

A SISTER'S VENGEANCE

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

"Look at that, now!" he whispered.
 "Ay, I was looking. What does it mean?"
 "Mans!" said Dinny, scornfully. "It means that Black Muzzard thinks he's captain now."
 "Then if the throat-cutting scoundrel is I'm off first chance."
 "An' I'm wid ye," said Dinny, earnestly. "I'll go and lade a virtuous life."
 "And leave the skipper's brother and Bart?"
 Dinny pulled off his cap and rubbed his head viciously.
 "Now, why did ye want to go and say that?" he cried. "Everything was as aisy as could be, and you go and upset it all."
 "Poor Abel!" said Jack, at last, softly.
 "Ay, poor old Abel!" said Bart, with a groan.
 "You here?" said Jack, starting up and catching the rough fellow by the arm.
 "Here—ay!" growled Bart, slowly.
 "Where did you think I was, lad?"
 "I didn't think, Bart, or I shouldn't have said that," cried Jack, earnestly. "Where would ye be but at my elbow if I was in trouble, ready to be of help?"
 "Ay, but there's no helping you here," said Bart, with a groan. "What'll you do, lad?"
 "Do!" cried Jack, with a savage laugh—"do what poor Abel always hung back from doing, and stopped Black Muzzard from many a time. I don't read my Bible now, Bart; but doesn't it say that there shall be blood for blood? and my poor brother's cries aloud for vengeance, as they shall see."
 "No, no, my lad," whispered Bart, hoarsely. "let it stop here. It seems to me as if something said: 'This here's the end on it. Now get her to go back home.'"
 "Home!" said Jack, with a fierce laugh. "Where is home?"
 "Yonder," said Bart, stolidly.
 "Nol! Here—at sea. Bart, there is no other home for me; no other hope but to have revenge!"
 "Revenge, lad?"
 "Ay, a bitter, cruel revenge. I could have been different. It was once full of love and hope before I knew what the world was like, but that's all past and dead—yes, dead; and the dead yonder is looking toward me and asking me to remember what we have suffered."
 "But think."
 "Think, Bart! I have thought till my brain has seemed to burn; and everything points to revenge, and revenge I'll have!"
 "What are you going to do next?"
 There was no answer for a few minutes, and then the words whispered were very short and decisive.
 "And let 'em think it's scared us, and we're gone right away!" said Bart.
 "Yes."
 Bart gave a short, quick nod of the head, walked sharply to the fore-castle and yelled to the men to tumble up. The result was that in a very short time sail after sail was spread till a dusky cloud seemed to hover over the deck of the schooner, which reeled over in the light breeze and began skimming as lightly as a yacht eastward, as if to leave the scene of the commodore's execution far behind.

CHAPTER X.

The merchants of Bristol sent in a petition to his majesty the king, saying that the trade of the port was being ruined, that their ships were taken, that the supplies of sugar and tobacco must run short, and that, while the ladies would suffer as to their coffee, there would soon be no snuff ground up for the titillation of the noses of the king's liege subjects.

Always the same story—Commodore Junk, in command of a long, low, fast-sailing schooner, was here, there and everywhere. Government heard what was said and replied that five years before they had sent out a ship to capture Commodore Junk, that there was a severe engagement and the captain was taken and hung, and afterward gibbeted off the port where his deeds obtained most fame.

To which the Bristol merchants replied in a further petition that though it was as the government stated, Commodore Junk's body had been taken down from the gibbet soon after it was hung up, that he had come to life again, and that his deeds were now ten times worse than before.

Moreover, that somewhere or another on the western shores of the great Mexican gulf, he had a retreat where he lived in great luxury when ashore; that many bloody deeds had been done after desperate fighting, men being compelled to walk the plank or sent adrift in small boats far from land; and that, though Spain had been sent out, no one had been able to discover the mysterious retreat, even the Indians who had been bribed to go returning with their heads minus their ears, or else with strange tales that the buccaner was under the protection of the thunder gods, whose home was in the burning mountains, and that it was useless to try to destroy him and his crew.

Moreover, the men of Bristol said that it was a crying shame that their ships and cargoes should not have adequate protection, seeing what a deal they paid to the revenue for the goods they imported, and that one of his majesty's ships ought to be more than a match for all the thunder gods in Central America, and his majesty's petitioners would ever pray. Then the government concluded that they must do something, and gave their orders accordingly.

The result was that one day Captain Humphrey Armstrong walked along the bluff in his big boots, which creaked loudly over the gravel. The gold lace on his uniform glittered in the sunshine, and as he wore his cocked hat all on one side, and rested his left hand upon the hilt of his sword.

The captain was on his way to St. Stephen's square, to keep an appointment with Loganson's, and before long he was in earnest converse with Lady Widdery, his lordship's youngest daughter, and of the most fashionable of the day.

"I shall be away for months," said the captain, after nearly half an hour's preliminary conversation.

"Of the nature of duty, and I must be on my way," said the lady, with a cold

An officer of the watch came down to announce the arrival of a couple of Indians bearing news.

"It's the old story, sir, but I thought I'd better report it to you. Shall I kick them, and let them go?"

"No," said the captain, shortly, for he was ready now to snatch at straws.

"What does the man say?"

"There are two of them, sir; and they say the pirate vessel is to be found a day's journey to the south, and that they have seen it lying at anchor."

"Do they seem honest?"

"Honest as Indians, sir. I think it's all made up."

The captain rose and went on deck, where he found a couple of soft, brown, plump-looking Indians, with large, dreamy eyes, and languid manner, seated upon their heels near the gangway, where they could give a glance from time to time at their canoe swinging by a frail-looking bark rope.

"La!" said her ladyship, as, after a show of resistance, she surrendered her lily-white hand, and suffered it to be kissed. "And how long will it take you to capture this terrible buccaner?"

"I shall be away for months," said the captain.

"La!" said the lady.

"But I shall fight like some knight errant of old, and fly back, with the wings of my good ship," said the captain, "and hasten to lay the trophies of my victory at my darling's feet."

"You will be sure to bring him?" said the lady.

"I hope he will fall in the fight," said the captain.

"Then you are going to fight?"

"Yes, I am going out in command of a splendid ship with a crew of brave men, to attack and exterminate this horde of wags, and I hope to do it like a man."

"But will anybody bleed?"

"I fear so."

"La! Will you be hurt?"

"I hope not. But I must run the risk; and if I come back wounded, it will be in your service, dearest, and then I shall claim my reward."

"No," said the lady, with one of her most winning looks. "I don't believe you. Sailors are worse than soldiers, and you will fall in love with one of the lovely Spanish ladies out there and forget all about poor little me."

"Forget you!" cried the captain, passionately. "never! My love for you grows stronger every day; and as to beauty, there was ever a woman so beautiful as you?"

Captain Humphrey was about to throw himself on his knees as well as his boots would allow, but just then the door opened, and fresh visitors were announced, and the topic of the captain's appointment to the sloop-of-war Queen Jane, for the extermination of the West Indian buccaners, formed the staple of the conversation.

Love had blinded the eyes of the stout captain lately introduced to the fashionable beauty, and welcomed an account of the fact that he had lately succeeded to the Devonshire estates of the Armistrengths, consequent upon the death of his cousin James, who had been killed in a duel.

So, deeply in love with as pretty a bit of artificiality as ever dressed, or rather believing himself deeply in love, Captain Humphrey joined his well-found ship at Falmouth and sailed for the far west and the land of the torrid sun. The men of Bristol rubbed their hands, thought of their riches and set down to their ledgers, while they waited for the news of the hanging of Commodore Junk.

Captain Humphrey had been out in the Mexican gulf for six months, and was as far off finishing his task as on the day when he had reached Kingstown harbor, and listened to the tales of the buccaner's last deeds.

But it was no myth. Put in where he would, it was to hear fresh news of the pirates. Now some unfortunate captain would arrive in a small boat, with his crew, suffering from heat, thirst and starvation. Now the half-burned hull of a goodly argosy would be encountered on the open sea. At any other time news would come of a derelict that had been scuttled but not sunk, and seen in such and such latitude.

Wherever he went Captain Humphrey was met with news, and at last with reports and almost insult by the authorities at the various ports at which he touched, for the way in which his task was being done.

For there was he with a small, swift-sailing ship, full of stout seamen, bravely equipped, well armed, and with guns big enough to blow all the schooners in the west to matchwood, while from the captain to the smallest powder monkey all were red-hot with desire to meet the commodore and give him a foe who knew how to fight.

Messages traveled slowly in those days, but all the same Captain Humphrey Armstrong had received a dispatch hinting at a recall, and a friendly letter telling him that if he did not see something to show he would be superceded and in disgrace.

He was a rich man, and at the end of three months he did not scruple to offer rewards for information; he doubled his offer to the man who would bring him within reach of the commodore's schooner; and beginning with ten guineas, he went on increasing, as the time went on, till he reached a hundred, and, at last, when six months had passed, it was known all round the coast that Captain Armstrong would give a thousand guineas to be brought alongside the schooner.

Captain Humphrey ground his teeth when he was alone in his cabin, and he swore as a Devon captain could swear in those days; but it did no good, and in spite of all his struggles, he could only look upon Commodore Junk as a will-o'-the-wisp.

"What will Lady Jenny think?" he groaned. "And I meant to do so much!"

At last what he dreaded arrived. He sailed into port one day, to find his recall; and he went back on board ship, ordered all sail to be made, and, ignoring the order, determined to find the commodore or die.

CHAPTER XI.

Humphrey Armstrong sat in his cabin listening to the whirr of a beetle which had been attracted by the lights, and down in through the open window, to make a base to the treble hum of the mosquitoes which haunted the mouth of the river where the ship had anchored for the night.

He had been away five days since the orders had come out for his return, in the vain hope that perhaps now he might at last encounter the buccaner; but, so far, he had seen or heard nothing; and the pirate captain might have dropped out of sight, or never existed, on the evening when the captain searched creek after creek along the coast, till daylight, when, for safety's sake, he had anchored at the mouth of the muddy stream.

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darkness, and then, feeling more and more that men who could serve their guns so well would be terrible adversaries in a case of boarding, and determined to spare his men till the schooner was disabled, he kept up the artillery duel till the only guide for laying their guns was the flash of the enemy's pieces.

By this time the fire of the buccaners had proved so effective that the sloop's bulwarks were shattered and her decks were slippery with blood, while her captain was flung with rage at the unfortunate aim of his men; for, though the schooner had evidently been hit again and again, she seemed to have escaped vital injury.

(To be continued.)

TESTS OF INTELLIGENCE.

Frenchmen Seeking to Learn the Reasoning Power of Animals.

A somewhat novel and interesting class of experiments is to be attempted by a French society created at Longchamps. The mental powers of different kinds of animals are to be tested. According to a correspondent of the London Daily Mail, the tests of the reasoning powers of these lower orders of creation are to be entrusted to as many of the members as possible, in order to avoid undue personal bias in judging of results.

The method is as follows: A large circus or arena is the scene of the investigations, into which the animals destined to prove their reasoning abilities are to be introduced. Around it are the seats for four hundred members, who will watch with French enthusiasm but scientific self-restraint, the puzzled fox contriving shifts to drink out of a deep vessel, and the thoughtful efforts of the crane to drink soup from a shallow one. That, at least, was the form which the first experiment took.

A lion was given some meat shut up in a box covered with a lid, and the spectators watched with breathless interest the solution of the question whether he would raise the lid or crack the box. He raised the cover, much to the gratification of the company.

The Longchamps lion was unanimously voted to have acted reasonably, and some monkeys, to which a rather more complicated task was assigned, came out with flying colors.

If the right class of French inquirer takes up this subject and has the assistance of a society and stock of creatures to use in experiments, and convenient places to make them in, much may be hoped from such an inquiry into the reasoning powers of animals.

THE POOR OLD SULTAN.

The Turkish Butler Looks and Acts as Though He Were Haunted.

Probably no potentate on earth is so continuously haunted by the fear of death as is the Sultan of Turkey. This is the pen picture given of him by an American correspondent who recently saw him in Constantinople.

"I stood on the palace terrace rising above the little roadway which on Friday the Sultan ventures forth to say his prayers. I saw the extraordinary precautions taken to protect him—the gathering of all his 5,000 troops, the stoppage of traffic by walls of armed men in every roadway leading up to the palace, then the surroundings of the few hundred yards of roadway which the Sultan must traverse from his palace gate to his mosque by rows of soldiers knee-deep. It was a strange, gorgeous, incongruous spectacle.



SULTAN OF TURKEY.

"Preceded by his women in closed carriages, several of their sons and some 80 great generals and officers of the army marching on foot, cause the Sultan himself. He was driven slowly in an open carriage facing forward, with the minister of war facing opposite. And this is Abdul Hamid II, the absolute ruler of 25,000,000 people, the defender of the faith, monarch of the Huky-met-senize, the glorious government, variously known elsewhere as the 'sick man of Europe' and the 'great assassin.' Every splendor of general and trooper is forgotten; every eye is fixed on the little, old, round-shouldered man in the carriage. A shout—well trained and evidently long practiced shout, curiously lacking in fire or spontaneity—goes up from the troops. The old man raises his hand in salute. He wears a red fez; his face is sickly white, like parchment; the nose is that of an aged eagle, long, hooked, high-bridged—the Armenian nose, his subjects will whisper in contempt. His eyes, what one sees of them, for he turns his head neither to the right nor to the left, are deep set and black.

"Those who know him best say that he has a peculiar way of moving his eyes without moving his head, as if he were always seeking to look behind him, to pry out secrets, to surprise hidden motives. His beard is deep blue-black, as are his eyebrows; naturally they would be gray, but he dyes them, for the Sultan must never look old. To his generals he leaves all the pomp and display of gold lace and tinsel; for himself he is clad wholly in black, like a eunuch, without ornamentation of any kind. 'The Raven,' he has been called, and the raven he looks. The Sultan is not really old—and yet if there is one impression above another that he gives it is that of age and great weariness."

BLAINE'S FEAR OF HORSES.

Would Not Have Been in an Accident Like That of Roosevelt.

"Had James G. Blaine been alive and a member of President Roosevelt's party at Pittsfield last week," remarked Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Taylor to-day, "the disaster by which Craig lost his life would not have occurred. I don't think I ever met anyone who was in such mortal fear of being in a runaway as was the brilliant Maine statesman. He would take absolutely no risks with horses, and required the most extreme precautions to be observed before he would submit himself to a carriage ride. I remember many years ago that Mr. Blaine was to visit our city of Milwaukee, and I was in charge of the arrangements for his reception and entertainment. One of the prominent liveries of the town came to me and offered free of charge the services of a magnificent team of six white horses to draw the carriage of Mr. Blaine. I accepted the offer, and when the statesman arrived at the depot I escorted him to the street where the team and carriage were waiting. I was about to hand Mr. Blaine into the vehicle when he suddenly drew back. 'There is no one at the head of those horses,' he said, 'and I would prefer that you get some man to guard them before we proceed.' I told the driver what he said, and the latter insisted that he had absolute control over his animals; that they were used to bands and other noises, and that there was not the slightest danger. I repeated this to Mr. Blaine, and told him that I thought he could safely take a seat. But he wouldn't do it. 'I shall not put my foot into the carriage,' he said, 'until a man is put at the head of each horse and is made to stay there.' That ended it, and we hurried around and got half a dozen men together and had each book on to a bride. Then Mr. Blaine got into the carriage and we proceeded uptown."—Brooklyn Eagle.

CRIPPLES MADE IN RUSSIA.

Beggars Disfigure Children and Exhibit Them for Gain.

That the making of cripples is carried on in Russia as a regular trade, and as a mighty profitable one, has just been proved in a startling way. As the

result of a dramatic happening at the annual fair at Podkama, it has come to light that Russian beggars make a practice of mangling and disfiguring children in order that they may show them in public and pocket the alms drawn from tender-hearted people by the sight of them.

At the Podkama fair, in the charge of an old beggar woman, there was a little girl of about 6, whose condition shocked everyone. She was entirely blind, she was lame in one leg, one of her arms was broken, and her body was a mass of disgusting sores. Money simply poured in on the old hag who had her in charge, one of those who gave being a shabbily dressed woman.

Handing the little girl some money, she said, "Pray my child, for my lost niece, Kitty?"

"I am Kitty," said the little girl.

The hag with her was arrested at once, and it was soon proved that she had stolen the child from her aunt's house at Zravanic, in Galicia. She took her to the headquarters of a regular gang of which she was a member, and there the child's eyes were put out, one of her legs and one arm were broken, and terrible wounds were made on different parts of her body. Then the little girl was taken from place to place in the country, the sight of her never failing to bring pocketfuls of money to her abductors.

When the people who were at the Podkama fair heard the story they vowed that they would lynch every beggar on the grounds, and it was all the police could do to keep them from doing so. Investigation proves that over fifty cases similar to the one described above have been detected during the last year.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

Were the Romantic Adventures of an Exile in Australia.

Like a page of sensational fiction read the romantic adventures of Joseph J. Gill, once a resident of Brooklyn, who died recently while home-bound from a life of remarkable exile in central Australia.

In 1856 Gill left his wife and two children and set sail for Australia to look after some mining interests there. After some time no letters were received from him, and after years of waiting his relatives in this country believed him dead—a belief that was firmly established when, in 1890, word came from the United States consul at Sydney, Australia, that a man named Gill, together with four companions, had been ambushed and killed by bushmen in the interior. Three years after his reported death his wife became Mrs. Frank Johnson of Brooklyn.

Meanwhile Gill was having his chapter of adventures in Australia. Instead of being killed by the bushmen he had been captured by them and forced into servitude, doing the most menial work and subjected to every indignity. For twelve years he lived in constant hope of deliverance, but so close was the watch upon him and so far had he been removed from civilization that his hopes seemed vain. Finally the opportunity came and Gill succeeded in making his way to the coast.

He yearned for the home and friends from whom he had been absent for six ten years and sought information regarding them through a detective agency. After some delay he was informed that his wife was dead. Accepting the report as true, he remarried in Australia and this second wife and a child survive him. In March of this year Gill made further inquiry for his people and with more success. He learned from the Brooklyn police that members of his family were still living in his city and it was while he was on his way to join them that death came. He died on shipboard and was buried at sea in the straits of Java.

Quite Safe.

The truth is never more convincing than when it "slips out" involuntarily. Generally at such times it has a peculiar charm also, as this incident suggests. A tattered and forlorn young girl of 15 summers or so entered the office of a real estate man the other day. Ordinarily he is the politest of individuals, but this day he was as busy that he did not know which way to turn. So, with a swift glance out of the corner of his eye, he said rather sharply:

Grass Houses in Oklahoma.

Among the most interesting features of Southern Oklahoma are the remains of the grass houses formerly built by the Wichita Indians, who, to a certain extent, keep up their novel mode of architecture to the present day.

Best Wage Earners.

In the average wages paid to employes the industry that stands highest among the large undertakings is that of smelting and refining, says Mahin's Magazine. Here the average for the 24,500 workers is \$52 per worker.

Cattle Sprayed with Kerosene.

The cattle which draw the mahogany logs in the forests of the Isthmus of Panama have to be sprayed with kerosene to destroy the parasites which are their deadly enemies.

The smaller the man, the larger the sea uses.