

SUNSTRUCK.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER VII.

An hour later, the two young men were seated in long lounge-chairs in the dense shade cast by a huge tree. On a table between them lay flowers and luscious fruits; while beneath the table lay blinking at their a huge Cuban bloodhound, as if keeping guard over his master's guests.

The house was hidden by the luxuriant foliage, and the only presence visible in the midst of the calm dreary silence was Miramis, the black nurse, who sat on a stool at a little distance, watching them from time to time, to see if her services were needed.

The silence was at last broken by Manton, who had been lying back with his eyes half closed, and who now said softly: "Thank God!—Will, lad, I never thoroughly knew the delight of existence till now. Yes; we shall soon grow strong again."

"Amen to it all, Jack," replied Burns. "I'm pounds better already."

They relaxed into silence once more, and then Burns spoke, after drawing in a long deep breath: "It's heavenly!"

Then he took a glass from the table, drank, and set it back.

"Have a drink, Jack."

Manton slowly raised his glass and drank, gazing at the dog the while.

"Jack. What a brute of a dog."

"Yes. Kept to hunt the runaways, I suppose."

"How long have we been out here?"

"I don't know: about a couple of hours, I suppose; but time seems to have dropped away, and it is all delicious repose. That fevered agony seems something which never existed."

"But it did. Two hours, eh?—I say."

"Yes."

"I'm nearly well; and as soon as you can start we shall have to go."

"Go? Oh no. Captain Greville said we were to stay until the ship came back."

"Yes, lad, he said so to me too; but we must be off almost at once."

"Go?" said Manton so excitedly that the black woman started up.

"Massah want 'Miramis'?"

"No, no, my good woman no," said Manton, with the impatience of an invalid.

"Now, then, why must we be off at once?"

"Because, lad, the captain told me this morning that he was glad to have a couple of honourable English gentlemen beneath his roof."

"Well, panted Manton, with a faint colour coming into his cheeks.

"No: it's ill lad. I can't answer for you, though I may suspect; but as far as I am concerned, he has not got an honourable English gentleman beneath his roof."

"Will?"

"But a thorough-paced scoundrel instead."

"You are speaking in riddles," said Manton hoarsely.

"Then I'll speak plain English. Look here, Jack: we have been thrown into the society of two sweet innocent girls who have led the most secluded of lives; and if there is such a thing as love, that's the disease I've taken badly. It's contagious, I believe, and if I give that complaint to one in whose company I am hospitably allowed to be, I shall have been the scoundrel I say."

Manton drew a long deep breath.

"I think you are as bad as I am, my lad, from what I have seen; and if I am right, there can be only trouble. So we had better go while our shoes are good."

"Yes," said Manton excitedly, "trouble. Two men who have always been like brothers growing ready to spring at each other's throats, while they are taking advantage of their host's kindness by bringing misery upon his home."

"Sounds vain, doesn't it, to say so much?"

"It might in some cases, Will," responded Manton, "but I think not here. They are not accustomed to the ways of the world. Yes; we must go and the sooner the better, I suppose.—Yes!—What is it, 'Miramis'?"

"De young missie say may dey come and sit an' talk to the gemmen lil bit?"

"Yes," said Manton eagerly.—"No. Our compliments, and we are still two weak and ill."

"S, massah," said the nurse and she moved off.

"Jack, you brute," said Burns, in a low angry voice, "how could you have the heart to send such a message as that?"

"I want to be an honourable gentleman if I can," said Manton coldly. "The ladies are indeed unused to the ways of the world."

"No need to insult them if they are," said Burns bitterly. "Seems to me that the feud has begun."

That evening Renee grew thoughtful and strange, and found herself furtively watching Josephine, blushing each time that she realized that she was guilty of what she told herself was a meanness.

There was a change, too, in Josephine, who was singing about the house in a wild excited manner; but so sure as she caught Renee's eye fixed upon her, her own contracted, the lines between the eyebrows grew more deeply marked while she returned a defiant angry stare, that brought the tears to Renee's lids, and made her turn away with a sigh so as to be alone and think.

Josephine sat at her window with her head resting upon her hand. One by one the lights had been extinguished about the house, till one only remained—that in Captain Greville's room, where he sat reading for a time before going to bed.

At last the light was extinguished in the captain's room; and as soon as all was dark there, the girl's hand dropped upon the sill, and she reached out a little, peering into the darkness, where little points of light glided here and there over the transparent purple of the shadowy night.

"My beautiful," said a soft thick voice directly after in a whisper just beneath where the girl leaned out.

"Oh, 'Miramis,'" cried Josephine, in an eager whisper, "I thought you would not come."

"Den missie shouldn't tink suck ting. Well, didn't 'Miramis' say she make de hahnsum buckra officer quite well?"

"Yes, 'Miramis.'"

"And um make lub to missie?"

"Yes—no—not much."

"Ah? Wait lil bit, Missie Josee, and he lub her much as she like."

"But sometimes I think he might love Renee instead," said the girl faintly.

"Oh, no," said the woman with a low chuckle. "He goin'—lub—Missie Josee,

'Miramis make lub-charm, and Missie Josee hab de lubber she like moce. Where Missie Josee hahn? Dat's um—now touch. What dat you touch?"

"Your necklace of bright-colored seeds," said the girl.

"Yes, missie. Ebery one got a charm in um—make young man tink 'bout de lady who want um. Missie Josee want um buckra Massah Manton marry her. He got to marry her—dat's all."

"But suppose he doesn't care for me, 'Miramis.'"

"Yes.—What suppose?"

"He were to love Renee, instead," whispered the girl, almost inaudibly.

"What? No; he goin' lub my lil darlin' Missie Josee, who always lub 'Miramis. She gib him ting make um grow strong an' well, all o' purpose for Missie. Massa Captain tink he go cure de hahnsum sailor, but it all 'Miramis' doing. Whah Missie Josee's hahn?"

The girl leaned out again into the darkness, and there was a loud rustling and a sharp ejaculation.

"What's the matter?" whispered Josephine.

"'Miramis slip and moce tumble down-out ob de tree. Dah, kissie, kissie, kissie lubly hahn. Just like Missie Josee's moder's hahn. Good-night, darlin'! She shall have the hahnsum buckra officer.—Good-night."

Josephine let herself sink down upon the matting-covered floor and rested her burning face in her hands to think of John Manton and her newly awakened love; while in her room on the other side of the passage, Renee was also awake, to unhappy to sleep, for the home which had once seemed so happy seemed now to be clouded over with trouble, and the future began to look very blank.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Nonsense, my lads. I stand to you both in the position of your captain, and I am answerable to him for the state in which he will find you when he returns."

"Yes, Captain Greville," said Manton, who acted as spokesman, one evening when they sat together after dinner, with the moths whirring round the shaded lamps, and the fireflies playing about like sparks over the bushes in the garden near the open window; "but we have been here nearly a month; and Burns and I think that we ought not to trespass on your kindness on longer."

"Humph!" said Greville. "What do you think of doing, then?—putting to sea in an open boat?"

"Oh, no, sir," interposed Burns; "it must be a month before the ship returns, perhaps two, and we have set our minds on making an exploring expedition through the island."

"Rubbish!" said the captain tartly. "Now, gentlemen, speaking as your host, I say I shall not let you go; and then as your medical man, I say it would be madness. Why, my good fellows, you are both as weak as ever you can be, and no more fit to go cutting your way through those forests than to fly. You would both be down with fever at the end of a couple of days. You must hug the shore, and hug it here in my garden. There is the boat."

"Yes, Captain Greville, you are very good, and we are very grateful," said Manton.

"Show it then, sir, by doing me justice when Captain Lance comes back."

"But really, sir"—said Burns.

"There—there—there—my dear boys; light your cigars, and we'll have coffee.—What! you will not smoke? Very well; let's get into the drawing-room and have some music. Renee's harp has been almost silent since you two have been here; but the noise will do you good now."

The young men glanced at each other as the captain rose.

He threw aside a thin drapery, and held it while the young men passed through into the drawing-room, where, dimly seen by the light of the shaded lamp, Renee and Josephine were seated some distance apart, the one reading, the other with work in her hand, which she hastily went on with as the gentlemen entered.

"Come, girls," cried Greville. "Your turn now to entertain. I'm going to smoke my cigar outside. Let's have a little music. Sing me my old favorite, Josee."

He stopped by the door while Renee crossed to the harp stand in one corner, and Josephine went to a canterbury and drew out a music-book. Then there was a little tuning; and both young men stood watching the round white arms, the one with its fingers busy among the strings, the other straining at the harp wreat.

This preparation finished, Renee played a short prelude; and Josephine's rich full voice rose end filled the room, thrilling her hearers as she sang with wonderful force and passion one of the fine old Irish ballads, full of love and promise of faith to the very end. And as she sang her eyes were for a time half closed, the lids veiling their lustre till near the end, when she raised them and fixed them full upon Manton, who was watching and listening intently.

Burns saw the look pass between them, and his brow contracted as he noted that Manton seemed fascinated by the glowing eyes fixed upon his. Then he turned away, and saw that Renee's hands still rested on the harp, to whose silent strings her fingers seemed to cling, while her head drooped, and he could read misery and despair in every lineament of her face.

"Poor girl!" said Burns bitterly to himself as he crossed to her side and offered a chair.

"You are tired, Miss Greville," he said.

"Tired? Oh no," she replied gently.

"Well," cried the captain from outside, "what next? That's very good, but I want more."

"Yes, you will sing again, Miss Maine!" said Manton, as the girl looked up at him with a timid appealing look, full of tenderness, one which plainly enough said: "Shall I?"

"And you will play the accompaniment again, Miss Greville?" continued Manton, advancing towards the harpist.

Renee bowed her head avoiding his glance, turning to the music and selecting the ballad she knew from old habit her companion would prefer.

Manton drew back as he saw how plainly Renee avoided him. Burns stood leaning against the back of a chair, watching the little comedy being played; and directly after the chords of the harp vibrated through the room, Josephine took up the strain, and Manton listened from the couch, with his head resting upon his hand, seeing Burns advance to turn over the music on the stand of the harpist, and then

involuntarily letting his eyes seek those of Josephine, who was singing, so it seemed, only to him, the words of the song sounding like the outpourings of her own heart.

He gazed at her once more, as if fascinated, listening, drinking in the music—the blending of voice and harp, which sounded so dreamy and delightful in his weak state, that his eyes grew dim, and the passionate look of the beautiful girl was robbed of half its power.

"Done?" came the voice of him who filled his thoughts. "Then come out here, you young people. It is delicious. The moon is just rising."

They all went out slowly in obedience to the captain's words, and Renee shrank back to leave the room last with Burns; while Josephine, after throwing a light scarf about her head and neck, placed her hand upon Manton's arm.

"Ah, that's better," said the captain as they approached the spot where he was leaning back in a cane-seat. "The most delicious night we have had for months. What a relief these times are after our hot days. But we must be careful."

That night, after the captain and the two young men had retired to their rooms, there was an eager conversation going on beneath Josephine's window, where she was leaning out; while Renee had sought her room to throw herself upon her bed, weeping silently in the misery of spirit which had come upon her.

"Is that you, 'Miramis'?" whispered Josephine as she reached out and peered down on the darkness.

"Yes, Missie Josee."

"'Miramis! Come closer—closer still, so that I can whisper."

"Dah, missie, you reach down. You touch my ear an' speak right in um. You got scem'n' good to say?"

"Yes," panted the girl excitedly. "He loves me, 'Miramis—he loves me!"

"Course. 'Miramis always tell Missie Josee so. She nurse and save de hahnsum officer buckra, Massa Manton, for Missie Josee. Missie Josee gib 'Miramis gold brooch now, and yaller hankchief."

"Yes—yes—yes!" cried Josephine excitedly. "Now go. I want to shut my window and think."

"When Missie Josee gib 'Miramis de brooch?"

"To-morrow."

"An' de yaller hankchief?"

"As soon as I can buy one.—Good-night—good-night."

She drew back and closed the window, to take her right hand in her left and hold it to her lips as she stood in the half-light, the broad yellow moon sending its rays through the lattice panes and casting her shadow upon the wall.

"It was here he held it," she whispered softly; "and there—and there—and there."

At each word she kissed her hand, her full red lips curling as she stood there afterward smiling at her happy thoughts; and that smile was upon her lips as she lay down that night and slept.

CHAPTER IX.

How did it happen? Who can tell. How does it always happen that two who love are drawn together. Nature's magnetism must be to blame.

Days had passed since the night when Manton had listened to the singing, and an afternoon had come when he and his friend were in their old place down the garden.

Burns had dropped asleep after they had sat together for some time in silence, for a coolness had sprung up between the young men, one which a few words on either side spoken openly would have cleared away; but those words were not uttered, and the coolness threatened to be the beginning of a feud.

Wearily of much sitting, Manton left his chair, and began to stroll down the garden toward where he could hear the voices of the black labourers in the plantation.

"Perhaps the captain's with them," he thought, "and I must see him alone and speak out frankly, for my position seems to be intolerable."

He went on, and passed out of the garden to the beaten track which led through a patch of the primeval forest toward the negroes' cottages. The path was very secluded and winding, dark almost in the deep shade cast by the huge trees which the captain had religiously preserved for their grandeur; and Manton was slowly and dreamily wandering on, thinking out what he should say, when his heart suddenly began to beat rapidly, the blood flushed to his temples, and he stopped short to watch the slight graceful figure in white coming toward him, her hat in one hand a basket in the other, suggesting that she had been out upon some mission to the negroes' village. Her head was bent; and as Manton gazed eagerly at the beautiful face before him, he could see that it was troubled, for the tears were stealing down her cheeks.

For a moment he felt that his presence was an intrusion upon her sorrow; and he was about to hurry away; but his feet seemed nailed to the spot, and he stood firm till she was close up and became aware of his presence, starting violently, flushed up, and then turning deadly pale.

"Mr. Manton!"

"Miss Greville—Renee," he exclaimed hoarsely; and, carried away by the emotion within him, he caught her hands and held them firmly in spite of the violent efforts she made to snatch them away.

"Mr. Manton!" she exclaimed, now flushing once more, and her eyes meeting his full of indignation fire—"loose my hands. What does this mean?"

"What I had hoped you saw and believed," he cried in a low passionate voice; "what I have tried hard to hide; what I have fought against all through these weary weeks of anxiety.—Renee, listen to me. Forgive me, if it is dishonourable to speak as I do, but the words will out now.—No, no—don't repulse me like this. The thought of you almost brought me back to life, for I love you—I love you as dearly as ever man could love."

She looked at him wildly for a few moments, and then snatched her hands away.

"It is an insult!" she cried angrily.

"To offer the love of an honest man!" he said in a tone full of bitter reproach. "Is this the gentle girl whose image I sat up in my breast to worship! No, no—don't leave me like this, Renee. I am not worthy of you, but believe me all I say is true."

She seemed to grow before him in her indignation, and for a few moments stood gazing at him with a look of withering contempt.

"Is this the gentleman to whom my father has done nothing but good—to whom

we offered a kindly welcome in his time of need?"

"Miss Greville," he cried excitedly, "what have I said that you should turn upon me like this!"

"Returned evil for good. Given us deceit when we looked for frank manliness."

"Renee, you are too cruel!" he cried.

"Cruel! How could I be harsh enough to the man who, after trifling and leading on one whom I look upon as a sister, dares to offer me what he calls his love!"

"I—trifle—lead on Josephine!" he cried indignantly. "Never, so help me Heaven?"

She gazed at his flushed indignance face wildly, as he went on angrily now.

"Who dares say that? Oh, this is too much! Miss Greville—Renee—what have I ever said and done that you should think me so contemptible a cur?"

"Mr. Manton!" she cried, with her voice trembling now, and her eyes gazed searchingly into his, "I thought—my sister thought"—

"So little of me that you both supposed I would insult you and betray your father's confidence in so contemptible a way."

"But Josephine!"

"Well," he said coldly, "Josephine?"

"She thinks that"—

"That I love her," he cried bitterly. "Surely she could not think this. I have never by word or look given her cause. I have never thought of her in connection with love. There is some terrible mistake. Miss Greville, Renee, you misjudge me, on my soul."

"Is—is this the truth?" she faltered, her voice growing hoarse and agitated.

"Look at me and ask me that question again," he said, catching her hand. "Renee, from the first day I saw you, when weak almost unto death, you seemed to be the angel of hope beckoning me back to life. Indeed, indeed, it is true; and I have never given your sister more than a passing thought.—Don't withdraw your hand. Tell me you believe me. You cannot think I could be so base."

"What can I think?" she faltered. "Josephine believes so firmly that"—

"She did not finish her sentence, for as she spoke, he could read in her eyes that she had perfect faith now in all he said. Her sweet countenance had softened, and was irradiated now by a joy she could not hide; and as he drew her toward him, he felt that she was yielding softly, and that the misunderstanding was at an end, when all at once her face grew set, with a look of horror and dread. She shrank from him; and with a feeling of anger and shame that they should have been surprised, he turned round quickly to face Captain Greville, and ask pardon for suffering love to master duty toward his host."

But he was wrong. The captain was not standing behind him in the path, but Josephine, with her dark eyes dilated, her creamy cheeks flushed with scarlet, her head thrown back, and her lips parted in a smile which showed her white teeth.

"I am so sorry," she said with a mocking laugh; and her voice had a metallic ring. "I did not know you two were lovers. Shall I go away?"

"No," said Manton, recovering himself, and holding out his hand as he met the girl's flashing eyes. "Stay with us. Josephine—sister—I love Renee very dearly. You love her dearly too. Give me your hand."

She fixed her eyes on his in a cruel vindictive stare, made no answer, but stood motionless for some moments before turning quickly and hurrying away.

Manton stood frowning for a few moments.

"Come," he said, taking Renee's hand; "there must be no further misunderstanding. Tell me, though: you believe me now?"

She could not answer; but he was satisfied with the look of faith and trust that beamed from her eyes; and they walked slowly back together till they reached the garden, where Burns still lay back asleep. They stopped near him, and Manton felt a strange fresh dread arise within him as he asked himself whether he was to find an enemy in the sleeping man.

"I cannot help it," he said half aloud. "If he loves you too, what wonder? Renee, tell me all. Has Will ever told you that he loved you?"

"Mr. Burns?" she whispered eagerly. "Oh no. Could you not see? He loves poor Josee, I am sure, and I always thought he was jealous of you."

"He—Josephine," cried Manton excitedly. "Then it was about her! How blind I have been.—Here, Will: wake up! And he laid his hand on the sleeper's shoulder."

Burns started up, to look wildly from one to the other.

"Congratulations, my old fellow," cried Manton, taking Renee's hand as she stood flushed and tearful beside him. "You and I have been playing at cross-purposes. Renee here has made me the happiest man under the sun."

"Jack!" cried Burns wildly. "I thought—I thought—He stopped, looking deadly pale, and then flushing in his excitement."

"Yes; I know now what you thought. But it was all a mistake, lad. Renee"—

"Is my child, sir," said a stern voice, "and you are my guest, whom I trusted as a man of honor. I think some explanation is first due to me."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

LEPROSY IN CANADA.

An Increase in the Number of Cases on the Pacific Coast.

In view of the increased numbers of lepers on the Pacific coast in Canada, Parliament will be asked to increase the annual appropriation on account of the care of lepers at this season. Dr. Smith in charge of the lazaretto in New Brunswick, reports that on Jan. 1 there were twenty-two lepers eleven males and eleven females. During the year six new cases were admitted and two died. Dr. Smith reports that no lepers have been admitted to the hospital for several years past from Tracadie, so long its hiding place. The newcomers were gathered in from outlying districts, to which relatives of leprosy persons in Tracadie had removed years ago. Dr. Smith says: "I am constantly on the watch, and have difficulty in finding some of the cases because they are hidden by their families and friends. By stamping out each new focus of leprosy I feel quite confident that New Brunswick will soon be clear of the disease. To segregation I shall attribute the happy change. Segregation has already cleared leprosy forever from Tracadie."

EMPEROR WILLIAM.

Changed His Mind on the Socialist Question—His Professed Sympathy for Workingmen.

We are told that Kaiser William II., dining last week with Chancellor Caprivi, urged Herr von Bismarck, the leader of the National Liberals, to support the Education bill, on the ground that it would purge the rising generation of Socialist ideas. On the same occasion he is reported to have said to another member of the Reichstag that, having become convinced that the Socialist party wished to attack the existing order, he had determined to take measures against them. Two days later seven Socialists were arrested in Berlin on the charge of high treason, and as these arrests are the first made since the repeal of the anti-Socialist laws, it seems evident that the Emperor's attitude toward socialism has been completely reversed. It has not taken the young Kaiser long to change his mind on the subject, which first, it will be remembered, gave rise to a sharp difference of opinion between him and Bismarck. When William II. came to the throne, the veteran Chancellor was preparing to secure from the Reichstag an extension of the laws against the Socialists. Bismarck held that no compromise was possible between the monarchy and the Social-Democratic party, which had never disguised its conviction that the existing order ought to be overthrown, and that dispute was only possible as to the means which should be taken to that end. The young Emperor, on the other hand, believed himself to be much wiser than the aged adviser of his grandfather, and took for granted that with a few vague promises and reassuring words he could transform the Socialists into loyal subjects. He therefore allowed the so-called *cartel* parties, namely, the Conservatives, Imperialists, and National Liberals, to see that he personally desired the anti-Socialist laws to expire by limitation, and Bismarck consequently found himself unable to get them renewed. Then the Kaiser proceeded to convoke his international labor conference, which, as the old Chancellor predicted, proved entirely abortive. From that day to this he has done nothing to attest the sincerity of his wish to answer the demands of German workingmen. He cannot even claim any part in the Workmen's Insurance laws, which by no means meet with unqualified approval from Social-Democrats, for these were devised and passed by Bismarck.

Although William II. has done nothing to demonstrate the reality of his professed sympathy for workingmen, he has disclosed a keen disappointment at the failure of the Socialists to vote for all candidates known to enjoy his favor, and at their refusal to proclaim themselves entirely contented with the present conditions. He has such an extravagant sense of his importance, and of the filial devotion of the German people, that he supposed the Social Democrats would at the first good-natured overture from him consent to the extinction of their political organization. He was astonished to discover at the last general election for the Reichstag that the Socialists, instead of supporting the Government nominees, cast a vastly increased number of ballots for their own candidates, and thereby obtained a much larger representation in Parliament. Surprise became exasperation when the Socialist Congress at Erfurt unanimously reaffirmed its objections to the existing order, although a split took place between the majority, who had advocated constitutional agitation, and the anarchical wing which prefers more expeditious and violent measures. In a word, the young Kaiser has found out how well founded was Bismarck's warning that the doctrines of Karl Mark and the principle of paternal government are essentially irreconcilable. Having abandoned the plan of propitiation and reverted to the programme of coercion, William II. will, of course, soon learn, as Bismarck learned, the difficulty of suppressing socialism, by the cumbrous machinery of the common law defining and punishing the crime of treason. We may therefore expect to see shortly the same sovereign who prevented the reenactment of the special legislation against the Socialists, demanding its revival. Such a move on his part will destroy the last vestige of the popularity which at the outset of his reign he acquired among unthinking persons by philanthropic professions, which were based neither on deeply rooted sympathies nor on thorough knowledge of economical and historical facts.

The British Cabinet.

The British Cabinet, as readjusted in November last, consists of Lord Salisbury, prime minister and foreign secretary; Mr. A. J. Balfour, his nephew, first lord of the treasury and leader in the House of Commons; Lord Halsbury (Hardinge Stanley Giffard), lord chancellor; Viscount Cranbrook (Gathorne Hardy), lord president of the council; Earl Cadogan (George Henry Cadogan), lord privy seal; Mr. G. J. Goschen, chancellor of the exchequer; Mr. Henry Matthews, home secretary; Lord Knutsford (Sir Henry Thurston Holland), colonial secretary; Mr. E. Stanhope, secretary for war; Viscount Cross (Sir R. Cross), secretary for India; Lord George Hamilton, first lord of the admiralty; Lord Ashbourne (Edward Gibson, created in 1885 and reappointed in 1886), lord chancellor for Ireland; Mr. W. L. Jackson, chief secretary for Ireland; the Duke of Rutland (formerly Lord John Manners), chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Sir M. Hicks-Beach, president of Board of Trade; Mr. C. T. Ritchie, president of local board; and Mr. Henry Chaplin, president of the Board of Agriculture. Of these Ministers the Duke of Rutland, who as Lord John Manners entered the House of Commons in 1841, has been longest in public life, though Lord Cranbrook is an older man. He was born in 1814, Lord Rutland in 1818. The latter