush of the train; To turn your sweet eyes to your lover, And kiss him again!

There's no one to bore or to bother, There's no one to call and to stay; The whole pretty world; and each other Are ours from to-day.

This quaint little parlor, how pleasant— Its flavor of long-ago life! But the crown of its life is the present, My darling, my wife!

The Colonel had already caught Vivian up in his arms, delighted that the child had remembered his soldier, Ethel looking at the boy in a sudden ecstasy of child-worship; while Gladys Charlesworth stood face to face with Frank as one who has found a pleasant dream to be the sweetness of reality.
"You have not forgotten me?" he asked.
"Oh no, indeed. Only, it seems so strange to see you here. The last time we met was all sickness and suffering; here, it is so peacefully quiet."
"It is a beautiful place!" Frank replied, drawing a deep breath of admiration, and feeling almost dazed with the wisdom of his own happiness.
"There is no wonder that you love it. But tell me how it was that you left me so abruptly out yonder? Not even time to say good-bye, not even a moment to thank you for your angelic kindness."
"Not now," said Gladys hurriedly, with a quick frightened glance at the others retreating figures.—"See; they are going into the gardens, my mother's favorite walk. Won't you come with them?"
But Frank stood perfectly still, looking down into the pleading face. "Why did you leave me like that?" he repeated. "Do you know that I have been searching all London to find your whereabouts?"
"Captain Sandhurst, I will tell you everything presently, only let us join the others now. Mother will be so disappointed if you do not see the garden with her."
Captain Frank suddenly melted; he would have been something more than a man could he have withstood the wistfulness of those imploring violet eyes. So they went into the old-world garden; and under the avenue of ancient fruit-trees, Frank detailed to his hostess the story of his lingering illness away from home and friends—how an angel nursed him, and the manner in which that sweet divinity had been found.
"Your girl and my boy," the colonel remarked musingly, as he watched the figures disappearing down the shady avenue. "How strange it seems! It seems almost like the renewal of one's own youth."
"It seems more strange that they should have met in such a way," Mrs. Charlesworth replied. "They would make a handsome couple, George."
The old name came so naturally that neither of them noticed it. The Colonel laughed lightly, wondering a little to find himself viewing such a contingency so complacently. Under the bending arch of the trees they sat, till the talk gradually veered round to old times long since forgotten, though none the less delightful of recall.
Meanwhile, Gladys and her companion had wandered on beneath the filbert boughs to a secluded spot, below which the sunny meadows sloped away into a far-stretching valley, beyond which rose range after range of wooded hills, crowned in the faint blue distance by the Malvern. In the quiet contemplation of this silvan beauty they were silent for a time, with that innate sympathy that exists between spirits of a kindred nature. There was a soft flush on the girl's delicate cheeks, a subdued content gleaming in her eyes. "You look like happiness materialised," said Frank at length.
She turned her glowing face to his, trembling with a sweet emotion. "Almost too happy," she replied. "Yesterday was all dark and troubled; to-day is all joy and sunshine. Then it seemed as if we were going to lose home and everything that makes life worth living. I do not think I am very sentimental, but I have a passionate love for this place. Perhaps you cannot understand the feeling."
"Yes, I think so. When I was ill, dying almost, out yonder I learnt to appreciate the meaning of home. I used to dream of it, more perhaps when you were by. When you left, I knew it was a dream. And that brings me to the old question: happiness materialised? What more had I to detain me? I had lost my brother; you had grown well and strong enough to do without me."
"You think so?" Frank asked, with a dangerous thrill in his voice. "Perhaps I am the best judge of that. I was not strong enough to do without you, and I never shall be now."
"I am glad you thought of me. It is pleasant to know that."
"Thought of you for a moment. Sweet hypocrite, dare you look me in the face and say it is not so?"
She did not look up, though a rosy smile trembled on her cheeks, and rudely lips for a moment. In spite of the tumultuous beating of her heart, there was in all the painful uncertainty an exquisite sense of pleasure which rendered it doubly pleasing.
"Gladys, if I may use the name again, tell me why you left without good-bye?"
For the first time she glanced up at him with her truthful eyes. "I will tell you, then. In the first place, I thought you would despise me, and your regard was very dear to me."
"Of course I should have despised you," Sandhurst replied ironically—"the same as one would despise a heaven-directed angel sent to succour a despairing wretch. But, ah me, I quite forgot to do that because, you see—"
Gladys stretched out a trembling little hand imploringly, immediately the bold soldier seized it and kept it imprisoned in his own warm grasp. At the touch of this strong masterful grip, all the reserve and coldness seemed to leave the girl yielding and helpless.
"But I thought you would," she cried. "I was only an hospital nurse; you are a soldier with a good name and fortune. I was always proud of being

Miss Charlesworth, of Fernleigh; but even then I did not know how long I could call myself so. And if you had met me some day, an obscure governess, or perhaps a shop assistant—" "I should have lavished large sums on that blessed establishment in my excess of gratitude.—No; I will not release your hand, Miss Charlesworth of Fernleigh. You proud young person—isn't that the expression I should have to have used if I had found you in a shop?"
Gladys laughed, and said no more about her prisoned fingers. There was a wild flush on her cheeks, and a lustre gleam in her eyes, like unshed tears. As Frank looked down into them, a sudden flood of tenderness rushed into his heart, overpowering all other feeling. "Gladys," he said quietly, "you were very cruel to me then."
"Perhaps; but it was not without pain to me. I did not know—" "That I loved you. I did, the first time I saw you. I do now; I shall cling as life is spared to me. Hear all I have to say. This is no passing fancy—remember, it is more than a year since we parted—and instead of growing weaker, my love becomes stronger every day. If I can do anything to make you happy, if I can—Gladys, my darling, will you be my wife?"
Then there came a long silence more eloquent than words, as heart went out to heart in a perfect understanding. It seemed as if the parting of a year had been washed away with its months of doubt and uncertainty, as she lay upon her lover's breast with her arms around her. Woman-like, Gladys was the first to break the stillness, with a broken laugh and a strangely happy face tinged with a shame at her own beatitude.
"I wonder what they will say!" said she. "Mr. Heath told us yesterday that you and Miss Morton were expected to—" "To fall in love with an obsolete family arrangement," cried Frank gaily. "My dear child, what chance could I possibly have with a full-blown baronet? Strange as it may seem, Ethel prefers Cresswell to me."
"What shocking taste! And to console yourself, you came to me. I am afraid yours is only a secondary attachment."
"To which audacious speech Sandhurst replied by a rapturous embrace, in which Gladys' hair fell to the ground and her fair hair spread out in wild disorder. And, to add to the catastrophe, at this moment appeared the Colonel in company with the mistress of Fernleigh, eying the blushing culprits with an ill attempt at deep severity.
"I should like to know the meaning of this," asked the Colonel, in his sternest parade voice. "I should very much like an explanation."
"It is simple enough," said Frank coolly. "Colonel Sandhurst, permit me to introduce you to my future wife."
Mrs. Charlesworth gave a little cry of astonishment, while the Colonel bowed with an exaggerated politeness, possibly to hide the pleased expression which somehow would manifest itself on his features.
"What shall we do with them?" he asked, turning to his companion.
"It is so sudden, so unexpected," faltered the bewildered lady with a glance at the now collected lover.—"Gladys, what have you to say?"
"It is quite true," said she, laughing and crying in a breath. "He asked me to—to marry him, and I—"
"Well, And you?"
"Were obliged to say yes. He would take no other answer; and Gladys kissed her mother once, and disappeared without another word, leaving Frank to bear the brunt of the paternal wrath, an impending punishment which he bore with enviable stoicism. Fortunately, the advent of Vivian at this moment served to distract attention from the culprit, who forthwith took the lad by the hand and set off in search of an imaginary wren's nest.
Mrs. Charlesworth took a seat, the Colonel stood by her side.
"You are not displeased?" he asked with a shade of anxiety in his voice.
"Not exactly displeased; indeed, I think I am very glad. It seems so poetical that between our children there should be such a tender feeling. I think of this the more because there might have been—" "As blissful a consummation for us.—Margaret, do you remember the time when you and I looked forward to such happiness, when at the end of three months you were to write to me?" "And I did, George; do not forget that."
"Yes, I know it now; but I did not receive the letter at the time. I waited for a month, but it never came. And then I thought you had forgotten me, so I troubled you no more."
"And I thought you had forgotten me. How absurdly proud we must have both been not to—How did you find out afterwards?"
The Colonel took the letter from his pocket, and handed it to her. When she had read it, he told the story of its finding. But the history of the treachery practised by a vanished hand he did not tell her, nor did she ever know.
It was blissfully quiet there, save for the song of birds and the light sound of voices on the lawn below. For a long time neither spoke, for the mind of either was back in the far past.
"Margaret," said the Colonel at length, "there is still a little fragrance over our dead romance. Can't we treasure up the remaining years together?"
"Last year's leaves are dead," Mrs. Charlesworth replied, blushing like a girl; "their fragrance has gone for ever."
"But the beauty springs afresh. I have been a lonely man; I shall be more so in the near future. The sunshine has gone, but its warmth still remains. If you can bear with me for a time, I shall be the happier."
"Very well. It shall be as you wish, George."
The sound of voices came nearer, till presently all the happy group had gathered round the colonel and his companion. When they became a little graver and the conversation had taken a more serious turn, he told them. They listened in respectful silence, while Vivian climbed on to the Colonel's knee, looking up into his face the while intently.
"What do you think of it all?" asked the narrator in conclusion.
"I think it will be very nice," said the boy confidentially.
"You are pleased, Vivian?" asked his mother.
He looked from one to the other as

if he saw them, then away round the garden, peaceful in the fading afternoon, pleasant, fresh, and sweet as if the very guardian spirit of the place had blessed the garden and its denizens. A delicate light fell upon his face, filtered through the branches.
"I think it is the best thing that could happen," he said in his quaint old-fashioned way; "and I think," he concluded, with a glance heavenward, "that God has been very good to us all to-day."
(The end.)

ABOUT LONDON AND PARIS

STATISTICS ABOUT THE TWO LARGEST CITIES OF THE WORLD.

London Far Outstrips Any Other City in Population, Wealth and All That Goes to Make Up a Modern City.

There are 600,000 buildings in the city of London, including stores and public buildings. There are 100,000 buildings in Paris.

The population of London by the municipal census of 1896 was 4,433,018. The population of Paris by the last municipal census, the record of population in France is continuous and not made at stated intervals only—was 2,511,955.

The area of London is 688 square miles. The area of Paris is 172 square miles.

There are 1,890 miles of streets and 2,350 miles of sewers in London. There are 600 miles of streets and 550 miles of sewers in Paris.

London consumes in a year 5,000,000 tons of meat of all kinds and Paris consumes 3,600,000. London consumes in a year 400,000 tons of potatoes, 110,000 tons of cabbages, 60,000 tons of turnips, 50,000 tons of onions, and 20,000 tons of green peas. The yearly consumption of celery in London is 800 tons and of asparagus 300 tons. Paris consumes a ton of bread a day and 450,000,000 eggs a year. The consumption of game in Paris includes 1,000,000 pigeons, 600,000 partridges, 300,000 hares, and 100,000 pheasants.

The water supply of Paris averages 150,000,000 gallons a day, and of London 200,000,000, exclusive of a portion of the metropolitan district, locally supplied. London's supply costs \$9,000,000 a year.

The consumption of ale, beer, and liquors in London amounts to 355,000,000 gallons in a year. In Paris the consumption of wine is 100,000,000 gallons and of beer 8,000,000 gallons, through the disparity between the two is being gradually lessened by the increasing popularity of beer in the French capital. There are relatively more drunkenness and fewer arrests for drunkenness in London than in Paris.

The municipal expenses of London in a year amount to about \$70,000,000. The municipal expenses of the city of Paris, exclusive of national contributions, amount to \$65,000,000. The debt of London is \$50 per capita; the debt of Paris is \$150 per capita.

There were 2,015 burglaries and "house-breakings" committed in London in 1895, 997 in Paris.

The receipts of the Paris theatres and music halls for the year 1896 were \$4,400,000. The receipts of the London theatres and licensed music halls for the same year were \$3,200,000.

The population of London increases at the rate of 200 a day from the excess of births over deaths. The population of Paris is increased by drafts from the French provinces and not from the excess of births over deaths in the capital, which average ten a day of 3,000 in a year.

There are more than 2,000 churches in London—675 belonging to the Established Church, 450 Methodist, 350 Baptist, and 125 Catholic—1,600 exclusive of Congregational, Presbyterian, and Lutheran churches, and exclusive also of Jewish synagogues, of which there are 32 in London. There are 355 churches in Paris of all religious denominations.

The antiquarians declare that the first authentic mention of London appears in Tacitus. It was burned in A. D. 61. Paris was burned in B. C. 52, and the earliest authentic mention of its existence as a settlement is traced to Julius Caesar, or rather it was ascribed to Julius Caesar, though there was never anything traced to Julius Caesar so far as history records.

In London, English is spoken almost exclusively by all the inhabitants. In Paris the number of tourists is continuously large.

A MINER'S HEROIC ACT.

A despatch from Rosland, B.C., says:—By an act of heroism Jim Hensworth saved the lives of two miners working in the Young American hundred-foot shaft on Sunday. They had filled the iron bucket with ore and it was within twenty feet of the surface with Hensworth turning the crank, when it broke at the elbow and knocked him down. The cogs failed to hold the load and the bucket was rapidly descending on the heads of the unconscious miners when Hensworth threw himself on the reel and blocked the machinery by thrusting his arms in the wheels. It was horribly lacerated and amputation may be necessary, but the miners in the shaft were saved. The foreman blocked the wheels and released Hensworth's arm in a few moments. When asked if he was much hurt he replied:—"What's the difference so long as I saved the boys."

IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

Bliffers (reading). Science now recognizes a condition called "intoxication by radiation." Many cases of drunkenness are cited in which the victim had touched nothing alcoholic, but had simply been in the company of drinkers.
Whiffers. Cut that out. I want to show it to my wife.