

UNDER AN AFRIC SUN.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER VI.

Tom Digby's right hand clenched, and as Helen clung to his left, she felt his nerves and muscles quiver with rage. A curious sensation of faintness came over her, and she struggled to be firm, as she told herself that she might prevent some terrible encounter. But there was nothing of the kind. For Ramon came forward eagerly. "Ah, there you are!" he exclaimed. "Had a pleasant day? Why, where are the stagers?"

"Did you not hear them?" said Digby roughly. "If No. Oh yes; I heard Senor Redgrave call. I missed them as I came through the trees—What a delightful evening! I passed three years in London, Mr. Digby; but I never saw such an evening as this." He chattered away, as he stepped to the other side of the mule, keeping on without waiting for the other's reply. "You have had a splendid day, but very hot down by the town. You have felt it cold up the mountain, Mr. Digby?"

"Yes, very," said Digby shortly; and he felt Helen press his hand gently, as if she were imploring him not to be angry. "But you could not have had a clearer day for the view. Did you feel the cold much, Miss Helen?"

"No—no," she said quietly. "I don't think it was very cold."

"Generally is. I beg pardon, Mr. Digby! Have a cigar?"

"If I refuse it, he'll take it for a declaration of war, and I don't want to fight. Why should I? Poor wretch!"

"There you are," said Ramon, coming round by the back of the mule with his case open. "The smaller are the best."

"Thanks," said Digby, taking one. "Let me give you a light."

A match was struck, and by its light Digby caught a glimpse of the Spaniard's face, which was as calm and unruffled as could be.

Then they went on, and retook their places on either side of the mule.

"I've been very busy, too," continued Ramon. "Tired; but was curious to hear how you had got on; and yet half afraid that the crater had given way and swallowed you all up."

Digby felt tongue-tied; but Ramon chattered away.

"I wonder whether Senor Redgrave will let me throw myself upon his hospitality this evening? I called on my way up, and found that you had not returned. I left some fruit; and there was a fragrance from the kitchen window that was maddening to a hungry man. Ah! here we are." For they had come up to Redgrave and Fraser, who were standing beside the track.

"You, Ramon!" said Redgrave, rather sternly.

"Yes, my dear sir, I thought I would go and meet them; but I missed you. My dear Redgrave, I want you to give me a bit of dinner to-night."

"Certainly," replied Redgrave—and he told a polite lie: "I shall be very happy."

For the rest of the way Ramon did nearly all the talking; and during the evening his conversation was fluent and highly interesting as he engaged Fraser in conversation about the antiquities of the place; smoking cigars and sipping his chocolate in the most unrefined way.

"You are making quite a collection of our minerals, I hear," he said in the course of the conversation.

"Yes; I have a good many."

"Of course you examined the head of the barranco on the west side of the mountain?"

"No; we have not been there yet."

But don't forget the head of the barranco beyond my place. It will repay a visit; and if I can assist you with guides or men, pray command me—right."

"Well, Tom," said Fraser, in a sad voice as soon as they were alone, "what next?"

"I don't know, old fellow, and don't want to know," replied Digby in a tone of voice which contrasted strangely with the mournful speech of his friend.

"You do not know?"

"I only know that I am surprisedly happy."

"Yes; you must have been. Horace, old fellow, I can speak to you as I would to a brother. I love Helen Redgrave with all my heart."

They walked on in silence for some time, and then Fraser said sadly: "A boyish fancy—Come, be a man. This must go no further, Tom. Let us pack up and go away."

Digby shook his head.

"I am sure it would be better for all."

Digby drew a long breath, full of exultation, for the pressure of Helen's little fingers seemed to cling to his hand.

"Do you not see," continued Fraser, "that you are intervening between two people whom Fate has evidently marked out for husband and wife?"

"Fate be hanged! What has Fate got to do with it?"

"Do you not see that you are making a powerful enemy of Ramon, who has the father at his mercy?"

"I'll pitch Ramon down one of the barrancos, if he doesn't mind what he is about," cried Digby warmly.

"Mind he does not pitch you down, Tom. But about Helen Redgrave?"

"Well, what about her? I know what my dear old moralist is about to say. Marriage is a serious thing—I have my friends to study—I ought not to be rash—I ought to wait—I ought to write home."

"Yes; I should have said something of the kind, and also warned you to flee from danger—and temptation."

"Then here we are at the root, and I am going to get on my perch at once, my dear old model of wisdom; but before I do so, here are my answers to your warnings: I am well off; I am my own master; and I have neither father nor mother to vex me. Greatest and most cogent answer of all—Helen."

Half an hour after, setting at defiance the insect plagues of the island, Tom Digby was sleeping peacefully and dreaming of his sweet young mistress; while Fraser was seated in the darkness, with his arms folded, gazing out through the open window, with the darkness visible and mental ahead.

"He loves her, and—Yes," he added, after a painful sigh, "what wonder, poor boy—she loves him in return. Oh! I must have been mad—I must be mad. And that man Ramon? Yes; he smiled and showed his white teeth. I would not trust him for a moment. The calm was too false and treacherous. If I could only get the poor boy away!"

CHAPTER VII.

A week of unalloyed happiness passed, during which time every evening was spent at the villa. Digby grew more joyous; the saddened look was rapidly passing away from Helen's face, and that of her father grew puzzled, while Fraser's seemed more sombre and sad.

Ramon had fetched them to his place again and again, and had also begged leave to accompany them in two of their expeditions, taking horses and mules and providing himself with a polished and agreeable guide, taking them to various points, whose marvels made Fraser forget his own trouble in the excitement of discovery; and to a naturalist's heart; while, after these journeys, Ramon always insisted upon the travellers accepting his hospitality.

Ramon had left them for a time, one of his servants having called him away, a summons which, after many apologies, he had obeyed, leaving the friends to go on their journey, with the excellent French claret towards his companion, Digby, who was slightly flushed and exclaimed: "Taste that, my boy, and confess that our host is a charming fellow and a polished gentleman."

"Yes, I confess to these," said Fraser gravely; and just then Ramon reappeared at the door, bearing a fresh box of cigars, which he handed to his guests and resumed his seat.

"One of the evils of possessing plantations," he said, "Your men are always coming with the news of some disaster."

"Nothing serious, I hope!" said Digby.

"No, no—a mere nothing—kind of blight appearing. But, by the way, you two have never visited the head of that barranco yet. Don't forget it. When will you go?"

"When Fraser's ready.—What do you say to to-morrow?"

"This was agreed to, and Digby rose as if to leave.

OUR EXPORTS INCREASING

CANADA'S TRADE IS EXPANDING YEAR BY YEAR.

Over Seven Million Dollars Greater in 1895 Than in 1894—List of the Articles Which Make up the Aggregate Increase.

The trade and navigation returns for the fiscal year ending 30th June last are now to hand. With their grand totals the public was made acquainted several months ago, when the summary statement appeared. Happily, the information is of a kind that cannot be communicated to the people too soon. It shows that we are going on adding to our commercial successes, and that we have made a new record in our foreign trade.

Our exports amounted to \$121,013,862, exceeding by \$7,375,049 those of the year before, and scoring the highest mark ever reached in Canadian trade.

They close also a great half-decade in our export trade, of which the figures are as follows:—1892, \$113,963,375; 1893, \$118,564,352; 1894, \$117,524,949; 1895, \$121,013,862. Before that period our exports kept below the hundred-million line except in the year 1882, when they rose to \$102,137,203.

What makes the progress of the last five years the more remarkable is the fact that it was contemporary with one of the worst depressions of the century. Our great gain last year was made in the face of adverse circumstances. The prices of some of our chief staples—as cheese, bacon, cattle, horses, and lumber—were low. In some of our agricultural products the crops were short, especially so in hay.

In spite of these drawbacks, the industry and enterprise of the country rolled up an export trade surpassing that of 1895 by \$7,375,049. Some of the particular increases which make up this big aggregate increase are indicated in the following list:—

| | 1895. | 1894. |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Gold-bearing quartz, dust, etc. | 612,729 | 1,099,063 |
| Silver in one piece | 651,737 | 1,995,548 |
| Canned lobster | 1,837,676 | 2,149,067 |
| Canned salmon | 2,060,413 | 2,539,755 |
| Canned meats | 319,568 | 820,605 |
| Butter | 709,126 | 1,118,768 |
| Bacon | 3,546,107 | 3,802,269 |
| Wool in bulk | 3,646,107 | 3,802,269 |
| Ships | 184,623 | 2,184,623 |
| Horses over 1 year | 1,493,683 | 2,068,117 |
| Hay | 1,540,251 | 1,976,749 |
| Cottons | 553,579 | 775,592 |
| Carriage | 26,308 | 103,491 |
| Leather | 1,273,845 | 1,997,848 |
| Whiskey | 327,983 | 374,013 |
| Wood pulp | 590,874 | 676,777 |
| Upland cotton | 193,576 | 283,779 |
| Lumber | 17,504,362 | 19,972,702 |
| Square timber | 1,940,775 | 2,727,417 |
| Pulp blocks | 468,359 | 627,865 |

Against these there are of course items to be set in which the level of 1895 has not been maintained, as in the case of cheese, of which, though we shipped 164,689,123 lbs. of our own production, as against 1894, the value in 1895, the value last year was only \$13,556,571, as against \$15,118,894 for the smaller quantity sold in 1895, the decline being accounted for by the fall in price. Another striking feature of the export trade for last year is its growth in the British market. The United Kingdom took from us in the year 1895, as against 1894, the value of \$66,690,238, as against \$61,855,990 in 1894. For our bacon and ham, and our cheese, the British demand keeps on steadily expanding. In the fall of 1895, our exports show large increase in butter. In 1895 we sold abroad butter to the value of \$709,126, as against \$553,579 in 1894. The British demand has been steadily creeping up into large figures is deal lumber. Of deals and deal ends, pine timber, etc., our exports in 1895 to the value of \$9,138,183, as against \$8,048,073 in 1894. Of this Britain's purchases in 1895 amounted to \$8,397,505 as against \$7,375,252 in 1894. The quantity of our exports have increased by nearly a million, the credit being largely due to the demand of the Mother Country.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

In three years the progeny of a pair of rats, under favorable conditions, will number 1,000.

Every prudent young man in Chicago, when he takes a lady to a theatre, carries a bit of cheese in his pocket to nourish a certain rose bush. He further directed that the roses be distributed among his friends.

An electric mouse trap is something new. A bit of cheese is attached to an electric wire. The mouse or rat to get at the bait must stand on a metal plate, and the moment he touches the wire he is shocked to death.

A shorthand typewriter is in use in Boston. The size is eight inches by seven, and it is supplied with a roll of paper. The reporter listens to a speaker, fingers the keys, and the speech is taken down on the endless roll.

A Scotch minister in Melbourne has a male chorister arrayed in Highland garb, and the females in the costume of the lady of the house. The hymns are sung to the music of the bagpipes and the church is crowded.

Dr. Calot, an Italian physician, practicing at the Rothschild Hospital in Berk-sur-Mer, France, has succeeded in straightening thirty-seven hunch-backs. All those operated upon were children, and in no case has he failed to remedy the deformity.

It is against the law to erect in Providence, R. I., a frame building covering more than 2,000 square feet. A builder is about to construct a bowling alley there, 40 by 80 feet, and will have it feet of it, with the entrance in Providence and the rest of the building in the adjoining town of Johnston.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

He told me, papa, that his sole aim in life would be to make me happy.

Who?—The man's going to make the livin' then?—sorted the old gentleman.

WHAT UNCLE SAM IS AT.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ABOUT THE BUSY YANKEE.

Neighborly Interest in His Doings—Matters of Moment and Flirt Gleaned from His Daily Record.

Owing to a coal war, people of Jasper, Ala., are enabled to get lump coal at \$1.25 per ton.

He stopped to water his horses, and was standing in front of them, adjusting the harness after they had drunk, when one of them bit off his under lip.

Bones of soldiers who were buried at Clarksville, Tenn., when the female academy at that place was used as a hospital during the war, were uncovered by a recent landslide back of the building.

Recreant men cashiers of several Minneapolis establishments have been replaced by women, and the action has led to another discussion as to whether women are more trustworthy than men.

Oscar Randall of Chillicothe, who married Bertie De Vaul, there is the son of his father's stepmother by his first husband, so that his mother becomes his mother-in-law and his bride's father becomes her father-in-law.

The Rev. Dr. Walker, an advocate of foreign missions couldn't bring the congregation of the Christian Church at Knoxville, Ky., to agree with him on the subject of missionary propaganda, and they stopped contributing to his salary. Then he resigned.

When a South Dakota rancher's family were sitting around a table in their sod-covered cabin, the centre support of the roof gave way and the turf fell in, burying them all, smothering to death the mother and one child. The rancher dug his way out, but could not reach his wife in time.

When Bettie Quick, who was receiving the attentions of Fred Bokamb and Henry Perkins in Knott county, Ky., appeared to her father, Bokamb, a polecat and threw it into her lap, and trouble began, Perkins was in it.

Reports are meagre "at Middleboro" but Bokamb was mortally wounded. Finding a purse containing 35 cents on the sidewalk in front of a Calais, Me., store, a woman picked it up and took it to the storekeeper. He hung it in the window above a sign reading: "Found—this purse, containing a large sum of money, when he came down in the morning the purse was gone and there was a big hole in his plate glass window."

Alejandro Ruiz, a Mexican antiquarian and traveller, whose collection of antique curios, paintings, and carvings, fills a private museum at his home in Puebla, Mex., at the age of 70 years is learning the English language as a means of occupying his time. He has travelled in almost all parts of the world, collecting whatever of interest was old. He has been an intimate friend of President Diaz ever long before the time of his elevation to the Chief Magistracy of Mexico, and the President visits his home whenever he travels through Puebla.

Barre, Vt., granite cutters have shipped to Daniel Moriarity, a millionaire of New Orleans, for a mortuary monument, the largest surface stone ever sent over a railroad. It is fourteen feet square, with a depth of three feet, and weighs 80,000 pounds. A special car had to be built to transport it, and as no weight was allowed, the stone is permitted on roadways and bridges of New Orleans, a special track had to be run for about a mile there from the main line of the railroad to the cemetery. The slab is a part of a monument which will be seventy feet high.

ENGLAND'S NAVAL PROGRAMME.

Views of What It Should Be—What France and Russia Are Doing.

Before long the naval programme for the coming year will be considered in the British House of Commons, and in view of that fact the Pall Mall Gazette discusses what is needed.

The steady increase in England's new construction is shown by the fact that while three years ago \$23,840,000 was considered sufficient for the annual contribution, two years ago the amount was made \$31,555,000 and last year \$35,825,000. Thus it had increased more than one-half in two years. Of course, the full naval expenditures include also the enormous sums for the maintenance of existing ships.

Of the ships now in hand and not completed there are eighty-three in all, nearly half, however, being torpedo destroyers, which can easily be finished before long. In addition, five battle ships of the Majestic class are nearly ready, and should be in commission this year, while six of the second-class are virtually finished. Several other ships are nearly ready. As a whole naval construction in England is

EXTRAORDINARILY RAPID

and in that respect she is ahead of all the rest in the world.

The five newest battle ships, however, are little advanced. The Canopus and the Goliath were only laid down on Jan. 4, the Ocean is not yet begun, and the Albion and Glory have been put out to contract.

England's naval work is largely regulated by what France and Russia are doing, her principle being always to have as large a force available as these two countries combined. Now, in the three years just spoken of, the dual alliance had laid down only nine first-class battle-ships to England's ten, two small battle-ships, the same number of first-class cruisers as England, four small cruisers, and fewer torpedo boats. So far, therefore, England is satisfied; but the authority quoted thinks that to make assurance doubly sure, it would be well to provide for laying down five more battle-ships this year. As to cruisers, England has a splendid fleet of them, but may need more.

France has on the stocks three 23-inch guns, and is laying down as many more. Russia has three of 21-knots building, and Germany has five. We want then, from four to eight of 23

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Twenty-first-Class

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