

A SISTER'S VENGEANCE

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)
"Abel, mate, I'm ready for anything now," said Bart, as they went that morning to their work. "Only say again as you forgive our loss."

"Bart, old lad," said Abel, hoarsely, "I've naught to forgive."

"It's not that," said Bart, and then he began to whistle softly, as if in the highest of spirits, and looked longingly in the direction of the jungle beside the creek; but three days elapsed before he was set to hoe among the coffee bushes again.

When they approached the jungle at last, heeding more slowly—for, much as they longed to go up at once, they knew that any unusual movement on their part might be interpreted by watchful eyes as an attempt at escape and bring down upon them a shot-Bart's voice trembled and sounded hoarsely as he said, fully:

"Now, Abel, my lad, I'm going to talk to that there poll parrot. Now, then, Polly! Pretty Polly, are you there?"

"Yes, yes, Bart, Abel, dear brother, at last, at last!" came from the jungle.

"Mary—Polly, my girl!" cried Abel, hoarsely, as he threw down his hoe; and he was running toward the jungle, and a crashing sound was heard, when Bart flung his strong arms across his chest and dashed him to the ground.

"Are you mad?" he cried. "Mary, for God's sake keep back!"

The warning was needed, for from across the plantation the overseer and a couple of soldiers came running, every movement on the part of the prisoners being watched.

"Sham ill, ladd! sham ill," whispered Bart, as a piteous sigh came from the depths of the jungle.

"Fighting, are you?" growled Bart: "rum fighting. He nearly went down."

"He was trying to escape."

"Escape!" growled Bart. "Look at him. Sun's hot."

The overseer bent down over Abel, whose aspect helped the illusion, for he had been mostly from his emotion; and he had presence of mind enough to open his eyes, look about wildly from face to face, and then begin to struggle up, with one hand to his head.

"Is it the fayer, sor?" said one of the soldiers, whose name was Diddy Kelly. "No. Touch of the sun," said the overseer. "They're always getting it. There, you're all right, ar'n't you?"

"Yes, sir," said Abel, slowly, as he picked up his hoe.

"Sit down under the trees there for a few minutes," said the overseer. "Lend him your water bottle, soldier. And you stop with him till he's better."

Bart took the water bottle; and as the overseer went off with his guard Abel was assisted to the edge of the jungle where a huge cotton tree threw its shade; and here Bart held the water to his companion's lips.

It was hard work to keep still while the others went out of hearing; but at last it seemed safe, and Abel panted out: "Mary, dear, are you there?"

"Yes, yes, Abel. Oh, my dear brother, say one kind word to me!"

"Kind word? Oh, my lass, my lass, say that you forgive me!"

"Forgive you? Yes. But quick, dear, before those men hear," said Abel, speaking with his back to the jungle, and his head bent down as if ill, while Bart leaned over him, trembling like a leaf, "tell me how you came to be here."

"I came over in a ship to Kingston. Then I went to New Orleans. Then to Honduras. And it was only a fortnight ago that I found you."

"But how did you come here?"

"I got a small boat, dear. I asked and asked for months before I could find out where you were. I've been to other plantations, and people have thought me mad; but one day I stumbled across the sailors of a ship that comes here with stores from the station, and I heard them say that there were a number of prisoners waiting and watching for weeks. I caught sight of you two, and then it was a month before I could speak to you as I did the other day."

"And now you have come," said Abel, bitterly. "I can't even look at you."

"But you will escape, dear," said Mary. "Escape!" cried Abel, excitedly.

"Steady, lad, steady. Member you're ill," growled Bart, glancing toward the nearest sentry, and then holding up the bottle as if to see how much was within.

"Yes, but all in vain."

"Pshaw!" cried Bart again, "when you know she'll keep on coming till she's an old gray-haired woman, or she gets us away."

Abel shook his head, for he was low-spirited, and not convinced; but that night his heart leaped, for as he lay half asleep, listening to the thin, buzzing hum of the mosquitoes which haunted the prisoners' quarters, and the slow, regular pace of the sentry on guard outside, there was the faint rattle of a chain, as if some prisoner had turned in his unquiet rest, and then all was silent again, till he started, for a rough hand was laid upon his shoulder.

His first instinct was to seize the owner of that hand, to engage in a struggle for his life; but a mouth was placed directly at his ear, and a well-known voice whispered:

"Don't make a sound. Tie these bits of rag about your wrists so as they won't rattle."

Abel caught at the pieces of cloth and canvas thrust into his hand, and, sitting up in the darkness he softly bound the links and rings of his fetters together, hardly daring to breathe and yet with his heart beating tumultuously in his anxiety to know his companion's plans. As he was tying the last knot he felt Bart's hand upon his shoulder, and his lips at his ear.

"Quiet, and creep after me. Keep touching my foot so's not to miss me in the dark."

Abel's heart thumped against his ribs as he obeyed, taking Bart's hand first in a firm grip, and then feeling a short iron bar thrust between his fingers.

Then he became conscious from his companion's movements that he had gone down upon his hands and knees, and was crawling toward the end of the long, low stone-walled building that served as a dormitory for the white slaves, whose task was to cultivate the rough plantation soil as a rule, lay down and sleep from fever.

Just then Bart stopped short, for there were steps outside, and a gleam of light from his heart beating tumultuously in his anxiety to know his companion's plans. As he was tying the last knot he felt Bart's hand upon his shoulder, and his lips at his ear.

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shore, and there were no clusters of alligators lying here and there among the mud and ooze.

It was true enough. They did escape in the night, and Mary had been there to help them with a boat; but where was she now? and who was this sturdy youth in loose petticoat-trousers and heavy fisherman's boots?

Bart stared till his eyes showed a ring of white about their pupils, and his mouth opened roundly in unison for a time. Then eyes and mouth closed tightly, and wrinkles appeared all over his face, as he softly shook all over, and then, after glancing at Abel and the Irish soldier, he uttered a low—

"Haw, haw!"

The figure in the boat swung round and faced him sharply, glancing at the two sleeping men, and holding up a roughened brown hand to command silence.

"All right," said Bart, half choking with mirth; and then, "Oh, I say, my lass, you do look run in them big boots!"

"Silence, idiot!" she whispered, sharply. "Do you want that strange man to know?"

"Nay, my lass, nay," he said, becoming sober on the instant. "But you do look so run. I say, though," he cried, sharply, "what's gone of all your beautiful hair?"

"Fire," said Mary, coldly.

"Fire! what—you've cut it off and burned it?"

Mary nodded.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bart, and it sounded like a groan.

"Could a girl with long hair have worked her passage out here as a sailor boy, and have come into that cane-brake and saved you two?" said Mary, sharply; and as Bart sat staring at her with dilated eyes one more, she bent down after gazing at Diddy, still soundly sleeping, and laid her hand with a firm grip on her brother's shoulder.

He started into wakefulness in the instant, and gazed without recognition in the face leaning over him.

"Don't you know me, Abel?" said Mary.

"You, Mary—dressed like this?"

He started up angrily, his face flushed as he stared at her, and his look darkened into a scowl.

"What else could I do?" she said, repeating her defense as he had pleaded to Bart. Then, as if her spirit rebelled against his anger, her eyes flashed with indignation, and she exclaimed hoarsely, "Well, I have saved you, and if you have done with me—there is the sea."

"But you dressed as a boy," said Abel.

"Hush! Do you want that man to know?" whispered Mary softly. "My brother was unjustly punished and sent out here to die in prison, while I, a helpless girl, might have starved at home."

"What could I do?"

There was only one of the two equal to the emergency as the soldier woke up, and that was Bart, who gave his knee a sounding slap and cried aloud:

"Jack Dell, my lad, you've behaved like a trump, and got us away splendid. I only wish, Abel, I had such a brother. Hallo, soldier, where shall we set you ashore?"

"Set me ashore?" said the Irishman, nodding at Mary; "what for?"

"What for?" cried Bart. "To go back." "I'm not going back," said the Irishman, laughing. "Now, I want a change."

"You can't go with us."

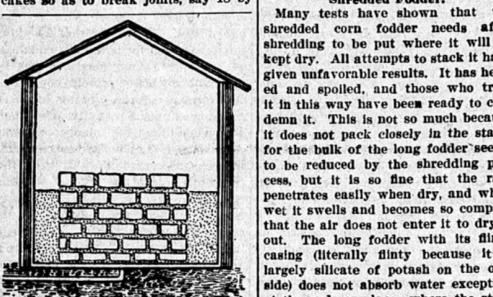
"Sure, and you forced me to come, and you wouldn't behave so dirtily as to send me back?"

"But we're escaping," said Bart.



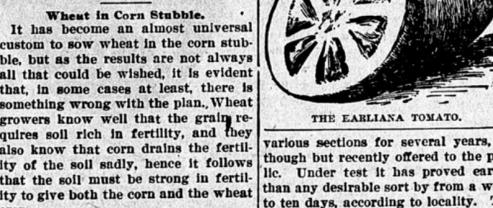
which is that the queens which go out with them may not be fertile, and if they come out after the drones have been killed off they cannot lay fertile eggs, but only such as produce drones. She cannot be distinguished from a fertile queen, but the drone cells can be distinguished from worker cells by the rounded appearance of the cap over the eye. If only such are found, destroy the queen at once, and either give the colony another queen or divide the bees that remain and the honey among other colonies, destroying the drone brood by uncapping it and shaking out the larva. If in cells of the worker-bee size, it may be useful to put in the regular cells of the drone bee, if it is best to make wax of it, unless some may be saved to put in the frames of the best colonies that one may want to raise male bees from.—American Cultivator.

Proper Way to Store Ice.
A correspondent of the Rural New Yorker explains the method he uses to store ice. The illustration shows a cross section of his icehouse, with boards nailed horizontally on the inside of the poles. From twelve to fifteen inches should be left between the ice cakes and the walls. Locate the icehouse where good natural drainage may be secured. Tile may be laid, as indicated at A, to secure more adequate drainage if needed. Cut the cakes so as to break joints, say 18 by



Shredded Fodder.
Many tests have shown that the shredded corn fodder needs after shredding to be put where it will be kept dry. All attempts to stack it have given unfavorable results. It has heated and spoiled, and those who tried it in this way have been ready to condemn it. This is not so much because it does not pack closely in the stack, for the bulk of the long fodder seems to be reduced by the shredding process, but it is so fine that the rain penetrates easily when dry, and when wet it swells and becomes so compact that the air does not enter it to dry it out. The long fodder with its flinty casing (literally flinty because it is largely silicate of potash on the outside) does not absorb water excepting at the ends or places where the stalk is broken, and then it does not pass farther than to the joints each side. Those who try shredding fodder should do so when it is perfectly dry, and then put it where it will keep dry. If not so, the porous center of the stalk absorbs moisture, then swells so as to refuse the admission of air to dry it out, and then the next thing is heating or fermentation, to be quickly followed by mold, and a food that is unfit for cattle and especially for milk cows, and dangerous to the health of young animals.—New-England Farmer.

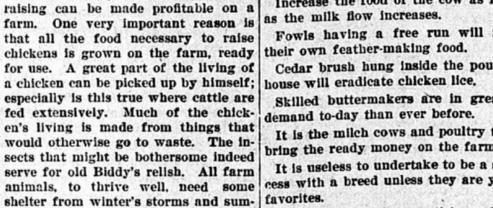
Valuable New Tomato.
Early varieties of tomatoes are especially valuable to market gardeners, and are always welcome for planting in the home garden. The Earliana, illustrated from life, has been tested in



Wheat in Corn Stubble.
It has become an almost universal custom to sow wheat in the corn stubble, but as the results are not always all that could be wished, it is evident that, in some cases at least, there is something wrong with the plan. Wheat growers know well that the grain requires soil rich in fertility, and they also know that corn drains the fertility of the soil, hence it follows that the soil must be strong in fertility to give both the corn and the wheat crop.

If the soil is not strong then the only possible advantage in using the corn field is in the fact that it has been well cultivated during the growing season, and consequently is in good shape, without much labor for the wheat seed. It is quite probable that any fairly fertile soil plowed early and well prepared for the seed bed would produce quite as good results in the wheat crop as the latter was strong in fertility.—Indianapolis News.

For Splitting Wood.
Splitting wood is often attended with some danger, especially with small, round sticks. The following device is



Dried Grass for Winter Grazing.
In portions of Montana, Wyoming and western South Dakota it is customary to fence large areas of land on the general mesa or prairie in order to protect the cut in these fenced fields. The grass simply dried up in the fall and the cattle graze on it during the winter.

Farm Notes.
Increase the food of the cow as long as the milk flow increases.
Fowls having a free run will find their own feather-making food.
Cedar brush hung inside the poultry house will eradicate chicken lice.
Skilled buttermakers are in greater demand to-day than ever before.
It is the milk cows and poultry that bring the ready money on the farm.
It is useless to undertake to be a success with a breed unless they are your favorites.
A change of food is appetizing and the more food a cow eats the more milk and butter she will yield.
Carelessness and neglect, more than ignorance, are responsible for most of the failures in the sheep business.
While improvements can be hastened by proper selection in breeding, improved breeding can never make up for poor feeding.
A large number of cockerels in the yards with hens and pullets are a nuisance, and should be thinned out as quickly as possible.

ANTE LUCEM.
If I could know that in some genial clime
This marred, imperfect life might e'er attain
The goal toward which I almost hopelessly strain,
With patience I could tread the paths of Time.
Now, tortoise-like, through winter's cheerless rime,
And summer days that seem too fair for pain,
I onward toil, the height afar to gain.
Which seems each day more distant and sublime.
My soul has depths that never yet were stirred,
My heart has pulses which have never thrilled;
They wait in vain some magic master-word,
Some unknown purpose to be yet fulfilled.
Death, when I meet, at last, thy dread eclipse,
Be thou to me my soul's apocalypse!

A SINGULAR GUEST.
MR. HENRY APPS, of Hoxton, completed the fixing of the wires on the lawn of Hasleigh Court. He looked up at the dim light in the dressing room, and chuckled softly as he bent the last yard of wire.

"A trip in time," said Mr. Apps, "saves nine."

He threw the rope ladder gently in the air, and at the first effort it caught the projecting nail.

"Once on board the lugger," quoth Mr. Apps, facetiously, as he mounted the rope ladder, "and the gurl is mine."

He opened the window very gently and soon stood inside the dressing room. Near the table in the corner of the room was an iron safe.

"Well, I'm jiggered," exclaimed Mr. Apps, he loosened the flaps of his fur cap and mopped his brow with the back of his hand. "Well, I'm jiggered! It hasn't been and left the key in for me. I might have sived myself a lot of trouble if I'd a knowed."

Mr. Apps swung open the heavy door of the safe and listened to the music down stairs. Young Lady Staplehurst was giving (as Mr. Apps well knew) a fancy dress dance, on her return from the continent, after her term of widowhood.

"I'll just see, first of all," he said, "that the coast is absolutely clear, and then—then for a bagful."

Mr. Henry Apps stepped out into the broad passage. He slouched, with his jimmy sticking out of his capacious side pocket, a few steps toward the stairs. Suddenly a girlish figure turned the corridor.

"Bless my art!" cried Mr. Apps. "Why, how do you do?" said the young lady, stepping forward. She gave a soft laugh that was very pleasant. "This is really delightful. Do you know, I recognized you at once in spite of the costume."

She held the hand of Mr. Apps for a moment, causing that gentleman to gasp for breath, and called one of the maids.

"Just bring me a pencil and a card," she said. "I must arrange for a carriage to take Captain Norman to his hotel in the morning. I wasn't sure that he would come."

that at first, just for one moment, I thought you were a real burglar."

"Fancy that now?" said Mr. Apps. He was relieved at seeing an obvious way out of his difficulty. "There's nothing like doing the thing in a proper, straightforward way."

"And," said Lady Staplehurst, with her fan on her arm, as they walked across the room, "you have got the East End accent capitally."

"That's so dusty, is it?" She beckoned to the Gondolier. "Captain Norman and I are great friends," she said, in an explanatory way. "He has not been long here from abroad, and he knows scarcely any one."

"Not a blessed soul," echoed Mr. Apps.

"You must let me show you round a bit, Captain Norman," said the Gondolier, with determined geniality. "Can you come round to my club one night this week?"

"What for?" demanded Mr. Apps, suspiciously.

"Why, to dine! Say Thursday. 'Evens' knows where I shall be on Friday," said Mr. Apps. "I don't."

"You must consider me at your disposal if you require any introductions. I know a good lot of people, and any friend of Lady Staplehurst's—"

"Oh, come off the roof," said Mr. Apps, with much discontent; "wot's the use of talking?"

"Isn't it capital?" asked Lady Staplehurst of the Gondolier, delightfully. "How much more interesting it would be if every one would only talk to me in their character."

Lady Staplehurst rose with something of a hurry in her manner and spoke to Henry VIII.

"What regiment do you belong to, Captain Norman?" asked the Gondolier. "Find out," said Mr. Apps.

"Am I too curious? I know very little of the army, I'm afraid." The Gondolier was resolved to be agreeable to Lady Staplehurst's friend. "I always lodge the army nights in the house, suppose you know several of the vice members?"