

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

J. H. Ingraham

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"A chief on land an outlaw on the deep."
"He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

Byron.

PREFACE.

The leading incidents upon which the present work is founded, are chiefly historical.

With the pages of history, however, we have had to do, only so far as they could be made subservient to our tale, which does not profess to be, exclusively a tale, or history, of the times to which it is referred, but of an individual in some degree connected with them.

Nor with the faithfulness of a biographer, have we portrayed the life of the personage whom we have taken for our hero. We have woven for our purpose a web of fact and fiction, unsolicitous to dye each thread with its own peculiar hue, to enable the curious reader thereby, the more readily to say which is which. But if he chooses to draw out either thread, to inspect it by itself, thinking thereby to judge better of the texture of the whole, we have only to say the web is his own; and, that if his humour prompt him to break up the watch, the pieces may perhaps reward his curiosity, if they do not demonstrate his wisdom.

New-York, June, 1836.

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BOOK I. BOYHOOD.

Childe Harold was he hight: but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day:
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lines of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.
Oh, Love! what is it in this world of ours
Which makes it fatal to be loved!
The Childe departed from his father's halls.

Byron.

CHAPTER I.

"Fame sometimes gives her votaries visions of their future destiny, while yet in early life. There is then a sort of sympathy created between their youthful aspirations and coming deeds a reflection of the future upon the present."

Edgworth.

AN EXILE'S HOME RIVER SCENERY AMBITIOUS MUSINGS.

In a secluded and richly-wooded amphitheatre, formed by a crescent of green-clad hills, among which the romantic Kennebeck wanders to the ocean, there stood, until within a recent period, the ruins of a stately mansion. Its blackened walls were enamelled with dark-green velvet moss, and mantled with creeping vines, as if Nature, with a gentle hand, had striven to conceal the devastations of ruthless Time.

Huge chimneys, terminating in fantastic turrets, heavy cornices, deep mouldings and panel-work, combined with the costly and elaborate architecture of the whole venerable structure, indicated a relic of that substantial age immediately subsequent to the revolutionary war: an age, although then in its decline, as eminently characterised by moral and physical stability as the present by their opposites. That, was an age of iron this, of tinsel.

At the period with which our tale is more intimately connected, the handsome edifice of which these melancholy ruins were both the monument and mausoleum, reared its lofty walls amid a grove of oaks, whose hoary bodies, and the majestic spread of their gnarled and giant limbs, while they told of their great age numbered by centuries, not years bore testimony to the dignity and grandeur of the primeval forest, of which they were alone the representatives. Here and there, among these sylvan patriarchs, glistened the silvery trunk of the classic beech, intermingled with the dark cone of the gloomy pine, and the tall, spiral poplar, swaying its graceful head in the breeze.

Beneath the thickly interlaced branches of these trees, and sloping gently to the pebbly shore of the river, lay, out-rolled, a lawn of the thickest verdure. Its green and quiet beauty was relieved and enlivened by half a score of ruminating, well-conditioned cows, standing or reclining in those luxurious attitudes indicative of comfort and repose, and a small flock of long-fleeced sheep, of a rare and valued breed, was dispersed in picturesque groups under the more venerable trees. A gracefully formed jennet, conjuring up visions of lovely woman, in velvet hat, nodding plumes and generous robes sweeping the earth, which the spirited animal beneath her disdains with his delicate hoofs a beautiful, slender-limbed saddle-horse and a brace of coal black ponies, with long tails and flowing manes, which are at once associated with boys and holidays stood together in a social group beside a small but romantic lake in the midst of the wood. They were mutually reclining their heads upon one another's necks, each manifesting his sportive feelings, by occasionally fixing his large white teeth into the glossy hide of his neighbour.

This pellucid sheet of water was spanned by a fantastic bridge of tressel-work, suspended with the lightness of a spider's web, from one green bank to the other. It connected a broad gravelled avenue, which, commencing at the river, wound among the trees, yielding to the natural undulations of the grounds, and terminated at a spacious flight of steps leading to the piazza of the mansion, the two fronts of which were ornamented by a light colonnade of eight slender Ionic columns. Tall windows hung with rich curtains of orange-coloured damask and snowy muslin, costly with deep broderies of oak leaves, large as the life, and curiously wrought with silken floss, in their autumn hues of green and yellow extended quite to the floor of the piazza, and, defended by venetian blinds, served as the only entrances to the interior, from the front.

The house faced to the west, and commanded an extensive prospect of the river, sweeping boldly around the

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peninsula upon which it was situated, and forming at the distance of half a mile, and directly in front, a noble bend, remarkable for the extreme beauty of its curvature. Beyond, ascending to the horizon, as they retreated from the eye, spread cultivated farms, studded with low, black, farm-houses and huge barns; more remotely, dense black forests blended with the bases of a chain of low, blue mountains, known as the Monmouth hills, which, while they confined the prospect, constituted a magnificent back-ground to the picture.

At the north and south, the view was shut in by alternately cultivated or thickly-wooded hills and rocky eminences, retreating on either hand from the river in a semicircular form, to a little less than a mile in the rear, and enclosing the dwelling and grounds in a spacious vale or glen, which, also embraced on the western side by the curve of the river, presented an area nearly circular in its shape.

Political events in sunny France, that great political index of this revolutionizing age in which the proprietor of this lovely domain bore no ordinary share, compelled him to seek a land where he could cherish his liberal principles with safety, and educate his twin-sons to act their part honourably and with distinction on the theatre of life. And where should the expatriated old soldier bend his footsteps but to the shores of America? Daughter of Europe! Yet she opens her arms to receive her exiled children, with the affection of a young mother. Noble and glorious land! the errors of the old world shall be redeemed in thee and, although the continents of the east have been enrolled, century after century, upon the scroll of history, yet their history is ended thine only begun; and dark and guilty as are ITS pages, shall THINE be bright and pure!

Orphans from their birth, his sons never knew their mother. The hour which ushered them into existence ushered her spirit into heaven. Strangers to maternal love, and educated, since the exile of their stern parent, in almost monastic seclusion, they early attained an uncommon maturity of mind and firmness of character, combined with manly sentiments and a habit of thinking independently, early taught them by their father's example, and inculcated, cultivated, and wrought out to maturity by him, with untiring assiduity.

Their fifteenth birth-day arrived, and although in years they numbered equally, both in mind, and person, and habits, they were wholly dissimilar. Achille, the eldest of the twins, had attained dignity of mind and manly beauty of person, far in advance of his years. Tall and finely proportioned, he was the youthful image of his noble father. Proud, aspiring and ambitious, with a spirit that spurned severity, but yielded to gentleness, he acted from impulse rather than from reflection or a sense of duty, while a mine of passions, never yet sprung, existed like a slumbering volcano in his bosom. It required but a spark to produce a conflagration that should feed upon and torture him like another Prometheus, or burn on, extinguishable only with life.

That spark was at length elicited by his brother, an amiable boy of a gentler nature, retiring in his habits, mild and quiet in disposition. The reverse of Achille, he was apparently as meek as his brother was spirited. The former resembled his father; but Henri represented his mother and all her gentler virtues. Not only did he represent the excellences of her heart and mind, but her lovely image was revived in his beautiful countenance; and, as year after year unfolded in his youthful face the more striking and perfect resemblance his graceful features bore to those of his deceased mother, the father recognized the features of the fair girl who had won his early affections, and whom, during the few short months he had owned her as a bride, he had worshipped with religious devotion.

Notwithstanding the contrarieties of character exhibited by the brothers, they grew up together, mutually interchanging all those amiable kindnesses which are the offspring of fraternal affection. Achille was the stronger, physically and intellectually, and unconsciously to the subject, exerted that wonderful influence over Henri which mind often asserts over mind. He was his guide in his studies, his leader in sports, his enticer into dangers, and his assistant in the thousand petty difficulties of childhood. He loved him with a sincere and devoted attachment, fervently reciprocated by his warm-hearted and unsophisticated brother. But their mutual affection was the principle which unites the vine and the oak. His brother's love was to Henri sufficient happiness, the stay of his clinging affections; and on the other hand, his kind and endearing attachment, by drawing out the kindlier feelings of his brother's sterner nature, rendered him better and happier.

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The morning which ushered in their fifteenth birth-day was bright and cloudless a more beautiful never dawned upon the earth. Could the tempter have chosen such a day to enter paradise? Yet on this day his presence was first felt in their peaceful home.

Achille was standing in the south window of his father's library, which opened upon the piazza, his person half-concealed by the rich drapery, gazing out upon the limpid river as it glided silently past, bearing upon its waveless bosom the single-masted sloop with its huge mainsail, the more graceful and bird-like schooner, her white canvass extended on either side like wings, the lofty, square-rigged merchantman, and swan-like sail-boat; their sails flashing back the morning sun, or changing to a dark hue as they moved in the black shadows thrown from overhanging cliffs.

The green meadows beyond the river, sprinkled with flocks, faded into the blue haze which floated around the distant hills. The air was alive with melody from a myriad of glad birds, climbing the rosy skies, and emulating the poised lark thrilling forth his matin-song to the rising sun. There was a charm of beauty, peace and rural happiness thrown over nature. Her works breathed inspiration, and spoke that morning in the sweetest accents to his heart. But he heeded not her language. A voice, softer-toned and more eloquent pleaded to his soul. It was the voice of ambition. Of boyish ambition it is true, but still ambition in her loftiest mood. In years but a boy, the sterner spirit of a man dwelt in the swelling bosom of the youthful aspirant. Visions of the unveiled future, wherein appeared pageants of conquering armies, thrones, and scenes of vast dominion floated before his youthful imagination; and in the leader of the armies, the occupant of the thrones, the controller of empires, he recognized HIMSELF!

CHAPTER II.

"The love or hatred of brothers and sisters, is more intense than the love or hatred existing between any other persons of the same sexes. Probably, nothing so frequently causes divisions between those whom nature has blessed with the holy relationship of brother and sister, perhaps that it may be the depository of pure affection, as an unequal distribution of the affection of parents."

H. More.

AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN FATHER AND SON A CATASTROPHE REMORSE.

"Achille!"

The young aspirant started from the contemplation of scenes of triumph and empire, carnage and blood the last too soon to be realized and beheld his father standing by his side, who had entered the library and approached him unperceived. Seating himself in the recess of the window he motioned his son to a chair, placed opposite to his own. The bearing of the veteran exile, was at all times in the highest degree dignified and imposing. His was the brow, eye, and presence to command respect and receive homage.

The affection of Achille towards his father was not unmixed with sentiments of fear. But he was the only being before whom the proud eye of the boy quailed!

That his father loved him he had never doubted. He knew that he was proud of him, "his noble, fearless boy," as he would term him, while parting the dark clustering locks from his handsome forehead, after he had performed some daring feat of boyhood. But when he spoke to Henri, the gratified and proud expression of his eye softened under the influence of a milder feeling, and his smile would fade into a sweet but melancholy expression; nor would Achille have exchanged his inspiring language to him, "his daring boy!" for the kind tone, and manner he involuntarily assumed when he would say, "Henri, my beloved child, come and amuse me with your prattle!" nor

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would the tearful eye, as he gazed down into the upturned face of the amiable boy, have pleased his wild spirit like the enkindling glance of that admiring eye, when turned upon him in paternal pride. Achille translated his glance of pride into an expression of love, and sympathized with one so evidently regarded with an air of sorrow, if not pity, as his brother. If he gave the subject a moment's reflection it resulted in the flattering conviction that he himself was the favourite son.

But on the morning which introduces him to our notice, he had to learn too painfully, that Henri was the favourite child of the old soldier's affection, and that so far from loving him but a little less, he loved him *not*. That look of affection which he had translated as an expression of compassion for the gentler nature of his brother, he had to learn was an expression of the intensest parental affection. In his brother, his father worshiped the image of his departed wife, and all his affection for her, which the cold hand of death had withered in its beauty and bloom, was renewed in his beloved Henri. He was doubly loved for his mother and for himself and there remained for Achille, so the sensitive and high spirited boy learned that day, no place in the affections of his sole surviving parent.

His father being seated, addressed him:

"Achille, you are now of an age to enter the university, for admission to which the nature and extent of your studies eminently qualify you. In a few days the annual examination of candidates will take place, and in the interval you can select and arrange a library for your room, and collect what other conveniences you may require. You will leave in the first packet that passes down the river."

This was a delightful announcement to the subject of it, and not wholly unexpected. To the university, that world in miniature, he had long looked forward with pleasurable anticipations. It was a field of action, at least, and he panted to enter upon it.

The two brothers had both prepared for admission into the same class, and he inquired if Henri was to accompany him.

"He is not," replied the father, coldly and firmly.

"He is certainly prepared, sir!"

"Undoubtedly! But I have decided that he is to be my companion to Europe this season, as I fear his delicate constitution will not admit of his confining himself at present to sedentary pursuits."

"I was anticipating that happiness for myself," replied Achille, chagrined at his father's preference for his brother, so unexpectedly manifested, not only by the words he uttered but by his tone and manner. He had long known his intention to visit his native land, and expected to accompany him, although his expectations were founded rather on his own wishes than any encouragement he had received from his parent.

Now that he learned his intention of taking Henri, instead of himself, he felt keenly the preference; and the coldness, if not severity, of manner he assumed in communicating his determination, offended his pride, whilst his decided partiality for his brother wounded his self-love. The old soldier was a man of few words, and his son was well aware, that, his resolution once formed, he was unbending. He knew that his brother was to go, and that he was to remain; and with a bitter and wounded spirit he turned his darkening brow from the penetrating gaze of his father, and looked forth upon the beautiful scene which lay out—spread beneath the windows of the library.

A closing door roused him from his gloomy and sinful reverie, and turning, he found himself once more alone! No not quite alone! An evil spirit Jealousy! pregnant with dark thoughts and evil imaginings was his

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companion. A long hour passed away, during which, his first fierce conflict with his hitherto slumbering passions took place. The first suspicion that his brother was best loved, then entered his thoughts. Once admitted, it underminded, by its subtle logic, the better feelings of his heart. Doubts were strengthened to confirmations, suspicions magnified to certainties, in the rapid and prejudiced retrospect he took of his father's bearing towards his brother and himself, from the earliest period of his recollection.

But an hour one short, but momentous hour, for then was fixed the lever which moved the world of passions within him, with all their evil consequences, had expired, and the canker-worm of hatred with its venomous fangs, was gnawing at the last slender fibre that bound him to his brother, when the hall door was thrown open and the unsuspecting and innocent subject of his dark meditations bounded into the room, holding in his extended hand a gemmed locket.

"See brother, see!" he exclaimed, in a loud and delighted tone, "see what my dear father has presented me as a birth-day's gift!"

Achille raised his eyes and fixed them upon the sparkling locket which enclosed the miniature of an exceedingly beautiful female, with a form, cheek, and eye, radiant with feminine loveliness.

He recognized the portrait of their mother, which till that moment had ever been worn, as the holy pilgrim wears the sacred cross, next to the heart of his father. So dearly treasured had that sacred memento of his departed wife ever been, that he never was permitted to remove it from the mourning ribbon by which it was dependant from his neck. Now, he saw the cherished relic in the possession of his brother, a gift from him. His lip curled, and his dark eye became darker still at this stronger confirmation of his father's partiality, yet he neither spoke nor betrayed his feelings by any visible emotion; but the fires within his breast raged deeper still. Like pent up flames, his passions gained vigour by the very efforts made to smother them.

For the first time in his life he looked upon Henri coldly, and without a smile of tenderness. He felt indeed, although his lips moved not with the biting words that rose to them, that the poison of his heart must have been communicated to his eyes, for, as his brother caught their unwonted expression, he suddenly checked himself, and the gay tones of his voice sunk subdued to a strange whisper, as he faintly inquired, at the same time placing his delicate hand upon his shoulder, "if he were ill?"

"No!" he replied, with an involuntary sternness that startled even himself.

The next moment he would have given worlds to recall that fatal monosyllable, and pronounce it over again, more gently; but it was too late. The sensitive boy recoiled as though he had encountered the eye of a basilisk; his forehead changed to a deadly hue, the blood fled from his cheeks, and he seemed about to sink upon the floor; but, suddenly recovering himself, he laughed, and the rich blood came back again, and his eye glanced brightly as he exclaimed, but half-assured,

"Brother, you did but try to frighten me you were not in earnest angry with me?"

His heart melted for a moment at this affectionate appeal, but with a strange perverseness he steeled it to insensibility.

"Leave me to myself," he roughly replied, "I am not in the humour to be trifled with."

Mysterious inconsistency of will and action! He would have given his right hand or plucked out his right eye, to have recalled the first angry word he uttered. In his own mind he did not will to speak thus harshly; yet, by a singular yet frequent anomaly, his words and manner were directly in opposition to his will. The first word spoken in an angry mood, hewed out a broad pathway for legions.

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As he uttered his last words, the tears gushed into Henri's eyes, and yielding to the influence of affection, he sprung forward and threw himself into his elder and beloved brother's arms, wept aloud, and sobbed out amidst his tears,

"Brother! Achille! wherein has Henri offended you?"

An evil spirit now seemed indeed to have taken possession of him. With angry violence he thrust Henri from his embrace, while a curse sprung to his lips. The poor youth tottered and reeled fell forward, striking his forehead as he fell, violently against a marble pedestal upon which stood an alabaster statue of the Madonna, and the warm blood spouted from his gashed temples over the cold, white robes of the image.

It was a spectacle of horror! and the guilty being gazed wildly upon his prostrate brother, and thought of Abel and his murderer upon the red-sprinkled image, and laughed, "Ha! ha! ha!" as maniacs laugh, at the fitness of his first offering a mangled brother at the shrine of the virgin moher.

The momentary but terrific spell upon his reason passed away; and throwing himself upon the senseless boy, he attempted to stop the ebbing current of life as it trickled in a small red stream down his pale forehead, steeping his auburn curls in gore, at the same time, calling loudly and madly for assistance.

His father followed by the servants rushed into the library.

"Help sir, my brother is dying!" he cried wildly.

The old man sprang forward and caught his bleeding child in his arms. His practised eye at once comprehended the extent of the injury he had sustained. He had received a deep cut in the shape of a crescent over the left eyebrow, yet not severe enough to endanger life. The free flow of the blood soon restored him to his senses, and opening his eyes, as his father with a tender hand staunched the bubbling blood, he fixed them upon his brother with an expression that eloquently spoke forgiveness.

"God pity me!" exclaimed the repentant and now broken-spirited boy; for that look went to his heart; and burying his face in his hands, he precipitately left the room.

The long and bitter hours of grief, remorse and shame, he suffered in the solitude of his own room, no tongue, but his who has felt like him, can utter. He experienced sentiments of hatred for himself, a loathing and detestation that tempted him to put a period at once to his own existence. When he recalled the reproving yet forgiving look of his suffering and magnanimous brother, he felt degraded in his own eyes, fallen, lowly fallen in his own self-esteem. That he must be in his brother's he was painfully aware, and for the first time he felt that the gentle-natured Henri was his superior.

CHAPTER III.

"Place the lever of Archimedes in the hands of love, and he will find the point on which to rest it. Perhaps love has caused more evil than ambition. Let us search from the cot of the humblest villager to the tent of Mark Antony, and we shall find it has been the pivot upon which some of the most affecting domestic, and many of the greatest historical, events have turned. Doubtless, that love which is elicited at the first sight of the object, is the most legitimate, the purest, and the most enduring."

Anonymous.

A STUDENT THE RETURN GERTRUDE LANGUEVILLE LOVE.

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Day closed in night, and night opened into morning, for many long and tedious weeks, and still the old soldier sat by the bed-side of his wounded child.

The generous boy, too honourable to prevaricate, yet too forgiving and fond of his brother to expose all the truth, had told him that he had *fallen* against the pedestal, but not that Achille had *thrust* him against it.

Their father never knew the agency of Achille in the accident; yet, bearing testimony to the truth of the maxim, that suspicion is the handmaiden of guilt, Achille suspected that he was informed of all the circumstances connected with the act. This suspicion, giving its own tinge to the medium through which he viewed and commented upon his father's deportment towards him after the accident, led him to conclusions as unjust as they were unmerited by his parent. Acting from these conclusions he shunned his society, and never entered his presence but with a sullen air of defiance.

Occasionally he visited the chamber of his brother, when, in answer to his frequent inquiries of the nurse, he learned that he slept; and pressing the fevered hand, or kissing the cheek of the sleeping sufferer, he would watch over him with the tenderness of a mother till the restless motions of the invalid, indicating the termination of his slumbers, or the heavy footsteps of his father ascending the stainway in the hall, warned him to return to the seclusion of his own room, or the deeper solitudes of the forests.

A few months passed away, during which Achille became a student within the walls of a university not far from his paternal home; while his brother, entirely recovered, accompanied his parent on his transatlantic voyage.

The period of Achille's residence at the university afforded no incidents which exerted any influence over his subsequent years. It glided away pleasantly and rapidly. He was known by the professors as one, who, never in his study, or a consumer of midnight oil, yet always prepared for the recitation room; and by his fellows, as a young man of violent passions, honourable feelings, chivalrous in points of honour, a warm friend and magnanimous enemy. Often violent and headstrong in his actions, he was just and equitable in his intercourse with those around him. With a love for hilarity and Tuscan pleasures, he never descended to mingle in the low debauches and nightly sallies, which, from time immemorial have characterized the varieties of college life.

At the early age of nineteen, he received its honours, and bidding adieu to the classic walls within which he had passed so many happy hours the happiest of his life he proceeded to an adjacent port where he expected his father to disembark, on his return from his long residence abroad.

The little green coasting packet in that early day, when steam navigation had not superseded those teachers of patience to domestic voyagers, the sloop and schooner had passed up the river the previous evening. He crossed to the opposite shore, in a broad flat wherry, whose representative, in the shape of a neatly painted horse-boat, propelled by the Ixion-like labour of a blind Rosinante, may still be seen plying frequently between the opposite shores.

The sun had just set in a sea of gold and crimson, and a rich mellow light hung like a veil of transparent gauze over land and water, when, after winding round one of the graceful bends of the romantic Kennebec, and ascending an abrupt and rocky eminence, up which the road wound, the beautiful and wooded glen, with the turreted chimnies of his paternal roof appeared, lifting themselves above the oaks, in the midst of which it stood. Reining in his horse upon the brow of the hill, he gazed down upon the lovely scene, with its sweeping river, relieved by a little vessel at anchor upon its black glassy flood its surrounding hills, its venerable oaks, and serpentine walks with a thoughtful eye.

Gradually as he gazed, the scene before him faded into indistinctness, in the approaching twilight, and the young moon had launched her silver barque upon the western sky a timid sailor, venturing each night, farther and farther up into the heavens, and spreading her shining sail broader and broader as she gains confidence from

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temerity before the young horseman shook off the spell which had rendered him indifferent to external objects a spell, whose workings, to judge from the knitted brow, compressed lips, and pale cheeks, were of no pleasant nature. We will not attempt to analyze his thoughts, he dared not do it himself nor will we. Spurring his restless horse down the precipice before him, as he perceived the shades of night thickly gathering, he soon gained the winding avenue leading to his paternal dwelling.

Nearly four years had elapsed, and its halls had echoed to the fall of no familiar footstep. During that period, he had never visited it but once, when scenes and events he would fain forget, were too vividly revived, and he shunned a second time to recall such unwelcome associations.

Now, as he rode forward the retrospection of the past was clouded by a reminiscence that weighed depressingly upon his spirits. Entering the bridlepath which led to the dwelling, he slackened his rein and moved slowly onward, musing upon the approaching interview with his long absent parent and brother, when the sudden glare of a light flashed from one of the windows of the library full upon his face, and roused him from his meditations.

Dismounting at the spacious gateway, he traversed the broad gravelled walk to the house, with a rapid step, anxious to hasten the meeting, which his heart foreboded, would be tinged with both pleasure and pain. He had placed his foot upon the first step, to ascend to the portico, when the apparition of a graceful female figure, gliding past the brightly-illumined window, stayed his ascent, while emotions of surprise and curiosity usurped for the moment every other feeling.

"Who can she be?" was his mental interrogation as her retreating figure disappeared. But he had no time for conjectures, for the old greyheaded gardener Phillippe, who had followed his exiled master, through all his fortunes, recognized him as he was taking his evening round about the grounds, and by a loud exclamation of joy, intimated his arrival to the whole household. The next moment he stood in the presence of his father and brother!

We will briefly pass over the interview between them. By the former, his reception was dignified and condescending; yet there was absence of affection in his manner as he received his congratulations, imperceptible to an ordinary observer, but to which the lively feelings of the young man, were keenly sensitive a cold politeness in his look and tone, such as a father should not wear to greet a long absent son. And such was the proud spirit of Achille, that he assumed a bearing of *hauteur* and distant respect, which measured his parent's coldness.

Henri, whose slight form and girlish beauty were lost in a manlier elegance of person, met him as brother should meet brother frankly, affectionately, and ardently. Achille returned his embrace as cordially and sincerely as it was bestowed; but a cold chill curdled the blood in his veins, as unfolding him from his arms, the purple scar glaring, half-hid by his flowing hair, upon his beautiful forehead, caught his eye.

Days and weeks glided by, and Achille loved!

M. Langueville, a distinguished Frenchman, his maternal uncle, and the only brother of his mother, had married an American lady of eminent beauty, and princely fortune. They both died within a short period of each other, leaving an only daughter, appointing his father the guardian both of her person and inheritance. To receive this trust, was the object of his visit to Europe; and on his return, his ward accompanied him to make her uncle's mansion her future home.

The lovely vision of the library was this cousin. Gertrude Langueville, at the period of our tale, was a noble creature, with a form of faultless symmetry, voluptuously rounded, and just developing into woman-hood a rich bud bursting into a full-blown rose.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

Neither too tall, nor too short, her figure was of that indefinite size, which a graceful poet has termed "beautifully less." In her manner she combined the dignity of a woman with the naturalness and infantile grace of a wayward child. The infinite delicacy of her chiselled features, and the finely turned contour of her expressive head, were unsurpassed.

Just turned sixteen, she knew the power to charm, while she seemed not to use it, as, with the bewitching grace of a girl and the refinement of a woman, she enchain'd the admiration of those around her, while they bent forward to listen to the rich, harp-like tones of her voice in conversation. Her eyes were of the mildest blue of heaven the indices of a pure and faultless mind. They spoke of a spirit mild and gentle; yet her lofty forehead told that also a spirit proud and high, slumbered within their gentle radiance. Intellectual, she was both romantic and imaginative. Few of her sex were gifted with a mind of higher order, or more accurately cultivated.

Obedient to the waywardness and contrarieties of her character, she was at one moment a Hebe, charming by her grace and vivacity, heightened by the sparkling expression of her eloquent eyes and beaming face, upon which every thought brilliantly played, like the reflection of sunny landscapes upon a shadowed lake, mantling it with a richer beauty or, now a Minerva, commanding admiration and esteem by her originality of thought, and the lofty character of her mind.

Achille admired loved worshipped her!

We will not linger over the recital of his first meeting with this charming girl, and the wild impassioned progress of his love. With the impetuosity of a mountain torrent, it merged every passion in itself, absorbing all the faculties of his soul.

His love was unrequited.

CHAPTER IV.

"Your true lover is a monopolizer. He must himself receive all favours and do all favours. He can bear no participator. He will sooner forgive acts of indignity against himself, than the man who steps between him and his mistress danger. If he cannot aid her himself, he would rather lose her than that another should boast of the honour. If I wished to make him my enemy, I would save his mistress' life."

Brown.

A MORNING EXCURSION SCENE ON THE ICE AN ESCAPE LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

Spring was just opening in that enlivening and rapid manner peculiar to northern latitudes, when Achille and his brother accompanied their cousin on a morning excursion along the beautiful shores of the river. The earth was clothed with the mantle of green and grey, which young spring loves to throw around her, and the morning was bright and warm for the season, as if June had usurped the wand of rude and blustering March.

They had reined in their horses on the verge of a lofty cliff overhanging the river, and remained gazing upon its icy surface, which, as far as the eye could reach, north and south, presented one vast plain of chrystal. The lateness of the season rendered it imprudent to venture upon it, although, except in its soft, white appearance, under the warm sun, it presented no indication of weakness. Gertrude, excited by the gay canter along the cliff, and in unusually high spirits, proposed galloping across the river, which, during the winter they had frequently done, and ascend a hill on the opposite side, from whose summit there was an extensive prospect she had repeatedly admired.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"By no means, Gertrude," exclaimed Achille, "it would be rashness to attempt it."

"I think not, cousin," she replied, with that love of opposition which is the prescriptive right of the sex. "It is evidently very firm; only three days ago, I saw several horsemen passing down the river at a hand gallop."

"But you forget the warmth of the sun, Gertrude!"

"Not enough to affect this solid mass before us," she replied, "at all events, I can but try it."

So, slightly shaking her bridle, she cantered down the smooth road to the foot of the cliff, rapidly followed by the brothers.

"Do not venture upon the ice, cousin Gertrude, I beseech," mildly remonstrated Achille, when they gained the beach, "you will certainly endanger your life!"

"How very pathetic and careful, cousin of mine," she replied, with a playful, yet half-vexing air; "if you really think there is so much danger, we will excuse your attendance. I am fearless as to the result, and quite confident that the ice will bear Léon and me. See, now," added she, as her beautiful jennet bounded forward on hearing his name, " `Léon is more obedient to fayre ladies' commands than their sworn esquires;' " and her fine eyes glanced mischievously as she spoke.

This badinage touched Achille, who was sensitively alive to ridicule, especially from the lips of the lady of his love. Biting his lip to suppress his feelings, he calmly observed, "I regard not myself, Gertrude, it is for you I speak. If you are resolved to go, I shall certainly accompany you, although the greater the weight, the more imminent will be the danger."

"So will Henri, will you not, Henri?" she said, half-assuredly, half-inquiringly; and a sweet smile, such as maidens love to bestow on their favoured swains, dwelt, while she spoke, upon her pretty lips, and mantled her cheeks, with a scarcely perceptible shade of crimson.

Henri, who had remained silent during this brief colloquy, though always close to his cousin's rein, replied.

"Certainly, Gertrude, although I think with brother, that there is a spice of temerity in the attempt. Allow me to dis "

"*Allons* then," she gaily cried, placing her gloved finger upon her cousin's mouth, and exciting the spirited animal upon which she was mounted to spring forward on to the crumbling verge of the ice.

Achille buried his spurs in the sides of his horse, and, in one bound, was the next moment at the head of her palfrey and dismounted with the rein in his grasp.

"For God's sake, Gertrude, stop! you must not venture so rashly," he cried, with energy, "do not go, I beg of you!"

"Loose my rein, Achille, and don't be so earnest about a mere trifle," she said, hastily.

"Nay, cousin," said Achille, in a softer tone, "the life of Gertrude can be "

"Now don't be sentimental, cousin Achille;" she laughingly interrupted, "do be just good enough to free Léon's head. See how impatient he is."

"Do, cousin, allow me to plead!"

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"No, no, you know how I hate pleading;" and, without replying further, she dexterously extricated her bridle from his grasp, touched her impatient horse smartly with the whip, and gaily crying, "*Sauve qui peut*," sprung forward like an arrow.

"Achille! your horse!" exclaimed Henri. "Mad girl, she is lost!" he added, and spurring after her, was in an instant galloping by her side. Achille turned on the instant to vault into his saddle, and beheld his horse, which he had left unsecured on dismounting, coursing, with his mane flowing, and the stirrups wildly flying, at full speed on his way homeward.

"Holy devil!" ejaculated he, through his clenched teeth, at the same time uttering a malediction upon the flying animal; then turning to look after the rash girl, he scarcely forbore repeating it, as he saw her with his brother at her side, cantering over the brittle and transparent surface of the river.

They were more than half-way to the opposite shore, when a loud report, deadened like the subterranean discharge of cannon, or the first rumbling of an earthquake, struck his ears, accompanied by a white streak, flashing, like lightning, along the surface of the ice, from shore to shore.

"God of heaven!" he exclaimed, uttering a cry of horror, as he saw the vast field of ice shivered along its whole extent. With a loud voice he shouted for them to return for their lives. Yet they heard him not, although now evidently aware of their danger; for they increased the speed of their horses, and made for the opposite shore, to which they were nearest, as the only chance for safety.

Suddenly, sharp reports, in rapid succession, like the near explosion of musketry, reverberated along the ice, which began to swell and heave like the surface of the ocean in a calm. Save the agitation on the river, all else was still. The skies wore the pure blue of spring, the winds were hushed, the air was close and sultry, and a deep silence, like that of night, reigned over nature.

A wild cry of terror suddenly reached his ears, fearfully breaking the stillness of the morning. His heart echoed the cry, but his arm could bring no aid. The adventurers had diminished their furious speed, and were hovering on the verge of a yawning chasm, which had suddenly opened before them. To advance was destruction; to retrace their way equally threatening. There was a moment's hesitancy, Achille observed from the summit of a pyramid of ice, which had been thrown upon the beach, and then he saw them turn their horses' heads, and, with a rapid flight, seek, over the moving, unsteady surface of the heaving flood, the shore they had left.

Onward they flew, like the wind. The labouring ice shivered and groaned in their rear, heaving itself in huge masses of wild and fantastic shapes into the air behind them. Near the shore towards which they were now directing their fearful course, the ice had yet remained firm. But, as they advanced, it groaned, heaved, and rose in vast piles in their path, while a yawning chasm gaped wide before them. Loudly and despairingly Achille shouted, as he indicated with his riding-whip, the surer way of escape from this chasm, which was momently enlarging; otherwise he could render them no assistance.

They saw their danger, but too late. Their impetus was too powerful to be resisted by the slight fingers of the maiden, as she drew in her reins with painful and terrified exertion, and her horse dashed in among the broken and heaving masses of ice, as they were agitated by the swelling current, and hurled, crashing and grinding with a loud noise, against each other. A wild cry pierced the ears of the paralyzed Achille, and horse and rider disappeared beneath the terrific surface.

Henri, who with a stronger arm had reined in his fiery animal, no sooner witnessed the fearful plunge, than, springing from his horse, he flew to the verge from which she had leaped, and for an instant gazed down into the cold, black flood, which had closed like a pall over the lovely girl. The next moment the deep waters received his descending form into their bosom!

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

A moment of intense suffering, during which Achille's heart distended almost to bursting, passed, and the waters were agitated, and the head of her favourite Léon came to the surface. The affrighted animal glaring around, his dilated eyes intelligent with almost human expression, uttered a loud and terrific scream, and pawing with his fore-feet upon the cakes of ice floating near him, made several violent and ineffectual attempts, with the exercise of extraordinary muscular exertion, to draw himself up on to them; while the big veins swelled and started out in bold relief from his glossy hide, his nostrils expanded and gushed forth blood upon the white ice, and audible groans came from his bursting chest.

In vain were the tremendous and sublime efforts of the noble animal his strength gradually failed, and he could at last retain his hold only with one hoof upon the crumbling verge: that at last fell into the water. The dying steed gave an appalling cry, which the other horse, who stood gazing on him with a look of sympathy, repeated, and the shores caught up and re-echoed from cliff to cliff, till it died away in the distance, like the wailing notes of suffering fiends. Then, rolling his large eyes round in terror and despair, he sunk from the sight of the horror-stricken Achille.

"She is lost, lost, lost!" he exclaimed, mentally imprecating his situation, which rendered it impossible for him to assist her.

Vast cakes of ice, between the elevation upon which he stood and the place where they had disappeared, constantly rolled by, tossed and whirled, like egg shells, tumultuously upon the fierce torrent. Conscious of his total inability to afford the least aid, he stood gazing like a riveted statue upon the dark sepulchre which had entombed the only being he loved.

"Merciful providence, I thank thee!" he exclaimed, dropping impulsively upon one knee, with clasped and uplifted hands, as he saw appear above the water, far below the spot where Léon sunk, one after another, the heads of his cousin and brother. She was lifeless in his arms, her luxuriant tresses floating upon the waves, her beautiful head pillow'd upon his shoulder!

With a cry of joy he sprang forward to the point towards which he was swimming among the floating ice with his lovely burden. Henri was a bold and experienced swimmer. In boyhood it was the only amusement in which he delighted or fearlessly engaged. Achille stood upon the utmost verge of the ice, and cast his riding cloak out upon the water, retaining the tassel that he might draw them, now almost exhausted, to the shore.

"No, brother," said Henri faintly, yet firmly. And a triumphant smile lighted his pale cheek as he declined the proffered aid. In a moment afterwards he laid the fair girl upon the bank *the preserver of her life!*

Achille cursed in his heart the fortune that had blessed his brother. When as he swam with her, he saw her marble cheek reposing against his, his arm encircling her waist,

"Would to God," he muttered, in the dark chambers of his bosom, "that she had made the cold waters her tomb than be saved thus! But no, no, too blessed a death for that proud boy to die. His death shall be less sacred."

His lip curled bitterly as he spoke, and his blood fired with the dark thoughts his new-born hatred and revenge called up. The passions which had slumbered for years were once more roused within him, hydra-headed and terrible.

Like a superior being, his brother gently laid the breathless form of his cousin upon the bank. Achille gazed upon them both for an instant in silence, and while he gazed, felt his bosom torn with conflicting emotions of love and hatred.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

As he bent over the lifeless girl, chafing her slender fingers and snowy arm, he half breathed the wish that she might not return to consciousness to be told that Henri was her preserver. He looked upon his brother as he assisted him in restoring her to animation, and felt that hatred, malice, and revenge burned in the concentrated expression of his glowing dark eyes; but as he encountered the proud glance of his brother, and witnessed the calm dignity of his demeanor, he withdrew his gaze from his face, but hated him the more.

But a few minutes elapsed after she had been laid upon the bank, when, accompanied by the old gardener and one or two of the servants, their father advanced rapidly towards them, having been alarmed by the appearance of Achille's horse flying riderless to the stables.

The breathless old man, instinctively comprehending the whole scene, kneeled by the side of his beloved niece, and by their united efforts she was soon resuscitated. Then, for the first time, he looked up, and observing the dripping garments of Henri, he smiled upon him with that comprehensive and affectionate smile, he wore when he looked upon those he loved. But as he turned upon Achille, there was no glance of affection, no smile of approval his eye was cold, severe and passionless.

Gertrude at length unclosed her eyes, gazed intelligently upon those around her, and then resting them for an instant upon the saturated dress of her cousin, slowly dropped the lids again to shade them from the light, while her lips, gently parted, and almost inaudibly pronounced,

"Henri!"

Achille sprung as though a serpent had stung him, and a fearful imprecation thrilled upon his tongue. His father frowned menacingly, while a smile, just such a one as passed over his face when he rejected the proffered cloak, and which, from its proud and happy, if not exulting expression, entered his bosom like a poisoned barb, re-opening the wound years had not healed, lighted up his brother's features, and the glance accompanying the smile was a glance of conscious victory.

CHAPTER V.

"As is the lion in the hunter's toils, thou art caged in. Thy doom is settled; ay, as sealed as if the genius of your star had writ it." "I am prepared." "'Tis well. The hour is fitting for a traitor's death."

Dugald Moore.

"The first crime is the Rubicon of guilt already crossed. Man, like that beast of prey which tasting human blood will touch no other, if perchance he stain his finger in his fellows' blood, is not content till he wash both hands in it. The first crime, give it leisure and convenience, will have its second."

A DECLARATION SOLILOQUY A MEETING BETWEEN THE BROTHERS ITS TERMINATION A FLIGHT.

But a few days had expired since the events just related, and the fields of ice had been swept to the ocean. The beautiful river flowed onward silently and majestically, gently meandering along the verge of green meadows, or darting swiftly with noise and foam around projecting rocks its pellucid bosom dotted with white sails, its sloping hills bursting into green luxuriance, and its overhanging forests enveloping themselves in their verdant robes.

Achille had passed the day ostensibly in hunting, but really to prey undisturbed, in the deep-wooded solitude of the cliffs, upon his diseased spirit.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The approach of night found him leaning on his hunting piece, his empty game-bag lying at his feet, standing upon the summit of a cliff which overhung the river. The sun had just gone down beyond the hills of Monmouth in his own created sea of sapphire, the western star hung tremblingly in the heavens, while the crescent moon, half unveiling her chaste face, shed a holy light down upon the earth, mingling her pale rays with the golden hues of twilight.

The scene of his cousin's rash adventure and his brother's triumph lay beneath him. A calm and hallowed silence, broken only by the gurgling of the waters as they swept by among the loose rocks at the base of the cliff, or the sighing of the trees as they waved heavily to the low, night wind, reigned around him. The wildest spirit becomes gentler under the soothing influence of such a time! But the bosom of the young man was insensible to every external impression. With a troubled brow and trembling lip, while he crushed a starting tear beneath his eyelids, he communed with his own wounded spirit.

"Virgin mother! have I not loved her! loved her as man seldom loves! Loved her did I say? was she not the object of my thoughts by day the bright spirit of my dreams! Did I not adore, (forgive me, Mary mother!) worship her next to thee? Was not her image enshrined within the inner and most hallowed temple of my soul? Oh God, oh God!" and he leaned his head upon his gun, and the big tears coursed down his manly cheek.

The momentary weakness if sorrow for shattered hopes, and crushed aspirations be weakness soon passed away, and he stood up with a firm and collected manner. His brow gradually became set, his eye glowed, and a withering expression of rage, curled and agitated his lip, while he continued in a changed voice

"Burning, burning truth! my thoughts will consume me! I would not have profaned her hand by a careless touch yet I have beheld her in my brother's arms!" With fearful calmness he uttered these last words and in the same tone, added,

"The cheek by me held sacred its profanation sacrilege! I have seen laid upon his bosom. Nay! I *will* think of it turn each minute circumstance over and round that I may survey it well for it feeds a passion I must let live, or die myself! Yes, that cheek, that rich, delicate cheek, with the hue of a rosy cloud, have I seen reposing upon my brother's imbibing from it life and warmth! I have beheld her tresses mingled with his, her sylph-like waist encircled in his embrace, and knew that their throbbing hearts beat together, as in one bosom, beneath the wave. And I remained silent! calm! for myself calm. Calm! I burned, my glowing bosom was in flames yet "

His dark meditations were interrupted by the hum of low voices, ascending from the beach at the foot of the cliff upon which he stood. Leaning over the precipice he looked down, but the deep shadows at the base obscured every object. Yet he listened with every sense dilated and resolved into one single one, as the wily Indian watches for the light footfall of his foe; his expanded ear alone the organ of communication with external objects.

A low melodious voice rose upon the still air like music. It fell upon the heart of the listener, not as melody falls upon the soul, soothingly, but with the unholy influence of a spell, withering it to its core.

"Nay, Henri, I love him not, I fear his wild and ungovernable spirit I *fear*, but I *love* him *not!*"

"But now, you said, dear Gertrude, that you could not refuse your admiration for what you have termed my fiery brother's noble nature and chivalrous spirit. Are not these the qualities that win a maiden's heart?"

"How little you are skilled, my dear Henri, in that riddle, a woman's heart! Such qualities may allure, but never win. Achille can, and will command, but never win, esteem. He may elicit *admiration*, but never *love!*"

This was the language of the being Achille so madly worshipped. And did he listen to the silvery tones of her voice, thus crushing forever all his hopes, in silence? Yes, such silence as precedes the earthquake before it bursts.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The voices had died away, but they still rung with fearful echoes through his bosom. In a few moments, whilst he stood transfixed, overwhelmed by a wave of passions, a winding in their path, brought the voices of his brother and cousin again within reach of his ear, and as they walked slowly along, he saw the white garments of Gertrude glancing through the branches of the intervening trees.

"Then, then it shall be yours, if the gift be worth accepting!" he heard, in a scarcely audible voice.

"Rich lovely treasure!" warmly exclaimed the happy and favoured youth, seizing the graceful hand she had ingenuously given him, and pressing it passionately to his lips.

"Hell and devils!" muttered Achille through his set teeth, and striking his forehead with his clenched hand.

He had stood till now, with suppressed breath, a burning eye and expanded ear, like a statue of stone. But he could endure no more; and scarcely suppressing a fierce cry, he sprung, leaping and bounding like a mad-man, down the face of the precipitous rock, in a direction opposite to that taken by the lovers, and in a moment stood upon the beach.

Hour after hour he paced the hard white terrace of sand, and strove to calm the raging tempest in his bosom. He bared his head to the cool night-breeze bathed his heated brow in the clear flood at his feet. He gazed upon the placid moon and wooed its soothing influence upon the solemn forests and peacefully flowing river; but the low voice of nature spoke to his warring spirit in vain. Hour after hour passed away, and he had given himself up to the guidance of the dark spirit he could not control, and had purposed revenge.

"The exulting boy shall feel what it is to cross my path. He shall die! by heaven, he shall die!" he whispered, through his compressed lips. At the same instant a loud voice from the cliff rung in his ear.

"Achille! Achille! are you there?" It was his brother. Ascending the cliff with rapidity, the next moment Achille was at his side.

"No, brother," he sarcastically replied, with his mouth close to his ear, "I am not there, but *here!*" and as he spoke his voice sounded hoarse and unearthly.

Henri started; but observed, without further noticing his brother's singular manner, that his father having apprehensions for his safety, from his remaining so long abroad, had requested him to seek him.

"Have you met with any game, brother?" he enquired.

"Yes brother, a sweet dove and a cunning hawk."

"Did you secure the birds?"

"Aye, the hawk, but the dove, the dove, although it wounded me with its angry bill, I could not stain its snow-white plumage with red blood. But the subtler bird I have meshed."

"Brother, your language and manner is strange and unwonted, and your face by this faint light looks pale and haggard. Have you met with aught to embitter your spirit during the day?"

They now, having walked slowly forward while speaking, stood upon the spot where Henri and Gertrude plighted their loves in the sight of Achille. He made no reply to his brother's inquiry, but stopping suddenly, seized him with energy by the arm, and gazed fixedly and revengefully upon his face.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"What mean you, brother? unhand me Achille!" exclaimed Henri, alarmed.

The fires within, smothered for a brief space, now raged tumultuously and fierce, breaking out like a volcano, long pent up in the bosom of the earth.

"Know you where you stand?" he loudly and angrily demanded.

"Release me, brother what is your mad purpose?"

"Aye, *mad!*" he reiterated. "Yes, I *am* mad. Know you where you stand?" he repeated, in a harsh voice, while his eyes glowed visibly even in the darkness of the deep shadows in which they stood.

"God of heaven!" he shouted fiercely on receiving no reply. "Speak, craven, or *thus*, I'll crush you!" and with his iron fingers he pressed the throat of his victim.

"Unhand me, brother!" cried Henri, till now unresisting in the grasp of one, from whom he apprehended no real injury, and whose violent rage he supposed would soon subside. But he knew not the irresistible power of the stream which he himself, perhaps unconsciously, had contributed to swell. He had not traced it from the fountain through all its devious and subterranean windings, fed by a thousand hidden springs, until it approached the precipice over which it was about to thunder terrible and mighty cataract.

"Do me no harm, Achille, I am your *brother!*" he exclaimed, and with a strong effort freed his throat from his grasp.

"So was Abel his brother's brother, and so " and his lip withered with scorn and hatred as he spoke: "and so is Henri MINE! but revenge I love dearer still. Henri, I hate you? Know you this accursed spot, I again repeat?"

Henri now released from his violent hold stood proudly up, and bareing his pale brow to the moonlight, which fell down upon it through an opening in the foliage like the visible presence of a blessing, answered,

"I do, sir; it is consecrated ground; and I learn from your strange language and manner, that you have witnessed the sacred ceremony which hallowed it!"

He spoke calmly, and in a tone of dignity, while a proud, if not sarcastic smile played faintly over his lips. Achille already insane with passion, fiercely shouted,

"And it shall be doubly consecrated by a sacrifice of blood! Proud fool, your mockery has sealed your fate. I needed only *this*," and springing fiercely upon him, he seized him by the breast with one hand, and, glancing in the moon while he brandished it in the air, his glittering huntingknife descended like lightning into the bosom of his victim. The warm blood spouted into the face of the fratricide, and bathed his hand in gore.

"Oh, Gertrude my father God brother! I for-forgive," he faintly articulated, and with a groan that sunk to the heart of the murderer, fell heavily to the ground.

For a few moments the guilty being stood over the prostrate body, with his arm outstretched in the position in which he had given the fatal blow, his features rigid his eyes glazed, and his whole person as motionless as marble the statue of a murderer chiselled to the life! During that brief moment he endured an eternity of suffering. The torments of ages were expressed into one single drop of time!

Who may tell the feelings of the impulsive murderer as he sees the life-blood gush out the features pale and stiffen, and the strong man become at once a cold corpse at his feet, and when conscience asks, who has done

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

this "I, I, I," oh, how bitterly is the confession wrung from his bosom.

But we will not dwell upon this scene. The fratricide fled, beneath the cold moon and glittering stars, which like eyes of intelligence seemed to look down reprovingly upon him. On he fled, nor dared to look up to them; the little light they shed became hateful, and he felt as though he would draw darkness around him like a garment, hiding himself from both God and man.

"Oh that the rocks would fall upon me and hide me ever from myself!" he groaned inwardly; and a loud voice within cried, "Vain, vain! live on! live on forever!" And he buried his face in his cloak and fled still onward.

The morning broke, and the miserable fugitive still pursued the path which led along the shores of the river to the sea. As the light increased, he saw, for the first time, that his dress was sprinkled with his brother's blood. He shuddered, and the fatal scene rushed once more upon his mind in all its horrors. Hastily plunging into the river, (alas! for the tales of blood, of which river and sea are the dumb repositories!) he removed all traces of the deed he had committed, from his person.

Two hours before sunset he came in sight of the bay, its bosom relieved by many green islands and dotted with white sails. He hailed the broad ocean in the distance with a thrill of pleasure.

Hastening to the coast, which was guarded by lofty mural precipices, he swung himself down their sides with that daring recklessness which is often the surest means of success, and throwing himself into a small boat which had been left in a cove by some one of the fishermen, whose huts were scattered in picturesque sites along the cliffs of the romantic and rock-bound coast, he raised the little sail, and steered out to sea.

BOOK II. LOVE AND PIRACY.

He had an only daughter,
The greatest heiress of the eastern isles;
Besides so very beautiful was she,
Her dowry was nothing to her smiles:
Still in her teens and like a lovely tree
So grew to womanhood

Irad. I loved her well I would have loved her better,
Had love been met with love; as 'tis, I leave her
To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

Japh. What destinies?

Irad. I have some cause to think
She loves another.

But who that chief? His name on every shore
Is famed and feared?

Byron.

CHAPTER I.

"Smuggling or frauds practised against the revenues originated in certain vices or imperfections in our laws, by which, as they are not yet reformed, this system of piracy is still pursued. Smuggling is at best but a school of piracy; but wiser legislation might prevent much crime and render the navigation of the high seas more secure."

Letters on Political Economy.

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"Circumstances sometimes impel men to crimes against which their nature revolts, yet they are not the less guilty."

Ibid.

SKECH OF THE BUCCANEERS OF BARRITARIA SCENE IN JAMAICA A NIGHT EXPEDITION.

About one-fifth of the brief term of years to which Divine Wisdom has limited the life of man we have suffered to roll unrecorded down the tide of time.

Our tale now opens in a new theatre, with scenes of fresher and more exciting interest, before which characters move and act who have borne no inconsiderable part in the great drama of the second, and last war of independence, between the United States of the North and Great Britain.

A few years before the commencement of this memorable and decisive war, a daring band of privateers—men, inured to every hardship to be encountered in storms of battle, or of the elements, and as free as the winds which filled their flowing sheets, had obtained commissions from the new government of Cartagena, then first struggling for independence, to cruise against the royalists, or vessels sailing under the flag of Spain. By the authority of these commissions, they not only made numerous captures on the great highway of nations, but blockaded many ports of the royalists in the Mexican and West India seas.

Giving a latitude to their commissions which the government from which they received them did not recognize or foresee, they embraced in them, besides the ships of the royalists, such other vessels as they might fall in with, which, on trial, proved unable to withstand their superior force. From privateers—men, sailing under the flag of a South American state, emboldened by success and power, they became rovers of the wide blue sea, independent of every flag but their own bright—red banner, and acknowledging no commission but that written upon the edge of their gleaming sabres. The flags of every nation struck to their own, and the broad waters of the Mexican sea became at the same time their empire, their battle—field, and their home.

The prizes, their lawless mode of translating special commissions, and that delusion of the visual organs which led them to see in every flag, the gorgeous blazonry of his Majesty of Spain, against whom they had declared open war, enabled them to seize, were taken into the secret bayous and creeks adjacent to the mouth of the Mississippi, where they were effectually concealed and safe from capture or pursuit.

The most important passes made use of by these buccaneers, and with which the scenes of our tale are more immediately connected, lie about twenty leagues to the west of the delta of the Mississippi, and about forty miles south—west of the city of New—Orleans. Here, an arm of the Mexican gulf extends four or five leagues inland, terminating in the mouths of several bayous or creeks, which, by many devious and intricate windings, known only to the smugglers, reached to within a few miles of New—Orleans. They were navigable only for boats, which here were accustomed to discharge their unlawful freights taken from captured vessels, from whence, through other and more commercial hands, it obtained a rapid and secret conveyance to the city.

This arm of the gulf is termed the bay of Barritaria, so called, from that system of naval barratry which characterized the class of men which usually frequented it. The mouth of this bay, or lake, as it is more generally denominated, from being nearly encircled by the land, is defended by a small island about two leagues in length and three miles in breadth, which lies in a direction east and west, and nearly parallel with the line of the coast, leaving two narrow passes or entrances to the lake from the gulf.

That, on the east, at the period with which we are to identify our tale, was exceedingly shallow, allowing only the passage of boats of light draught; the western and main pass only admitted vessels drawing nine and ten feet of water. This island, which is called indiscriminately, Grande Terre and Barritaria, is not an unbroken level, like the

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surrounding low lands, or prairies, constituting the southern section of Louisiana, but, with a striking geological feature in reference to the aspect of this region, it rises abruptly from the sea, with bold and precipitous sides, sometimes swelling into slight eminences several feet in height, covered with dense forests of trees, among which, superior to all, towers the live-oak in its iron strength. It also abounds in a great variety of game; and an abundance of excellently-flavoured fish are taken in its waters. Each extremity of this island, at the time of which we speak, was strongly fortified and bristly with cannon, completely commanding both entrances to the inner bay or lake.

Close within the western and deeper inlet to the right, and effectually concealed by the intervening islands from the open sea, from which it was about three leagues distant, was a safe and commodious anchorage; the only secure harbour for many leagues along that dangerous coast.

This island, with its anchorage, was the principal resort of the Carthaginian smugglers. From their little territory, which in the face of the government of the North United States, they had boldly usurped, the fame of their extraordinary deeds went abroad over sea and land, till the name of Barrataria was associated in the minds of men, with crimes and deeds of outlawry, unparalleled in the history of banned and out-cast men.

For better security, and more efficient operations, these men, at first sailing singly, each upon his own desperate enterprise, ultimately associated themselves into one body, conferring the command of their squadron on an individual of their number, whose distinguished qualifications as a commander over such a fleet, and such men, manifested on many a bloody deck and many a desperate fight, marked him singularly as their leader.

Besides this rendezvous of the buccaneers of Barrataria, in Louisiana, there were two others of less importance; one of which was situated in an uninhabited part of the coast, in the neighbourhood of Carthagena, and the other in the West India seas, on the west coast of the island of St. Domingo. In these seas, and ultimately in this last-mentioned spot, are laid the scenes of our second book.

In one of the romantic bays, with which the southern shore of the island of Jamaica is indented, and on one of the rich autumn evenings peculiar to the Indian seas, about fifteen years subsequent to the period embraced by the last book, a long, low, black schooner, very taunt and sharp in the bows, with all light sail drawing freely, and a red and blue signal fluttering aloft, might have been seen bowling gallantly over the miniature waves of the bay, which glittered in the sun-light as though overlaid with golden mail.

On the deck of the little vessel, which was heavily armed and full of men, stood one of commanding person, whose features, as he leaned over the quarter-railing, were partially concealed by the drooping front of his broad palmetto hat; that portion of his face, however, which could be discerned, displayed a black silken mustacho, curving like cupid's bow, over a fine mouth, whose general expression was resolution. Now, however, a yellow segar severed his lips, which languidly embraced it, while an occasional cloud of blue smoke emitted from beneath his overshadowing hat, curled above his head, and floating to leeward, blended with the evening haze.

Listlessly, like one familiar with the scenery, he gazed upon the glorious prospect spread out before and around him, rising from the shores of the bay and retreating backward and higher, till the distant clouds bounded the view a scene of gorgeous sublimity. Precipice on precipice, avalanche on avalanche rose, piled one upon the other a theatre of magnificent desolation; while the soaring ridges of the Blue Mountains, half mantled in clouds, and the lofty peak of St. Catharine, elevating her summit several thousand feet above the sea, towered proudly above all.

Immediately on his left, rose, to a lesser height, a chaos of inaccessible cliffs, abrupt rocks, shooting upward like towers and craggy peaks, exhibiting the stern aspect of some great convulsion which had laid nature in ruins. As the schooner shot farther into the bay, these wild features were concealed by intervening wooded hills, which, with round green summits, swelled from the shore; and as she still lessened her distance from the land, numerous

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verdurous spots sprinkled along the precipitous side of the mountains, or laid, like green carpets, upon the rocks, and among the trees, softened and relieved the harsher character of the scenery; while the traces of human ingenuity, taste and labour, were discerned on every hand. Majestic forests, groves of palmetto, and pastures like the softest lawns, now lining the shore and overhanging the water, were rapidly passed; and vast savannas, covered with variegated cane, as far as the eye could distinguish, displayed, in their changing tints, the verdure of spring, blended with the exuberance of autumn.

As the rover sailed farther into the bay, his eye, as he glanced with momentary animation along the land, rested upon the cots and hamlets of the negroes, the walls of a distant military post, and the white villas of the planters, dispersed picturesquely on the precipices, and in every green nook along the sides of the receding hills. The schooner, after running about a league into the land, suddenly altered her course, and stood for the entrance of a little harbour or recess of the bay; and now, under her mainsail and jib alone, coasted along a bold shore, dotted here and there with a magnificent pimento groves of which clothed the distant eminences. The summits of the cliffs, beneath which it sailed, were verdant with trees of thickest foliage, while, from their over-hanging brows, tiny cataracts, like slender threads of silver, leaped down into the sea, ringing musically as they fell, or struck upon the deck of the vessel, sprinkling a cool shower upon the seamen.

The inlet towards which she was rapidly advancing, was nearly enclosed by a chain of isolated rocks, towering like gigantic pinnacles; and a craggy promontory overhanging the basin, half encircled it on the west. Between the termination of this promontory, and the chain of rocks, was visible a narrow passage, by which craft of small size only could pass, one at the time, into the dark, circular pool, sleeping calm and deep within its rocky sides, which, frowning terrifically over it, cast beneath a black shadow, even whilst the sun hung high in the heavens. Now the shadows were deepened in the approaching twilight, and a mysterious gloom gathered over the spot as the day receded, presenting to the imagination dark caverns and horrid ravines on every side.

Into this secret nook the little vessel rapidly shot, under the guidance of a skilful hand, and running into its farthest extremity, towards the main land, came to anchor under a projecting rock, which, cleft to its base, admitted a footway from the water to the highland plantations in the interior. In a few minutes the white sails disappeared, and the tall, black masts of the vessel relieved against the sky, alone betrayed her presence; for the dark hull itself was invisible in the deep shadow of the cliff. Not a sound was heard from her deck after she entered, save an occasional order given in a suppressed voice, and the rubbing of the cable as the anchor sunk noiselessly into the water. The trees were motionless, and not a breath ruffled the limpid surface of the basin.

"List!" said a low, deep voice, from the stern of the vessel; and the distant wail of a bugle fell, with a melancholy cadence, upon the ears of the listening seamen.

Again it rose and fell, low and plaintive; and hardly had the sound died in the air when three sharp blasts were blown in rapid succession.

"That's the signal! Valasquez is as true as steel to his own avarice!" exclaimed the commander of the schooner, whom we have just introduced to the reader.

"Be ready all! Ten of you go with me. See to your pistols, and let every other man take a dark lantern and a cutlass, and have two oars slung for a barrow. The rest of you be still as the grave, and on the alert to obey my signals. Three pistols, Ricardo," he continued, addressing one of his officers, "fired in succession will be our signal for a reinforcement, should the old Don be too hard for us. Now ashore, my men, all," he added with rapidity and energy.

Accompanied by a handsome youth, and a deformed slave, and followed by ten of his men, in red woollen caps and shirts, and without jackets, he sprung on to a projecting point of rock, heavily armed, and the next moment stood in the mouth of the cleft or defile, terminating at the top of the cliff.

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"Madre de Dios!" exclaimed one, in a suppressed whisper, to his comrade by his side, casting his eyes up the narrow and precipitous pass, which they were slowly ascending, "this must be the upstairs to purgatory."

"Rather, Mister Spaniard," drawled his companion a tall, light-haired, ungainly seaman through his generous nasal organ, "rather, it may be another guess sort of a road."

"And what may that be?" inquired a Spanish sailor, gruffly, who toiled on just before him.

"The road to the good place, I guess, Senyore."

"Gif proof o' dat!" said a lank Frenchman, by trade a frissieur, but who had now taken to cutting men's throats instead of their beards. "Gif proof o' dat, by Gar, Monsieur Yenkee!"

"Why, Mister Parley-voo, you see," articulated the other slowly, in reply, "I can prove it to a demonstration from scriptur, if ye happen to know what that are is. Don't it say, `strait is the gate and narrow is the way that goes up to heaven?'" and the scriptural quoter cleared his throat emphatically, and wiped his loose lips upon his red woollen sleeve, with an air of self-complacency.

"Give preacher Sol a quid o' tobacco for that sarmont," said one; "blast my eyes if he haint arnt it;" and a low suppressed laugh was heard from two or three of his comrades.

"Silence there," said their leader, in a low, distinct voice; and the rest of their way up the defile was effected, only occasionally interrupted by the splash of a loose fragment, which, agitated by their feet, fell into the water, or the whispered execration of some one, as a false step had nearly sent him headlong down upon his companions, and into the dark gulf beneath.

"Now, my brave fellows," said the leader of this night-party, as he stood at the head of the defile, upon the summit of the cliff, whilst his men filed past him, and gathered in a group, beneath the dark shadow of a cluster of palm, cocoa-nut and bamboocane trees, which crowned the heights. "Now, my good men, we are on an expedition, which, if successful, and its success depends on your own wills, and sharp cutlasses, will redeem all our past losses, which tempted the crew to mutiny. These wars have made all craft, but those who show their teeth, full timid enough in venturing on our legitimate empire; but this henceforward shall be no cause of complaint. I have yielded to your wishes on this occasion, not, you well know, because I feared to withstand them, although it is against my own feelings to rob an old man of his hoarded ingots. The free flag, a flowing sheet, and open sea for me. But be ready. I will lead you on this adventure. Ho, Cudjoe!" he said to his slave, "give the answering signal to Velasquez clearly and well, now, for your boar's head may pay the forfeiture for bungling;" and the clear, wild and discordant cry of the galena, when alarmed, suddenly broke the stillness of the night, now prolonged and low, now sharp and loud then suddenly ceased.

"Well done, my Guinea-bird," said his master; "your beldam mother, Cudjoe, must have fed you on guinea-eggs."

"Hark! it is answered;" and a similar cry came from the depths of the wood. In a few moments afterwards it was repeated nearer, and then ceased.

The silence which succeeded, was interrupted by a screech and rustling on the left, in the direction of a patch of coarse grass, terminated by clumps of aloes, torch-thistle, and palmetto, which formed the boundary of the cultivated portion of the estate. Every eye turned instantly in that direction, and every man's hand was laid upon the butt of his pistol.

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"Ho! Léon, my fine creature, but you are a welcome pioneer!" exclaimed the chief, as a noble dog, of majestic size, bounded into their midst, and sprung fawningly against his master's breast. "But down, sir, down, you hug like a Greenland bear! What news bring you from my trusty spy?"

The sagacious animal, as if the careless question of his master had been intelligible, looked into the face of the querist, and strove to draw his attention by raising his fore-paw to his neck and striking once or twice forcibly the broad, studded collar encircling it.

"Ha! it is so? Théodore, open your lantern," said the chief to the youth; "cautiously, though:" and the pirate bent over the collar and examined it, while the dog stood wagging his huge tail with a motion expressive of much satisfaction.

"Nay, Léon, you are a cheat, sir!" said his master, angrily, after a close examination of the collar, which on other occasions had served him for the transmission of billets relating to both love and battle. "Go, sir!" but the noble animal crouched at his feet, forced his paw under the collar, and struggled to break it from his neck.

"The key! the key, Cudjoe!" he cried; and the slave thrust his huge hand into a kind of Pandora's box made in his lower garments, from which, among a heterogeneous display of broken pipes, chicken breast-bones, beads, ebony hearts, broken dirk-knobs, charmed relicks, and spells against obeahs, fetahs, and melay men, he produced the key to the collar.

His master unlocked it, and stepping aside with his back to his men, he secretly slid aside the smooth plate which constituted its inner surface, and displayed an opening nearly the whole length and breath of the collar. From this concealed repository, which he thought known only to himself and a fair inamorata, then in a distant land, he took a folded scrap of paper.

"Curse this prying knave Velasquez!" he muttered; "how in the devil's name could he have learned this secret? But how or when, he has made good use of it," he cast his eyes over the note upon which the rays of the lamp fell brightly through a carefully opened crevice in the sides of the lantern.

"Well, men," he said, turning to his party, "I find Léon has been a trusty messenger; Velasquez has written upon his collar what chances await us at the old villa. There are but two old slaves, the old man and his daughter, besides his trusty nephew and secretary, Hebérto Velasquez! Onward. Lead, my trusty Léon!"

"How I do hate such treacherous tools," he said mentally, as, preceded by his dog and followed by his men, he threaded the forest; "open villany were virtue to such secret machinations. And against an uncle too! who has been but too indulgent that he may a little earlier have his heaps of gold to squander upon his debaucheries. Holy father! if I did not fear a general mutiny throughout my squadron, by reason of our late scanty harvest on the seas, I would not lift a finger to help this roué to his wishes. But fate, fate! I am the football of circumstances! How often have I been led by my destiny to do deeds at which my soul revolted! Oh, God! oh, God! that I could be at peace with my own heart! Peace! there remains no peace for me! I have bathed my hand in blood, and there is no retracing my footsteps. My first mad crime has been the prolific parent of all my subsequent ones. If my arm had been staid at that fatal period by some good angel, I should have been an honourable perhaps, a good man! That deed ruled my after destinies. My hand is now red red! and nothing but my own blood can ever wash out the stains which crimson it. And is there a future, too, where men must give account of their earthly deeds? Is there a day of retribution for the murderer? Do the innocent and the guilty go alike to one destiny to one reward or punishment? Oh, God! No, no! There was one pure spirit released by this same bloody hand from the snowy bosom which confined it, panting to be free and shall our destiny mine and hers be the same in the coming world? Oh, no! Oh, no! she must be glorious and happy there! and I *there is surely a hell for thee*, Lafitte!" he exclaimed bitterly. The wretched and guilty man pressed his temples for a moment, and turned to cheer his followers, striving in the action of the time to forget his own miserable thoughts.

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The party had now issued from the dark recesses of the wood, the vivid green of whose foliage was just tinged with silver from the rising moon, and after passing with a swift tread around a hedge, or border of bamboo and orange trees, came at once in front of a large, old mansion, situated on the side of a gentle eminence facing the bay.

From the point where they first beheld the house, several avenues, overgrown with rank and luxuriant grass, diverged in various directions. One of these paths immediately in front of them was broader, and by the light of the newly-risen moon, which glanced along its whole length, seemed some worn by recent use. This avenue, which afforded to the freebooters a glimpse of the house containing their prey, was bordered by the rich-leaved oleander, numerous beautiful trees bearing roses of every dye; with the jessamine, and grenadilla, yielding to the caprice of nature, entwining its luxuriant vines into gracefully-formed alcoves. At a gateway, obscured by the shade of many large trees standing around it, the party made a halt.

"Now listen to my instructions, each man of you," said their leader, as they paused here, awaiting their guide. "There is to be no violence; the persons of the old man and his family shall be held sacred. It is his wealth, not his life you seek. Let no man pull a trigger, if he love his life, this night. If we are attacked by the patrol, then, and only in the last emergency, use your fire-arms; for one report of a pistol, would bring the neighbouring garrison down upon us in force; and our little Gertrude, lying so snugly in the Devil's Bowl below, would be intercepted by a king's cruiser before she could gain the open sea. Be cool and discreet, and we succeed," he added, as the men were about to murmur their assent; "be imprudent, and it will be a short grace from the red coats, and a swing from the nearest tree."

"Hist! here comes our guide. What, ho, there, the word!"

Creeping on his hands and knees, as he spoke, appeared from beneath a clump of bushes growing by the gate, a low, square figure, naked to the waist, from which, to his bony knees descended a garment equally participating in the honours of the petticoat and small-clothes. As he emerged from the shadow of the hedge into the moonlight, his black glossy hide glistened like a polished boot.

Gathering himself up to his full height, which was perhaps a little exceeding three feet eleven inches, he replied, with rapid, nervous articulation, while his teeth, and the white of his eye glittered in the moonlight,

"De word, mass' buckra? de word, mass' 'berto tell me say be, `de collar.' "

"You are my man," he exclaimed; "lead on to your young master. Where does he await us?"

"Close by de big tam'rind tree, mass'! 'hind de soute wing ob de house."

"On, my beauty!" said he, gaily; the momentary depression having passed away; "lead on, we follow."

The guide darted again under the hedge, where the ground had been burrowed, leaving room for a full sized man to draw himself under with ease, by putting aside the lower branches of the armed hedge, encircling the grounds. Through this opening, each man, after getting upon his knees, passed through into the garden, followed by their leader, who hewed with his cutlass a broad passage, through which to retreat. Here, forming his men into a line, he placed himself at their head, and with rapid and noiseless footsteps the whole party followed their sable guide through many dark and devious labyrinths, towards the rear of the villa.

CHAPTER II.

"There exists no treachery so criminal as that of youth against old age. But when with grey hairs are united the

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ties of benefactor and kindred, it becomes the blackest of crimes, claiming neither extenuation nor forgiveness. The man who would be thus guilty, is the basest of men the most accomplished of demons."

M. Rollin.

"A lovely girl watching over the dying pillow of a venerable father, must be a scene over which angels love to linger."

Hamilton's Essays.

A RUINED VILLA A CASTILLIAN MAIDEN THE VENERABLE SPANIARD SCENE IN A SUBTERRANEAN APARTMENT.

While the band of piratical marauders were winding their way through the intricate paths which led through the grounds, we will precede them to the villa.

This was a long, low, steep-roofed edifice, with a dilapidated and sunken gallery running along its front, supported by a row of heavy, dark-coloured columns, some of which leaned inward while one or two were lying prostrate upon the green sward before the house. At either end of the gallery, stood a bronze statue of some classic hero, while in various points in front of the building and half-concealed by the wild and neglected shrubbery, were several marble statues, a few standing, but more broken into pieces and thrown down, fragments of which were scattered in every direction over the grounds. A green terrace, fronting the bay and bound with marble, up to which a ruined flight of steps ascended from the shore, extended the whole length of the parterre, or ornamented garden, before the villa. The chimneys, and in many places the walls of the house had crumbled and fallen; windows were without shutters the ascent to the piazza, the entrances to the dwelling, and the various walks diverging from it, were choked up with tall coarse grass, and fragments of brick, stone and marble. The whole premises presented a scene of melancholy desolation the sad record of past opulence and grandeur.

The northern wing of the building, alone withstood the devastations of decay, and at this time, served as the abode of the family whose reported wealth, had held forth temptations to a band of pirates to invade the sanctity of its domestic circle. The opulent proprietor, an old Castillian soldier, lived in the enjoyment of vast possessions in Mexico, when one of the many revolutions in that illfated land, sent him forth an exile to other shores. With the value of his estates exchanged for Spanish coin and vessels of gold and silver, or melted down into ingots, and accompanied by his only child, a beautiful dark-eyed Castillian girl a nephew whom he had adopted, and one or two faithful servants, he came to Jamaica, and purchased the estate on which he now dwelt, from one of those old, ruined planters, who once lived princes of the island.

The old Spaniard's heart was broken by his exile. His proud spirit was fallen, and he had become again a child, and the child of his bosom, the young Constanza Velasquez, was the only solace of his age and solitude. But the nephew, turned upon his benefactor, and like the serpent, stung the bosom that nourished him.

The hour of vespers had long passed, and Constanza kneeled by the couch of her father.

Her figure was round, finely developed, and displayed to advantage by a laced jacket, or bodice of black satin, enriched with a deep lace border closely fitting her shape. The curve of her shoulders was faultless, terminating in arms that would have haunted Canova in his dreams. On either wrist sparkled a diamond button confining the bodice at the cuffs. At both shoulders it was also clasped by a star of emeralds. Her fine raven hair was drawn back, and arranged in the form of a crest of tresses falling around her finely-turned head. A single white flower was secured in a rich curl above her forehead, by a gold-wrought comb, inlaid with many coloured stones. Over her head was thrown a white mantilla or veil, fastened on the comb by a pearl pin, so disposed as to fall down the back, to the feet of the wearer; yet it could be readily brought forward and dropped over the whole person. At this

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time, it was gathered in folds, and hung gracefully on her left arm.

Beneath her robe of white satin, worn under the bodice, and richly flowered with net work of silver, appeared, fitted in a neat Spanish slipper, a foot such as poets of the northern clime see in dreams of the most perfect and fascinating symmetry. The complexion of the maiden was a rich olive tinge, mellowed by the suns of sixteen Indian summers. Her eyes were large, dark, and expressive, shaded by long silken lashes, even darker than her dark shining hair, giving them, when in repose, that dreamy look, which the pencils of the old Italian masters loved to dwell upon with lingering touches. They spoke of deep passion and gentleness, while a smile of light danced perpetually in their radiant beams. The general character of her extremely lovely features indicated great sweetness of disposition and ingenuousness. The timid expression of her eye, evincing indecision, was relieved by a firmness about the mouth and the maidenly dignity which sat upon her beautiful forehead. In her left hand, she held a diamond crucifix suspended from her neck by a massive gold chain, each link in the shape of a cross. Upon her right arm, reposed the majestic head of her venerable parent, her delicate fingers playing with the silvery, shining ringlets that flowed about his neck, and curled upon his massive forehead. His features were sharp and rigid with illness and settled grief; and his dark eye was lustreless as he gazed up into the face of his child.

"Have you said your prayers to night, my child?"

"I have, dear father; and they ascended for your recovery. Oh, that the sweet mother of our Saviour would grant answers to my prayers!" she said looking upward devotionally.

"She will, she will, Constanza," replied the aged man, "for yourself, but not for me! I have lived my allotted space. I must soon leave you, child. Be prepared for it, my daughter! Listen! I dreamed this afternoon that I saw the blessed Virgin, and she was the image of yourself."

"Nay, father, let not your love for poor sinful Constanza lead you to sin in your language," interrupted his daughter, blushing at the unintentional flattery, while she trembled at its seeming impiety.

"So, so, but yet hear me, child," he interrupted impatiently; "when I gazed upon her, wondering she was so like you, she changed, and instead of you, I saw your mother! How much like her you look just now my child! Bend down and let me kiss your brow." The fair girl bent her brow to her father's cheek, her dark locks mingling with his white hair.

"You do not remember your mother," uttered he, after a moment's affectionate embrace; "poor child! she was very beautiful. Your lofty brow is hers, the same pencilled arch the same drooping lid and when you smile, I almost call you, 'my Isabel!'"

"Am I so like my sainted mother, father? I wish I could recollect her or recall a feature," she said, placing her finger on her lips in the attitude of thought "but no, no, it is vain!" she added, shaking her head mournfully, "her image is gone forever."

"Oh no, not forever, my child, you shall meet her again in heaven."

All at once a cloud of sorrow passed across his troubled features, and grasping in his trembling and withered fingers, the soft, round hand of his daughter, he said in an earnest manner,

"Constanza, I feel that I cannot leave you, my unprotected dove! in this sinful world alone. What will become of you, my child, when I am gone? Hebérto!" and the old man's eye flashed with anger as he repeated the name, "Beware of Hebérto! Oh, that the proud name of Velasquez should be dishonoured by such a branch! Fear him, my child, fear him as you would the adder that winds his glistening folds along your path;" and the old man clasped his skeleton fingers upon the sparkling crucifix which lay upon his breast and after remaining silent for a

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few moments, he lifted his aged eyes to heaven and said, "Holy Mary! take her! she is thy child, thy sister! Be a mother to my child, dear Mary, Mother of Jesus! and as thy beloved son surrendered thee to the care of his beloved disciple while he hung expiring on the cross," and he pressed fervently and devotionally the jewelled representative to his lips, "so do I, a poor penitent worm of the dust, here and on my dying bed, give up to thee, my child my only beloved child! Thou hast her mother in heaven. Oh keep her daughter while on earth! Mary, Mother! in the language of thy dying son, I say, 'Mother, behold thy daughter!'" The venerable man, who in his momentary devotion had raised himself from the sustaining arm of his daughter, as he uttered the last words, fell back upon the pillow exhausted.

"Oh, Agata! Agata!" shrieked the deeply-affected and terrified girl, "Come! hasten! my father is dying."

The door of the anti-chamber burst open, and the tall figure of young Heberto Velasquez stood before her as she turned to look for her aged attendant, wrapped in a dark blue cloak, and his features shaded by a drooping sombrero.

"Ha, my charming cousin! what has tuned that pretty voice so high," he said in a gay, yet unpleasant tone; at the same time coming forward and bending gracefully down, he passed his arm around the waist of the lovely girl.

The maiden sprung as if a demon had laid his polluted hand upon her person. "Heberto! Señor Velasquez!" and she stood before him as she spoke her eye flashing with maidly indignation her cheek glowing with insulted modesty, and her majestic figure and attitude like that of a seraph whom Satan had dared to tempt. "What mean you, sir? begone! Would you press your hateful suit to the daughter, over the corpse of her father? Begone, I hate you! more than I have ever *loved* I now *hate* you! Oh shame, shame! that I should ever have loved THEE!" and her lip, eye and brow, expressed withering scorn.

"Leave me, sir!" she added, as she saw that he moved not. But the bold and unblushing intruder, although his eye quailed before the proud look of the maiden, stood with folded arms, a fierce brow, and malicious lip, gazing upon her, as she turned to bathe the aged temples of the unconscious invalid and restore him to animation. "Leave me, sir; Oh, let not my father revive and find you here. It will kill him. You know he cannot endure you, soulless man, since you brought that fatal will for him to sign."

"Ha, do you throw it in my teeth, pretty one! But prithee tell me, when first learned you the part of tragedy queen? Nombre de Dios, my pretty cousin! but you play your part excellently well."

"Scorner! Insulter! away Oh that the count were here to chastise insolence!"

"The count," slowly repeated Velasquez, grinding the hated appellation between his glittering teeth, as he slowly articulated it.

At this moment the old man unclosed his eyes. "Go, sir, go would you murder him?" she exclaimed, while her dark eye flashed with anger.

"He will die full soon enough when his ingots are gone," repeated Velasquez, scornfully. "I will go, my queenly cousin; but the time perhaps may not be far off, when you will sue for this same Velasquez to stay, and with clasped hands and tearful eyes pray him to speak you kindly; then will he remember this evening. Adios, estrella mia!" he added with a mock, sentimental air, and kissing his hand, while he cast over the voluptuous outline of her shoulders, as, in her sacred duty she bent affectionately over her father's form, a glance of mingled desire and hatred, he pressed his hat over his eyes, folded his cloak closer about his form, and left the apartment.

With a firm and rapid pace he passed through the hall, and traversed the deserted apartments of the large mansion, his way lighted by the moon, which poured in floods of radiance at the open and shutterless windows. Opening,

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and closing carefully after him, a door which communicated with the opposite wing, he descended a broken staircase, into a dark vault beneath, and unlocking a small door concealed on the outside by thick shrubbery, he pushed aside the bushes, and stood in the moonlight.

"By the blessed Baptista!" he exclaimed, as he emerged from the secret portal, "if these men betray me! Yet, without me they cannot hunt out the old dotard's hoard. But if I am the buccaneer's tool, you have lost your wits, Velasquez, if he shall not be yours." And the dark plotter against a helpless old man, and his lovely and unprotected child, smiled inwardly at the pleasant thought his fertile brain conjured up, as he paced to and fro, beneath the shade of a large tamarind tree, which grew near that wing of the mansion.

"What can keep them?" he muttered, as a fancied sound in a clump of bushes, upon which his eye was often turned, stayed for a moment his footsteps.

"It is a full half hour since they answered my signal. Cesar has been long absent! The black loiterer should have had them here, ere now."

"A shrine to thee, patron saint!" he suddenly exclaimed, devoutly kissing a medal, suspended to his collar, "there is the square figure of my naked Adonis; and that tall figure! I know it well; once seen it is not soon forgotten; and there follow his sturdy villains. Now, Herbérto Velasquez, thou art a made man!"

"Señores, buenos tardes," he said, gaily advancing a few steps to meet the approaching party, as it emerged from the avenue, and traversed the terrace to the place of appointment. "My good sir captain, you are right gladly welcome to my poor domicil. If it please you, draw up your men in this shade, while we walk aside," he added, proffering his hand to the leader of the party.

"Sir Spaniard, pardon me that I grasp not the hand of a villain," replied the chief, without removing his hand from the cutlass hilt, upon which it mechanically rested. "Nay, start not! and leave that rapier in peace. I know you, though we have met but seldom. Thanks, or courtesy, I owe you not. This adventure is not of my seeking; it is the ill-begotten offspring of mutiny on the part of my men, who will be in no other way appeased, and of treachery, ingratitude, and base villany on your own. Now, Señor, to business; but let there be no friendship, and but few words between us."

Velasquez bit his lip in silence, and his inferior spirit shrunk within him, as these biting words rung upon his ear; and the penetrating, self-powered gaze of the pirate rested, while he spoke, full upon his features. But his love of wealth overcame any momentary struggles of wounded pride, and he replied in a less assured tone than he had used, when first addressing his companion.

"It is well, Señor," he said, carelessly, "if you choose to be captious on so slight a matter. But 'tis a blessed chance my pretty cousin heard not your romancing. I would wager my gold-headed rapier against the iron one you wear, that she would have loved you outright."

"Your sword is more likely to be lost in such a wager, than in one of battle," was the contemptuous reply; "but I came not here to lay wagers with you, Don Velasquez, either of coin or battle. To the matter in hand. We have no time for idle dallying, and I am not given to bandying words. For the privilege of taking possession of the large sum of money in the possession of your uncle, you are to be allowed one-half for your own personal use, on condition, that without turmoil or blood-shed, injury to persons or property, you conduct my men to your uncle's strong-hold. These," he added, after a moment's silence, "are the terms we made in Kingston. Say I not well, Señor?"

"There remains one other condition," replied Velasquez, with the caution of practised villany; "that mutual secrecy be sacredly observed between us, in relation to the removal of the treasures."

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"Even so, wary Señor Velasquez; that the robbed old man may lay all censure upon the pirates, whom you would make the scape-goat of your treachery to your uncle, and curse them when he talks of his loss to his sympathizing nephew, if, haply, he lives to relate the sad story. Well, lead on, Señor, we follow," he added, sternly.

"Call two of your strongest men," said Velasquez, "let them accompany us, and command the rest to stand as close as possible with their weapons ready for use, in case of alarm; and enjoin upon them to observe the strictest silence. Now, sir! shall we move?"

"Théodore, be alert, our lives depend upon it," said the chief to his young attendant; and, followed by two of his men, he approached the secret opening, guided by Velasquez, who had constructed it for his own private admission into the vault, when his lavish purse required replenishing; although, a certain indefinable respect for his name and respectability among men, prevented him from openly robbing his benefactor, or removing sufficiently large sums to excite suspicion.

Accident, in some of his visits to Jamaica, had thrown him into the company of the commander of the schooner, with whom, from a supposed congeniality of character, he sought to cultivate an intimacy. Ignorant of human nature, whose outward seeming is often the most false, and anxious to be regarded by the outlaw as a caballero of mettle; without knowing his exact character, and thinking he must assimilate himself to the false standard of an outlaw set up in his own mind, he threw into his manner a recklessness, lawlessness, and ferocity, which was, however, natural to him, disgusting to the chief, who took no pains to conceal his contempt for him. Subsequently, a knowledge of a threatened mutiny among his men, suggested to the dark-minded man a scheme, not only to gain wealth himself, without suspicion, or rather, proof of illegal acquisition, but to do the pirate, whose fellowship, like the cur who is beaten, he coveted the more he was spurned, a favour that should purchase his good will.

Putting aside the thick clumps of the oleander, concealing the secret opening into the vault of the building, Velasquez and his companions entered the low-arched room communicating with the apartment above, by the shattered stair-case he had descended on quitting his cousin.

"It is too dark to place a foot! Are you provided with a lantern?" he inquired, in a whisper, carefully and without noise, closing the door, as the last man entered.

"Here is one," said the seaman nearest him, opening, at the same time, one side of the night lantern, with which nearly every man was provided.

The guide took it from him, and passing round the stairs, opened a door he had purposely left unlocked, and entered a long damp passage, the extremity of which lay in total darkness. The outlaw placed his hand upon his stiletto, and glanced, with habitual watchfulness, around him, as he approached its obscure and suspicious termination. At the end of the passage, which they crossed with light footsteps, they passed through another door, the key of which was in the lock, and entered a low-vaulted room, directly under the inhabited wing of the mansion.

The floor was paved with large flat stones, and besides the door, through which they entered, there was no perceptible outlet.

"Here is the room adjoining the money," said Velasquez, in a low, husky voice, with his face averted from the gaze of him whom he addressed. "Be silent; the least noise will betray us: Hark! did you not hear the report of a gun? No, it was a movement overhead." The momentary suspicion and apprehension of detection, which are the attendants of guilt, passed off, and he continued,

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"Look at this wall, sir! you see it is perfectly smooth; yet through it we pass to my uncle's gold bags," said he, with a forced smile, as he shook off his fears, and those qualms of conscience which tortured even his hardened spirit. Then, pressing against one of the sides of a large square stone, it turned half way round, on a concealed pivot, and displayed a narrow opening on either side.

"This is too small; we cannot pass through it," said the pirate, now speaking for the first time since entering the vault.

Without replying, Velasquez pressed the sides of the two lower stones in the same manner, and two dark, narrow passages, nearly the height of a man, and so wide, that one could pass sideways, were opened in the wall.

Holding the lamp, so that it would illuminate the interior, a narrow, spiral stair-case was discovered, leading both into the upper room, where the outlet was concealed by a private door, and from the spot where they stood, into a subterranean vault beneath constituting a medium of communication between the upper room and the vault, and from the stair-case, by revolving the stones, to the exterior of the building, by the way the party had entered.

"You see, my uncle is a true Spaniard, señor captain, in his taste for subterranean and secret passages!" said Velasquez. "Pity 'tis, his ingenuity should not have had eyes to admire it before. He should thank me, by our Lady's benison, for making known to a man of judgment, like yourself, his passing skill. See! how secretly he can descend from his chamber to count his ingots! though to do the old dotard justice, he possesses not a miserly soul. This passage in the wall must, however, be set down to his nephew's ingenuity. It would astonish the old man, as much as if a new Roman miracle were hatched, (the saints pardon my impiety!) if he should press too heavily against the sides of his stair-way, and pitch, at once, into this room. I would give half I expect to possess this night, to see his aghast features, when he made the discovery. But I see you are impatient, señor captain, let us proceed," he added hastily, as his companion sprung into the opening on the staircase; and following him, they descended into the vault, over which the lamp cast a dim and uncertain light.

The little room, or cell, in which they now were, was arched over-head the walls were constructed of solid masonry, and there was visible neither outlet nor inlet, save, at the foot of the stairs, that which admitted them.

Around the room, which was about eight feet square, stood several antique marble urns, blackened by age and dampness, which had once constituted a part of the ornaments of the villa grounds in the days of its pride. These urns were covered with slabs, once capitals and pedestals.

A heavy cedar box, with a cover loosely thrown over it, stood on one side, while, on a raised floor, were candlesticks, urns, a tall crucifix, and many vessels for the altar and festal board, all of massive silver.

"Mines of Peru! but here is a goodly display of wealth!" said the pirate, glancing his eye over the glittering array before him. "Let us see what these urns contain. Coin of silver! coin of silver! chains of gold! bracelets! glittering stones, and gems of price!" said he, as he removed one after another of the slabs which covered them. "And here, in this strong box," he continued, removing the lid, "what have we here? Holy Saint Peter! but here is a prince's ransom indeed;" and the rough corners of a heap of ingots sparkled with a thousand points in the rays of the lamp.

"Here, Señor Captain, is the prize you seek," said Velasquez, exultingly, after waiting until he had surveyed the costly heaps. "Let your men take the box of ingots, the vessels of silver, and the urn of golden chains, gems, and bracelets; for my portion, leave me the remaining urns of dollars though something less than what you share I am content with them. But remember your oath of secrecy."

"That will I, Señor Velasquez," said the outlaw, in a lively tone; "and I consent to this division."

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The sight of so much wealth, which he had to lay his hands upon only to possess, and the prospect of restoring discipline in his fleet, overcame for the moment his contempt for the tool that served him, and his regret at taking possession of the wealth of a defenceless old man. "But," he argued, as he and others, under similar circumstances, had argued before, "if I do not take it, Velasquez will; but I have sworn on bended knee that a sacred portion should be reserved for the daughter! Innocence has been too long the victim of guilt! The last shall now be subservient to the first. Come, Señor Velasquez," he said abruptly, aloud, "let us to work. Here, Gaspár, you and Nicolás raise this box; it is weighty, but you were not blessed with the neck and shoulders of bulls for nothing. No! not move it? Then lighten it there that's well. Now bear it to the outside, and bid Théodore send Mateo and Carlos back with you be silent and speedy."

The men, placing an open lantern upon the cover of the box to light them through the dark passage of the building, disappeared slowly up the stairs with their heavy burden, while the two principals who remained, the one with folded arms leaning against the side of the vault, and the other, with his right hand thrust into his bosom, the left resting upon a slab stood silently and in darkness awaiting their return.

CHAPTER III.

"The wealth in gold, silver, and jewels, brought away from Mexico by the Spanish exiles, exceeds belief. Their riches, ultimately, by presenting temptation to the lawless and vicious, became the instruments of their destruction. In some of the West India islands, the military were often called from their posts to defend remote dwellings, inhabited by these Spanish Dons, against bands of freebooters."

HISTORY OF REVOLUTIONS IN MEXICO.

"A strong proof of Divine oversight in relation to human affairs, is the entrapping of the guilty in the gins they have set for others. This retributive system is daily presented to our knowledge. The most perfect consummation of Divine justice on earth, is, no doubt, when the criminal receives his just punishment, accidentally, by the hand of his intended victim."

A SURPRISE VELASQUEZ AND HIS UNCLE A BATTLE WITH DRAGOONS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT RETREAT DEPARTURE OF THE BUCCANEERS.

After Velasquez left the apartment of the insulted and distressed maiden, her firmness and womanly indignation forsook her with the object that called it into existence, and burying her face in the pillow of her father's couch, she wept bitterly.

"Daughter! Constanza! why do you not speak to me?" called the old man in a tremulous voice, his consciousness gradually returning. "My child weeping! do not weep for me, my dear Constanza. I am better better much quite well," he feebly articulated in a broken voice, which contradicted his words. "It grieves me to see your eyes in tears; let me take your hand in mine, mí alma! Tell me why those tears?" he inquired, with parental kindness.

"Nay, I weep not, father," replied the lovely girl, brushing the fast falling tears from her eye-lashes; "now that you are well, I am happy, very happy," and she laid affectionately her dimpled hand upon her parent's fevered brow. "Oh, I have dreamed a fearful dream, mí alma," suddenly spoke her father, starting with the recollection. "I dreamed that Velasquez, with a guilty lip, sought to desecrate your virgin cheek "

"Nay, nay, my dear father, it was but a dream," interrupted the blushing girl, with a nervous rapidity in the tones of her voice. "Will you not sleep? the hour wears late, and I would see you sleep. Oh, my father, try and sleep for your Constanza's sake live for your child," she said, as a sense of her loneliness, if he should be taken from her,

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coming vividly to her mind, alarmed her.

"I will, I will, daughter. Do you not recollect, sweet wife, when first I called you mine; you were young, then, and beautiful; 'tis a great while ago, and yet you are still as lovely as when crowned a virgin bride. But methinks time has changed me strangely! Why do you weep, Isabel? We are not all alone. Our little daughter is with us. Shall Constanza not be our earthly blessing? When I am old and feeble will she not bless our pillow?"

"Father! father! oh, my dear, dear father! do you not know your daughter? your own beloved Constanza, who speaks to you?" cried the distressed girl, as from his wandering language, the conviction of her father's danger pressed upon her mind.

"Yes, my child," said the aged parent, recovering from his temporary alienation of mind, "you are indeed Constanza!" and she kneeled by his pillow, and was pressed affectionately to his bosom.

Whilst father and daughter, locked in each other's arms, presented this lovely and touching picture of filial and parental love, a low murmuring, apparently from the vault beneath, aroused them from their endearing interchange of affection.

"Hist, child! what sounds are those?" She raised her head and listened; and the ringing of metal, and whispered words came up from below.

"Blessed Virgin! there is mischief near," she cried, in alarm.

"Jesu, Jesu Maria! my ingots! my gold!" exclaimed the old man, clinging with the penurious characteristic of opulent old age, to that wealth he could no longer use. "There are robbers below! my child, oh, my child, you are a beggar!"

With suddenly bestowed strength he sprang from his couch, and seizing a pistol hanging near him, he pressed with his thumb the knob from which he took it, and a narrow door, hitherto concealed by the peculiar architecture of the room, flew open, displaying the winding stairway leading to the vault, and at the same instant a light flashed full in his haggard face from the aperture.

"We are discovered!" shouted a voice from below.

"It is the old man!" exclaimed Velasquez; "finish him dead men tell no tales;" and a click of a pistol followed the words of the speaker.

"What mean you, sir Spaniard," interposed the deep, manly voice of the pirate; "would you do murder? What fear you from a childish old man? For shame! put up your pistol. Be lively, men," he added, with a quicker tone, "and convey this last load to the men without. Stand back, Señor Velasquez," he cried in a loud voice; "attempt to pass this stair, and, by St. Barabbas! little service shall this night's treachery do you. Cielos! what is this! he exclaimed, as the blood spouted from the temples of the Spaniard, whilst the report of a pistol, levelled by the old man at the scarcely seen marauders, thundered in the close vault like the explosion of a mine. The Spaniard sprung backward, and fell dead upon the urns of silver, for which he had sold both honour and life, with a fearful execration upon his livid lip.

"Thus perish treachery by the hand of its victim," exclaimed the pirate. "This is likely to be no small night's work; stand where you are Senor," he added, addressing Don Velasquez, who was descending the stair-case, "there shall no harm come nigh you; the man you had most to fear has received the reward of his deeds. Stay your hand, old man! do you dare me with steel?" he demanded, as he struck up from his hands a glittering rapier, he had seized to defend the stairway after discharging the pistol.

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"Mother of God! what noise is that without? one two three, pistols! my signal! Ho, Carlos, Matéo, what?" he emphatically demanded, as his two assistants rushed past the old man and leaped into the vault. "What, villains, what?" and his voice rung through the passages.

"We are surprised, sir! The report of the pistol, and the shrieks of some old slaves, were answered by a shout from a distance. Immediately a blue light illuminated the barracks, and a musket was discharged to give the alarm. Just as I came in, I could already hear the tramp of horses, and the clanging of armour along the highway. There must have been mounted troops abroad to be on horse so soon." This information was given with rapidity and energy by the seaman.

"It is as I feared," said the chief, calmly, "the dragoons are upon us!" and drawing his cutlass, "follow!" he cried to his men. And as the speediest way of gaining the outside of the building, he sprang up the stairs into the room above, gently putting the old man aside, as he emerged into the chamber.

"Save, oh save my father!" shrieked his daughter, who had clung to his neck during the scene we have described, striving to prevent him from rushing below, and, who now threw herself upon his breast, intervening her person as a shield between the pirate's cutlass and her parent's bosom. "Save, oh spare his life!" and she extended her arms imploringly. "Take, take all, but let my father live."

"Fear not, fair maiden," replied the chief in a tone of deep respect, that fell like the voice of hope upon her heart, struck with her extraordinary loveliness; "do not be alarmed, your lives and honour are sacred in the hands of Lafitte!"

"Lafitte! oh God!" shrieked the maiden; and raised her eyes to heaven, clasped her snowy fingers and would have fallen, had not the outlaw caught her in his arms.

"Oh my daughter, my daughter!" cried the helpless old man, weakened and nervous from excitement, "what will become of you?" and falling upon his knees before the pirate, he supplicated his mercy.

"Oh, take all, take all gold, jewels, all, but leave me my Constanza my only child! the blest image of her mother!" and the furrowed cheeks of the old father, as he pleaded for his child, were running with tears. "For the sake of thy mother," he continued, with energy, "for the sake of the blessed Virgin, take not away my only child!" and the old man clasped the knees of the buccaneer, and fell upon his face and wept.

"Venerable Señor, rise up, your daughter shall not be taken from you," replied Lafitte, raising tenderly the prostrate old man from the ground.

Constanza, when she felt that the pirate supported her form, at once, by a strong mental effort, rose superior to her weakness, and was preparing to bound from him; but when she saw that he did not detain her, and that he spoke kindly and soothingly to her father, she thought a voice of so much tenderness, could not belong to so bad a man as the pirate had been represented to her. And when he placed her father's form in her arms, she looked up into the outlaw's face with greater confidence.

"Señor, I will believe you, we will trust in you, for, oh! what else can we do? but go, do go from us! take the gold you came for, and depart! Leave me and my father; we can be happy without wealth; he is too old to use it, and, I care not for it take it; it is yours, freely bestowed."

"Maiden," he replied, with an embarrassed air, and a flush like shame suffusing his brow, whilst the shouts of the dragoons approaching the villa, rung unheeded in his ears. "Maiden, I thank you, and feel grateful for your confidence; it is not ill placed. The treasure it is out of my power to command, or I would return it; it is in the hands of my men, and at their disposal, not mine. But here," he added, after an instant's hesitation, kneeling, and

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taking her hand, which she instantly withdrew, "here is a treasure dearer to me than all else beside!" and he gazed with impassioned, yet respectful tenderness, upon the pale features of the surprised girl.

"Pardon me," he added with earnestness, as he observed the maidenly embarrassment, his abrupt address produced, "pardon me, that I make use of such untimely language, at this moment, but there is a tumult abroad I hear the ringing of steel, the shouts of fighting men, and the firing of musketry. I must speak to you now! Listen to me, lady, I beseech! See, I am a suppliant at your feet!"

"Oh Señor, I implore you, think not of me! go! your men call their chief! Go, you will be taken, and your life will be sacrificed."

As she spoke, a rich colour played over her cheek, and mantled her brow, and her dark, up-raised eye, betrayed deep and strange interest, in the safety of the pirate the fruit of a struggle between resentment, and kindness, in her bosom; and her dishevelled hair, fell, a dark cloud of ringlets, over her neck and bosom, which heaved like a gently agitated billow.

"Maiden, unless your lips pronounce forgiveness, without one ray of hope I cannot go. Speak, Señora, but one word!"

"I do forgive you, señor, but leave me. Hark, that shout! delay another moment, and you are lost."

"I will obey you, lady, and leave my cause to you and heaven!" he said, seizing, and pressing her hand to his lips; then, as the noise without increased, he drew a pistol from his belt, and casting back a lingering look, expressive of mingled hope and fear, while a smile mantled his handsome features, he rushed from the apartment on to the terrace. The next moment, she heard his footsteps dying away, in the direction of the sounds of contest, which from the firing and cries of the combatants, seemed to be already fierce and bloody.

Constanza, as the pirate disappeared, laid her father's head upon a pillow, and leaving him to the troubled sleep, into which he had sunk from exhaustion, leaned from the window, and looked forth upon the lovely moon, which, in its nightly watch, never shone upon a sweeter face.

The sounds of conflict had receded till they were lost in the distance; and all was still and motionless, save a few white clouds sailing along the blue heavens, a slight waving of the foliage about the window; and the irregular heaving of her bosom.

She stood, and communed with her own thoughts. "Strange! strange," said she, mentally, "but that voice, so rich, and full of tenderness! how my heart bounded, when I heard him address my poor father! where can I have heard it? How singularly it affected me! and can he be Lafitte? that dreadful man! proscribed among men a price set upon his head! hated, shunned, and feared by all! Yet, how very noble looking he is, and so humane! And his eyes, how dark and piercing. He is certainly, very handsome! But," and her cheek paled, as she gave utterance to her thoughts, "oh, holy Virgin, I fear him, the language he used! oh, lost, lost Constanza! If beloved by this outlaw, better have been the bride of Velasquez, than the the oh, dear Madonna, help now, for I know not what to do!" and she covered her face with her hands, and the tears forced their way through her taper fingers.

"Oh that Alphonse were here," she at length continued; "my own Alphonse! Dreary weeks he has been absent, and yet he comes not. How have I watched day after day, for the glimmer of his white sails, upon the horizon. Oh, that he were here to-night! when, when, will he come?" and she rung her hands, and leaned despondingly upon the window.

Suddenly, the report of a pistol, followed by the sound of running feet, and now and then, a cry, as of men pursuing and pursued, startled her from her reverie; and instantly, the scenes she had gone through, passed vividly

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before her mind, and she awoke, at once, to a full consciousness of the loneliness, and utter helplessness of her situation.

Hastening, instantly, as the noise increased, to the side of her father, as though protection could be found in his feeble arm, she awaited, like the panting fawn, with throbbing heart, and alarmed eye, the coming danger. The sounds came nearer and nearer, and the hasty tread of armed men was heard upon the terrace, followed by a heavy sound, as if one had leaped, at a bound, from the ground on to the piazza. Hardly had Constanza time to move from the surprised attitude in which those appalling sounds arrested her, or conjecture their nature, when, springing in through the window, which she had just left to cling to her father, Lafitte once more stood before her.

His eye was illuminative with a fierce light, his lip was compressed, and blood was upon his brow and hand, which grasped a dripping cutlass.

"Oh God! oh God!" shrieked the terrified girl, as this sudden apparition appeared before her, and fell senseless upon the floor. The outlaw though closely pursued, paused for an instant, with indecision, and then, hastily raised her with the air of one, who had, at the moment, decided upon a certain mode of conduct. Scarcely had he lifted her drooping form upon his muscular arm, when the window was filled with soldiers, thirsty for the blood of the daring outlaw.

"Back, sirs; or, by the holy God, I will bury this weapon in this maiden's bosom!" he cried in a resolute tone; and he grasped his cutlass near the point, shortening it, like a stiletto, and elevated his arm.

The soldiers hesitated to enter.

"What, cowards! do you value a girl's life, when Lafitte is the prize?" said the fierce voice of their leader; "follow me!" and he sprung in at the window to fall back upon his men, a stiffened corpse; while the report of a pistol, discharged behind Lafitte, rung through the room.

"Ha Carlos! is that you?" said Lafitte, as he looked round to see from whence the shot was fired.

"Yes, Señor," he hastily replied, "escape through the old man's door down the stairs and out through the passage. I have just passed through, and the coast is clear. I will keep the red devils at bay," said he quickly.

"Good, my Carlos but the old man! we cannot leave him," and he pointed to the couch.

"Little will he know whether he be taken or left. The old man's commission has run out," said he, laying his rough hand upon the cold temples of the old Spaniard "Dead, dead enough, señor!"

"Poor, poor child, how will she bear it!" said Lafitte with interest "How now," he added quickly, "here they come like so many blood-hounds."

The soldiers without, who were engaged in loud and noisy altercation among themselves, as to who should first enter and seize the outlaw, now hailed with a shout the sound of hoofs, and the ringing of sabres and spurs, announcing a reinforcement.

"This fair girl must be my breast-plate dash out that light, and follow me!" cried the pirate; and springing through the secret door, he disappeared with his lovely burden. Carlos darted after him and hastily closed the door, which received a shower of bullets from half a dozen horse pistols, levelled at his retreating form.

"Well done, Carlos," said Lafitte, approvingly; "now open your lantern and lead the way."

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Rapidly traversing the dark passages, they soon left behind them the sounds of rage and disappointment, vented by their pursuers on entering the room, and finding their victims had escaped in some mysterious manner.

"That torch here, William!" said the dragoon officer, "how in the devil could he have escaped! There is no sign of an outlet here he must be in league with Beelzebub to have slipped away thus. Ha! who is this? old Don Velasquez! and dead too! Poor old soldier money, daughter, life, all in one hour! But mount men, mount! to horse! this outlaw has escaped by some subterranean passage in this old Spanish house and will double upon us like an old hare Ho! surround the house to horse!" Leaping from the window he bounded across the gallery, and mounted, followed by half a score of his followers; and putting spurs to his horse, he made a rapid sweep around the dwelling.

But before his pursuers had taken horse, Lafitte threaded the subterranean passages of the building, and emerged from the secret door into the bright moonlight, and with the speed of the hunted stag, crossed the open lawn and entered the avenue which led towards the sea-shore. This path was exposed for some distance, to the eye of an observer, from the piazza of the villa, and as the dragoons completed their survey of the grounds immediately surrounding the house, and met at the end of the wing, near the tamarind tree, the white robes of the maiden glared upon the eyes of the leader.

"As I thought on! there is our game," he cried, burying his spurs deep into the horses flanks, and dashing down the avenue, like the wind, followed at speed by his troop.

"Carlos," cried Lafitte, as he heard the shout, announcing to him that they were on his track. "Now we must put forth all our energies, my brave man. You know the path go before and we will yet distance them fly!" and on they went with the rapidity of deer, with the hounds but a bound behind them, passing under trees crossing from avenue to avenue, and endeavouring, by a straight line, to gain the cliff instead of following the windings of the paths which were open to the cavalry. Breathless they flew, and at every turn, and opening in the shrubbery, the feet and voices of their pursuers were heard nearer and nearer.

"Now, captain, we are at the end of the grounds, and here is the gate stoop, sir," said Carlos, darting under the hedge, from which their ebony guide had crawled early in the evening, to conduct them on their expedition.

"Thank God! we are safe at last they cannot pass that barrier," exclaimed Lafitte, as he paused a moment, to breathe on the outer side of the hedge, "and this fair maiden!" he added with sympathy, "she is yet unconscious!"

"Now, Carlos, once through this wood, without being intercepted, and we are safe forward!" he said, in an assured tone; and raising his lifeless burden, he moved swiftly through the forest, while the shouts and execrations of their pursuers, as they found their prey had eluded their pursuit, rung in their ears.

The fugitives had nearly gained the cliff, when a sudden galloping on their left, told them that their pursuers had found a way to clear the hedge. Looking back, they discovered their arms gleaming through the trees, and the whole troop dashing forward in full cry.

Drawing his belt tighter around him, bringing his cutlass hilt to his grasp, and changing his still lifeless burden to the other arm, with renewed speed, the outlaw bounded through the dark glades of the forest. Every moment lessened his distance from his pursuers and just as he was ascending a slight eminence, commanding a view of the sea, and near the verge of the cliff, beneath which their vessel lay the foremost horseman was within pistol shot of them.

"Surrender, sir pirate! surrender!" he shouted as he levelled his long pistol, and deeper plunged his spurs into the sides of his foaming steed; the next instant horse and rider would have been upon the buccaneer, when drawing a pistol from his girdle, and half turning in his flight, he fired upon the dragoon. The ball sunk into the forehead of

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his horse, which, with one plunge forward, fell lifeless upon his rider and the ball of his pistol, which he discharged while falling, passed through the cap of the pirate. The remainder of the troop were close upon him, but the fate of their comrade, for a moment checked their speed.

"Hold there, for your lives, men!" shouted their commanding officer who had been outridden by his troop and now came up "hold, do not fire, but surround and take him. It were better that he should escape, than that fair girl should be injured."

"A hundred guineas to him," he added "who captures him, dead or alive but if the lady suffer harm, let him who gives the blow, beware!"

The soldiers sullenly returned their pistols to their holsters and drew their swords. But there were now other objects on which to exercise them; for at the same moment appeared a party of the pirate's crew, armed with cutlasses and fire-arms, who, leaving the schooner, and marching inland, on hearing the signal for succour made by their comrades, were returning, without meeting with them they having, with the exception of Lafitte, gained the shore by another route, with the loss of two of their number, shot down by the dragoons, and a portion of their booty. Striking their cutlasses against their pistols, with a loud noise and cheering each other with shouts, they came on at a rapid pace, and before the dragoons could draw and cock their fire-arms to meet this new enemy, they were fired upon with fatal effect, by the advancing buccaneers. Here and there, a rider fell from his steed at the discharge, while the wounded animals fled with wild cries through the forest.

"On, on! revenge for our comrades!" cried the pirates, pressing forward to close with them; creeping under the horses, and passing their cutlasses up through their bodies dragging the riders, by main force from their seats, or springing behind them, and hurling them bodily to the ground. For a few moments men and horse, were mingled in a sanguinary and dreadful melée.

The leader of the buccaneers did not, however, derive any personal advantage from this reinforcement; for the captain of dragoons, dismounting, as the pirates made their desperate charge, cried, "Have at you, sir pirate, for my own pleasure, and rescue of that lady;" advancing, as he spoke, with his drawn sword upon his antagonist, who, from the time he had killed the horse and dismounted the dragoon for a moment checking the pursuit had stood at bay, and facing his foes, determined to fight his way, step by step, to his vessel.

His eye lighted up with pleasure, as he heard the challenge of the leader of the dragoons a tall, gentlemanly-looking Englishman, with an herculean frame, and a strikingly military air.

Anxious to get safe to his schooner his lovely shield, whom he internally resolved should be forever his, although he had first taken her up to favour his own escape, when, closely pursued, he retreated to the villa he still moved slowly backward, facing his advancing foe. In his left arm he supported Constanza, her unconscious head laid upon his shoulder, while he wielded his formidable cutlass in his right hand, upon which he received the ringing steel of the officer.

In vain the Englishman used every device of art, and each favourite ruse, and as uselessly did he follow blow on blow, with tremendous force. The pirate coolly received his descending weapon upon his cutlass at every stroke, and acting only on the defensive, still retreated steadily to the verge of the cliff.

"Now have at you, sir Englishman!" he cried, as he reached the head of the defile leading to his vessel. "Now have at you, in my turn. If you love Lafitte so well, he will give you a lasting mark of his friendship. So, there!" he added, suddenly and emphatically, as the officer, at first making a feint, aimed a heavy blow at his head, which he intended should be his *coup de grace*. "So, *there!*" and while he received his antagonist's sword upon his own guard, by a peculiar motion of his cutlass, with the same movement of his arm, he whirled it from his grasp high into the air, and making a sweep over his head, his rapid cutlass whistling through the air, descended and nearly

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severed the left arm of the Englishman from his body. The officer groaned, and fell heavily upon the ground, while Lafitte descended with rapidity the narrow defile to his schooner.

"Ho! Théodore! are you there, my boy?" he said, as he saw the slight form of the youth upon the deck; "receive this lady, and convey her to the starboard state-room, and try to restore her. Jacques, be out of this place as soon as possible."

"The anchor is apeak, sir," replied his lieutenant; "and the boat is ahead with a tow-line: shall we move, sir?"

"No, no! hold on, here come the men! Spring aboard, every one of you!" The seamen came hastily down the gorge, leaving two-thirds of their number behind them, while the voices of the soldiers were heard in full cry in pursuit, some bearing wounded comrades, and others portions of the booty, the most of which, was already safely got on board. As soon as the last man touched the deck, the commander uttered his orders for making sail with rapidity.

"Hoist away the jib and mainsail; set the topgallant-sails and royals; we must make every thing tell! Give way, men!" he shouted to the manned boat ahead; "steadily! there she moves! bear off from that crag! bend to those spars, men! now she moves! Pull heartily and cheerily, men, or we shall be intercepted by a guarda costa!"

"A curse upon this night's work," he said to himself, turning and walking aft as the schooner yielded to the efforts of the crew. "This is well called the Devil's Punch Bowl, and he is likely to have us all for ingredients, for his next bumper."

In a few moments the dark-hulled schooner, under the sweeps, the slightly drawing royals, and by the aid of the tow-boat, glided swiftly over the black, glassy flood, and in a few minutes, moved through the narrow entrance of the basin into the open bay. Rapidly passing, with a strengthening breeze, the needles or pinnacles of rock which girted the little harbour, her tall masts covered with clouds of canvass, and bounding with a lively motion before the night-breeze, she left behind her the land, and the scenes of death and desolation her presence had created, and swiftly and steadily stood for the open sea.

CHAPTER IV.

"No reflecting man can gaze upon a field of carnage, with its disfigured and gory corses, without feeling ashamed of his species! If a proud man, his pride will be humbled." "To find desolation and death, where we anticipate the calm bliss of domestic peace and happiness, is a trial few minds are prepared to encounter."

Spectator.

"Theirs was no hasty love, to bear for its bitter fruit a long repentance."

Maria of Meissen.

AN ARRIVAL SCENE AFTER A CONFLICT A MELANCHOLY SPECTACLE REVENGE PURPOSED.

The round, white moon was just fading into the western skies, and the well-defined outline of the peak of St. Catharine was delicately gilded by the yet unrisen sun, while a roseate tint mantled half the eastern heavens, the morning subsequent to the scenes and adventures related in the preceding chapters, when a little white spot on the horizon attracted the attention of the wounded officer of dragoons, as, under the refreshing influence of the morning breeze, he recovered from the swoon into which he had fallen from loss of blood, after being struck down by the buccaneer.

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Casting his eyes over the distant sea, he appeared to watch the speck with much interest; and surprise was manifest on his features, when, instead of receding, he perceived that it enlarged, and evidently approached the island.

"Can the buccaneer be returning!" he exclaimed; "but he might as well finish me, as leave me so!" and as he spoke, he raised, with a melancholy smile, his mutilated arm. "Well, Captain Adair," he continued, "you may hang your sword upon the willow now this Lafitte has done for you! But that cannot be the pirate neither," he said, in a changed and eager tone; "his was a schooner, although she carried royals, like a sloop of war. Ha! there is another sail in her wake a smaller craft what can they be? There! the larger veers a little two, three masts she's a ship under topsails, and the other's a schooner, a tender perhaps. But yet he's not a John Bull!" and after a few minutes silence, during which the anguish of his wound overcame every other feeling, he continued

"It is either a Frenchman or an American; but what can she want here? Ha, there fly Monsieur's colours!"

The vessels, which attracted the notice of the officer, were now plainly visible, about two leagues from the land. She was a large frigate, displaying the ensign of France at her peak, and the same national distinction also fluttered at the mast head of the schooner. Standing into the bay before a free breeze, with royals and sky-sails towering aloft, and lower studding-sails set on both sides, in less than an hour from the time she appeared a mere speck, like the flash of a sea-gull's wing on the horizon, she had passed the capes of the bay. Running close into the land, and furling one sail after another, she gracefully rounded to, and, accompanied by the tender, came to an anchor opposite the entrance of the recess, denominated the "Devil's Punch Bowl," and within the shadow of a gigantic rock, to which nature had given the outline of a huge granite fortress.

This vast mass rose abruptly over her tall masts, in enormous beetling heads, crags, and precipices, leaving a narrow belt of white sand at its base, upon which the waves of the bay peacefully unrolled themselves, when the winds were low, but over which they leaped in a storm, thundering against the cliff, and roaring in the caverns, with terrific sublimity. As the last sail was furled closely to its yard, the dragoon saw a small boat put off from the frigate, manned by four men and a steersman. An officer in a naval undress, with the insignia of the rank of a French captain upon his breast and collar, leaned back in the stern sheets, as the boat moved swiftly over the water, gazing upwards upon the giant rock, rearing its dark mass against the sky, admiring its castellated outline, and its dizzy crags, springing several hundred feet into the air.

The oarsmen pulled rapidly in to the beach at the base of the cliff, whose projecting verge, as they passed into its dark shadow, suddenly hid them from the eyes of the wounded officer.

"Lay to your oars briskly, men one strong pull more there, we strike!" said the French officer, as the boat, with a grating sound, grounded upon the beach, running half her length out of the water, on to the hard white sand.

The men shipped their oars and sprung out, respectfully raising their caps, as their officer passed by them in stepping ashore, and then turned to secure the boat from the action of the tide.

Delaying a moment to arm themselves with sabres and pistols, which they took from the stern, they hastily buckled them around their waists, and stood ready to follow their officer.

While his men were thus engaged, under the command of the coxswain a mere boy in the uniform of a midshipman—the officer stood a moment, awaiting their movements, gazing, with folded arms and thoughtful eye, upon the fine appearance his motionless frigate exhibited, as, towering above the dark hull, her lofty masts and slender spars appeared drawn with the accuracy of pencilling, against the sky.

He was a slightly-formed man, rather below than above the medium height of men, with a strikingly-elegant figure, finely displayed and relieved, by his blue frock and dark green cloak, falling negligently back from his

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shoulders in graceful folds. His forehead was high and expansive, over which, as, for a moment, he raised his velvet cap to meet the cool breezes from the sea, flowed, with almost feminine luxuriance, thick clusters of dark auburn hair. That softness of character, which this peculiarity anticipated, was, however, contradicted by the intellectual fulness of his brow, and the firm expression of his blue eye, which, although it might droop before a maiden's gaze, could flash proudly back the glance of a foe.

One lock of his hair seemed trained to lie over his forehead, and relieved the otherwise too perfect oval contour of his face. His complexion, naturally fair, was a little sun-brown, by exposure to the sun and seas of many climes; yet a healthy hue glowed upon his cheeks, while his upper lip was graced with a mustacho of the same rich colour of his hair. His lips were full, and rather voluptuous in their finely-curved outline, but, without any approach to sensuality. The general expression of his features, when in repose, as they now were, was intellectual, and, perhaps, melancholy. He might be above thirty years of age, though the juvenile and extreme beauty of his noble forehead, the suddenly-mantling cheek, and the curve of his mouth and chin, which a *Hebé* might have envied, would indicate, that he had seen even fewer summers. He would, in the eyes of a romantic maiden, have been the Raleigh of the days of Elizabeth the Ivanhoe of chivalry.

"We are ready, monsieur," said the youthful cockswain, as he drew closer the belt that confined his weapons.

"Follow me, then, Montville; the men may all remain; and see" he said, turning to them, "that you make no brawl with these Englishmen, as before! Those soldiers who felt your Gallic knocks, may take occasion to follow up their quarrel. If they approach, shove off at once, and lay on your oars beyond musket-shot."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the men, putting their shoulders to the boat, and floating her; while their commanding officer, followed by his favourite midshipman, crossed the smooth belt of sand, and winding rapidly around the base of the overhanging crags, came to a part where the descent was less precipitous. By the aid of branches, and jutting irregularities of the rock, they ascended the cliff, and, without pausing to glance at the magnificent panorama of woodland, sea, and mountain, spread out around them, entered a grove of pimento, whose deep green hue, presented a fine contrast to the unrivalled beauty of the lighter-tinged verdure underneath.

Their way lay by natural and artificial paths, through clumps of foliage of every variety and brilliancy of colours, now brightly tinted, as the sun-light shone through an occasional opening above, now black, in the impenetrable shadows cast by the loftier forest trees. After issuing from the grove, they wound through luxuriant bowers of West Indian vines, past a palm-tree, standing in lonely and towering pride, and spreading cocoas, and brazilettos, mingled with the vivid dyes of the plumage of the bamboo, orange, and tamarind, the whole presenting, in the brightness of the morning, a gorgeousness of colouring, unknown to less genial climes.

They had now reached the hedge of aloes and palmetto, forming the boundary of the grounds surrounding the villa of Velasquez.

Winding around it in a direction contrary to that taken by the depredators of the preceding night, they soon came to a small, latticed gateway, partly hid in the hedge, and close to the unoccupied wing of the mansion. The gate, which his young companion was hastening forward to unlock with a small key handed him by the officer, was battered in pieces, and the dead body of a seaman lay in the threshhold, with a fragment of a dragoon's sword, half buried in his head.

"Mon Dieu! what mischief has been here?" exclaimed the officer, stooping to examine the features of the dead man. "He is a Spaniard, and by his garb and arms, no doubt, a pirate. Cold, and stiff!" he added, touching his temples, "he has been long dead. Allons! allons!" he cried to his companion, bounding through the broken gateway "God preserve dear Constanza!" and both drawing their swords, they rushed up the avenue, every few rods of which exhibited traces of a recent and severe fight.

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By the body of a horse lay a dead dragoon, with the blood oozing from a pistol-wound in his head, grasping, convulsively, the body of a Spanish sailor. Although a deep gash cleft his cheek, he still lived, while a consciousness of the death-grapple in which he was held, overcoming the pain of his wound, he writhed his features into a terrible expression of horror his black, lustrous eyes, rolled wildly in their sockets, and his feeble fingers vainly worked to release the vice-like grasp of the dead man.

"Oh, Señores, for the love of God, help me! Ay de mi Ay de mi! Ave Maria!" and he extended his arms, imploringly.

The officer arrested his rapid progress to the house; his humane feelings overcoming his desire to proceed; and, perhaps, he was at the same time anxious to learn the nature and full extent of the bloody signs surrounding him.

"Hold, Montville! let us aid this wretch," he said, arrested by the imploring language of the sufferer. "What a fearful embrace!" With their united efforts, but not without the exercise of great muscular exertion, they disengaged the arms of the dead man from around the living body of his foe who, during the slow-moving hours of the long night, had borne such unspeakable tortures. How fearfully was the dead avenged! clasping in his close embrace the breathing body of his slayer!

"What, monsieur?" inquired his deliverer, as the buccaneer grasped his cloak, and gave way to a shower of tears, unable to express, in language, his gratitude. "What means all this bloody work? You, it seems, should know something of it!" and his cheek and eye betrayed the intensest excitement as he spoke. "Speak, speak!" he reiterated, as the man held up his clasped hands in silence: "Answer, man! or, by Heaven! I will give you to a worse fate, than the arms of this dead soldier."

The man shuddered at the allusion, and his eyes glared with terror.

"Mercy! Señor, mercy!" he cried, clinging to his cloak, without looking up.

The impatient officer drew a pistol from his bosom, with a threatening air, when the Spaniard, with difficulty and hesitation, articulated,

"Lafitte!"

"He has been *here*?" rapidly interrogated the officer. "Where is Don Velasquez, and his daughter?"

"I know not, Señor; yo no sé, yo no sé "

The officer, without hearing more, freed his cloak from his grasp, and darted forward, passing by pistols, cutlasses, and a portion of the pirate's booty, thrown away, in their flight. The sward was cut up, with the feet of horses, and blood reddened the green surface of the avenue, in many places. In a few moments, after leaving the Spanish sailor, they ascended the terrace, and came, at once, upon the scene of the severest conflict. With a sword in one hand, and a pistol in the other, the officer leaped over the dead bodies of two soldiers, and a headless seaman, and rushing to the front of the house, flew along the piazza, to an open window in the farthest wing. The sight that here met his eyes appalled him!

Upon a couch, in the extremity of the apartment, lay the corpse of the old man, cold and rigid. The floor was covered with pools of blood, and the dead body of a dragoon, with a pistol-wound in the forehead, lay under the window.

A deadly sickness came over his soul, as he gazed upon the horrid spectacle his hand fell powerless, at his side, and he leaned against the window for support.

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His more youthful companion, sprung into the room, and laid his hand upon the heart of the old man; but pulsation had ceased!

"He has been a long while dead," he said.

"Dead!" mournfully repeated the officer, half unconsciously, "dead, is he and poor Constanza! is she living? or worse?" he added, in a hollow voice. "Oh, merciful heaven, blast me not, at one stroke, and so cruel a one!"

"To the rescue, to the rescue!" after a moment's silence, he suddenly shouted, in a voice like a trumpet, "ho! my men, all! Alas, alas, Constanza!" he added, in a changed voice, "vain, vain, all in vain but there is *revenge!*" he slowly, and with strange distinctness, articulated. "I will revenge you, terribly revenge you," and his eye lighted up with a fierce light, his form dilated, and his glowing features wore a fearful sublimity as he spoke.

Approaching the couch, he placed his hand upon the marble brow of the corpse.

"Señor Velasquez, your death, your grievous wrongs, shall be avenged. I make this cause of mine and yours, a sacred one!" and he kissed, as he spoke, the cold forehead, and the crucifix, which, grasped in the old man's hand, lay upon his breast, "You have not died, by ball or steel deep griefs have killed you. Terribly! most terribly, you shall be avenged!"

"Ha! what more?" he exclaimed, as distant voices, and the tramp of horses' feet fell upon his ear. Springing to the window he saw, wheeling rapidly around the ruined wing of the building, a troop of horsemen, who drew up on the terrace, while their leader dismounting, and followed by two or three of his men, hastily approached the gallery.

The Frenchman immediately stepped forth to meet them.

"What, who have we here?" he exclaimed, cocking a pistol, which he had drawn from his holsters, as he alighted; but, observing the gentlemanly air of the stranger, and detecting his naval attire, he modulated his tone, to one of more courtesy.

"Your pardon, Monsieur! you are the Count D'Oyley, commander of the French frigate, in the bay, if I mistake not?"

The stranger bowed.

"This has been an unpleasant business," he continued; "a party of buccaneers, with Lafitte at their head, came last night, in strong force, robbed the old man, who, also, I am told, is dead, shot his nephew, and carried off his daughter. We have been out, part of the night, in pursuit of them. Since our return, we find that, after a hard fight with another detachment, he escaped to his vessel, with the old Don's child, and immediately put out to sea."

"Are you ill, sir?" he inquired, observing the face of the officer grow pale at his recital.

"No, Monsieur, no!" replied the Count, recovering himself; "I thank you, for the interest you have taken in this affair. The old Castillian and his daughter, were not unknown to me. He once saved me from a conspiracy, aimed against my life. It was in Mexico. He now lies in that room, dead; and his daughter Oh, Alphonse, Alphonse, where were you, in that evil hour? But there is vengeance," said he, looking upward, "there is just vengeance of Heaven, and I will be its instrument! Adieu, Monsieur; I leave the burial of Señor Velasquez to your kindness. I must away! the business, which brought me here, is ended alas, how ended! Adieu, Monsieur," he said, warmly pressing the hand of the sympathizing Englishman. Then hastily descending to the terrace, "Messieurs, adieu!" he added, raising his cap, as he passed the mounted dragoons; and then silently, and rapidly, accompanied by his

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young friend, he hastened to the shore.

After walking steadily onward, for many minutes, they emerged from the forest, on to the bluff, and on turning an angle in their path, encountered the officer whom Lafitte had wounded. He was slowly moving towards the villa, faint and weary.

"Gentlemen, for the love of God,! a little water! I am dying of thirst!" he said, addressing them as they appeared.

Again the humanity of the stranger, was called into exercise; and for the moment, forgetting his own sorrow, in sympathy for the distressed soldier, he stopped, kindly supported him to the shade of a large tree, and despatched his companion back, to communicate his situation to the party at the villa.

"Can you tell me aught of Lafitte?" he inquired of the wounded man, as they awaited his return.

"Much, much," he replied, "he has left his mark, as he calls it, here!" and pointing, as he spoke, to his mutilated arm, he attempted to smile.

"You saw him, then! did he gain his vessel, as they tell me, with, with," and he hesitated, while his chest beat with emotion.

"Yes, I both saw and felt him! He fought like a tiger at bay, a better swordsman never handled steel. Had he been less than Lafitte, or the devil, he would not have escaped me but he did escape me."

"And and, with him ?" The Frenchman could say no more; his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth; but he was understood.

"The lady, whom we, at the post, call the Castillian nun, the Señorita Constanza! but she had fainted, and was unconscious of her situation," replied the dragoon.

"Oh, my God, my God!" ejaculated his listener, and groaning, he struck his temples fiercely and bitterly; and, deeply agitated, he paced the ground under the tree, in silence, until the arrival of Montville and a party of the wounded man's troop.

"Describe his craft, if you please!" he asked, of the dragoon, as he turned to go.

"A schooner with a fore royal long, black, and very low in the water, with the masts much raking."

Bowing his thanks, he pursued his way, along the cliff, with increased rapidity, and recklessly descending to his boat, he was, in a few moments, on the deck of his frigate.

His orders were given, to get under weigh, with a startling energy that surprised the crew, and infused into them additional activity. In a few seconds, the heavy anchor hung from the bows, the broad top-sails were unloosed, and extended to the breeze, and the tall masts, covered with folds of canvass. The commander, then accompanied by Montville, left the ship, for the schooner, which also, immediately got under weight.

At first, the frigate moved slowly and heavily, but gradually gathering power, as sail after sail was displayed to the wind, she increased her speed, the waves dashed from her foaming path, and with a velocity that seconded the impatience of their commander, the two vessels sailed out of the bay, and stood westward.

The schooner, which now contained the commander of the frigate, immediately after gaining the offing, sailed in the direction of Carthagena, while the frigate hauled her wind, and bore up for the island of St. Domingo.

CHAPTER V.

"What tidings from the camp?" "Heavy and full of wo, my lady." "Speak! does my father live? was he unharmed amid the dread encounter of opposing hosts?" "Lady, I grieve to tell the fatal news I bear your noble sire" "Is?" "Alas no more!"

AT SEA A PIRATE'S CABIN REMORSE SOLILOQUY--STATE-ROOM CAPTOR AND CAPTIVE.

The pirate's schooner, which had now become the prison of the hapless Constanza, had long passed the capes of the bay, into which it had so gallantly sailed a few hours previous and the outline of the mountains of Jamaica, were rapidly fading in the distance, before the outlaw, assured that there was no danger of being immediately pursued, prepared to leave the deck of his vessel.

"Keep her away Ricardo, with every thing she can bear, for Barritaria," he said, addressing the helmsman "and call me if you see any thing suspicious; and before descending the companion-way, he cast one piercing glance around the horizon.

"Ha! a sail, and dead ahead!" he exclaimed, as his practised eye rested upon a scarcely visible gray speck upon the horizon, in the direction of his vessel's course. "Another two! Keep her away a point, and let us reconnoitre them," he added, taking his spy-glass, and closely surveying the distant objects.

The schooner kept steadily on her way, close-hauled to the wind, while the strangers came down upon them, with the wind nearly aft.

As they approached nearer, the foremost one showed the square rig of a large vessel, with royals and studding-sails set. In less than an hour from the time they caught the pirate's eye, they were within half a mile to leeward of the schooner for at such a disadvantage had the pirate cautiously thrown her, by altering his course, and distinctly displayed the tall and majestic apparel of a ship of war.

"A tiger, sir!" said Théodore, his young protégé, after gazing at the ship for a moment, from the top of a gun-carriage, through a focus, formed by his diminutive fists "her teeth glisten like Cudjoe's, here;" and he looked toward the ungainly figure of the slave, who, with one long arm clinging to a stay, his head and body bent forward, and his lips drawn back with an admiring grin, was inspecting with much curiosity, the noble, and warlike spectacle which the strange sail exhibited.

"Do you know her, Señor?" inquired the helmsman, with deference in his manner.

"I think not, Jean," he replied musingly "but she and her little tender seem to walk past us, as if disdaining to wet their cut-water with the same salt spray, which our pretty craft throws about her so merrily. Do you recognize her, Ricardo?"

"She is, I believe, señor, the French frigate Le Sultan, that we saw going into Cartagena, as we were getting under weigh off Las Naranjas."

"Indeed!" said the buccaneer, looking for a moment steadily at the passing ship. "I suspect you are right she was accompanied by a schooner her yards are not square enough for an American: an Englishman she is not; she is too light rigged, and carries whiter canvass than John Bull. I suspect you are right, Ricardo."

"I know her, captain, by the length between her mizen and mainmast, and the rake of her mainroyal-mast, as if it had been sprung," said the helmsman.

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"You have a seaman's eye, Jean, and you are right too," he quickly added, as the stranger showed two or three lights "that reads 'France!' But we have no time to dally in returning compliments. Hold to your course again, sir," he said, turning to the helmsman.

The schooner came closer to the wind, and rapidly held on in the direction from which she had diverged to avoid the strange ship, which, lowering her lights, silently and majestically with her companion, moved onward, apparently standing into the bay from which the schooner had just taken her departure.

"Théodore, how is our fair prisoner?" he inquired, as he descended into his cabin, accompanied by his young officer.

"She sleeps, sir," replied he, in a low voice.

"Poor girl, I almost wish she might not wake again to know her wretchedness," he said, feelingly. "It is my fate to bring ruin upon all around me. Has she spoken, or been conscious of her situation?" he abruptly inquired of the youth.

"I think not, sir," he answered. "By the aid of old Juana, who sympathizes with the misfortunes of the maiden, she was soon recovered from her death-like swoon, but directly passed out of it into a deep sleep. She is very lovely, Señor!" he added, with sudden animation.

"Poor lady;" said the outlaw, sadly, "I did not mean to take you from your father's bosom. But he was already dead! And who slew him? My act, if not my hand! But I will seek to atone for the father's wrongs, by treating the daughter with all honour. Leave me, Théodore, I would be alone," he added aloud.

The iron swinging lamp, suspended above, cast a bright light over the cabin, and its furniture. The sides were panelled with a dark-coloured, West Indian wood; the floor was of the same material, and hard and polished, like marble. The ceiling was low, and crossed at intervals by beams. Pistols and cutlasses, arranged in fanciful figures, were hung around the walls, and stands of muskets and boarding-pikes lined two sides of the room. On a case, which stood in one corner, lay two or three steel caps, for boarders a blunderbuss with a muzzle like the mouth of a bugle, stilettos, and the various paraphernalia appertaining to a vessel, whose trade is war. On the side opposite to the companion-way, a door opened into a state-room situated farther astern, and now occupied by Constanza.

On a pin near the companion-way, hung the full dress of a Spanish naval officer. Various dresses of citizens, soldiers, and seamen, were suspended near it, constituting a wardrobe well adapted to one, whose mode of life compelled him, not unfrequently, to adopt disguises, adapted to his purposes. Rolls of charts, elegant rapiers, iron-handled broad-swords, canes, and a rifle, stood in a corner, and several articles of the ordinary apparel of seamen, lay about on camp stools; several of which, with an oval table in the centre, a tall pedestal sustaining a handsome compass, constituted the only furniture of the apartment.

At the table, in the midst of the cabin, and within the dark circle cast beneath by the bottom of the lamp, sat Lafitte, his features so far thrown into shadow, that their expression was in a great degree concealed.

With his forehead resting upon his hand he leaned upon the table, in an attitude of dejection; nor had he opened his lips, or moved from that position which he occupied on entering the cabin and dismissing Théodore, for more than an hour. No sound but the gurgling of the water, as the vessel glided over the moonlit sea, the occasional song of the labouring seamen, or the hoarse cry of the helmsman, as he told the watches of the night, and the monotonous tramp of the officer of the deck over his head, broke the stillness reigning around him.

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There are times when conscience will wield her fiery sceptre over the soul, compelling the guilty to hide their faces in horror! In that short hour, the whole of his past life passed before his memory, like some fearful pageant, before the vision of the fevered sleeper. He thought of his first crime against a brother's life! of the blood-stained marble statue! of his love for his cousin, and the dark sea of passions into which he plunged in consequence of that love, and his subsequent jealousy! He called to mind, while a cold tremour passed over his frame, and a deep groan escaped him, his last meeting with that brother the descending knife, and fatal blow then his rapid flight, and his artful tale to the captain who saved him that night, as his frail boat was sinking in a storm! His voyage to the Mediterranean sea his capture by the Algerines his imprisonment and escape, by the aid of a Moorish maiden, whom he dishonoured and left his fatal rencontre in landing his imprisonment and escape in an open boat for Ceuti, and second capture by the rovers his union with, and subsequent command of, their vessel all in their turn, became the subject of his thoughts. His features changed, as he thought of the dark sea of crimes, through which he waded to that command.

Then came his capture by the Turks his freedom, and rapidly rising distinction in their navy and he pressed his temples violently, when he remembered that he had changed the cross of his religion, for the turban of the Mussulman. He was now chief of an armed horde, and now a combatant in the ranks of the Egyptians, against his invading countrymen. Once more he was on the sea, and an Algerine rover called him its commander! Then he was the captive of the Spaniard, and the Moro of Havanna became his prison. Liberated, again the quarter-deck of a pirate became his home, and the flag of Carthagena waved to the breeze above his head!

"What matters it," he suddenly exclaimed, "that I have gained the wealth of princes that I have waded through crime and blood to the acquisition of the guilty fame that makes my name terrible! that my hand has been against every man! I am at last but a miserable being penitent, without the power to repent remorseful, without hope a lover of virtue, without daring to seek it banned of God outlawed of my race fratricide, murderer! hundred-fold murderer! with the mark of Cain branded upon my brow, and burned deep deep into my soul. Oh, God! oh, God! if there be a God" he cried, clasping his hands and lifting his eyes to heaven "be merciful unto my iniquities, for they are very great!" And he fervently pressed to his lips the hilt of his rapier, shaped like a cross, and then dropped his head upon his arm, and wept, under the influence of feelings, which, at some seasons, will be experienced by the most hardened.

After a few moments silence, he continued, "Oh, for the days of childhood and innocence! I was then happy; then we my brother! my little brother and I kneeled nightly in prayer by our bedside! How beautiful! We were taught by our venerable parent to put up our prayers, first to the Virgin, and then to our sainted mother. Oh, would to God I had died then! Mother, you would have then embraced your son in heaven! But no! no!" as a ray of hope glanced over his mind, he exclaimed aloud, while his brow grew dark, "No! too too deeply dyed in crime. With a brother's blood I began and should a brother's murderer shrink from lesser crimes! Oh, how fatally consistent has been my life with its outset! Witness!" and he laughed, but his laugh was hollow and unearthly, as he spoke; "witness! I call ye to witness!" he cried, almost fiercely, "ye exulting demons, who madden me with your hellish triumphs Ha! ha! ha! I will yet be your leader! If I cannot be the last in heaven, I will be the first in hell!" and he sprung from his seat, and wildly walked the cabin, under the influence of temporary insanity, while such tortures as only a fratricide can feel, harrowed his soul.

His massive forehead, lurid with the glare of the lamp, and contorted and writhing, as if the mind within conflicted with the agonies of the doomed, was lowered darkly over his burning eyes, which glowed with a fierce, lambent light, as Lucifer's might have glowed when hurled from heaven. His finely-curved lip curled with a satanic expression of hatred and malignity: and his form expanded, as though under the influence of some strong passion, uncontrollable by human power. Suddenly he stopped, and stood with his arm outstretched in a meancing manner, while his dilated figure exhibited the attitude a painter would have seized, to represent Cain standing over the prostrate body of his murdered brother.

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A low exclamation, in the adjoining state-room, of mingled terror and surprise, recalled him instantly to his accustomed self-possession, for the moment controlled by the intense passions, which, from time to time, aroused by his guilty conscience, enslaved his spirit. The dark, scowling brow, resumed its serenity and beauty the wild fire of his eye mellowed into a milder lustre the impassioned and excited form became subdued and passive, under a calmer and happier influence; and approaching the door of the state-room, with a smile, that might have won a maiden's love, mantling his lip, and in a voice modulated to the gentlest tones, he inquired after the welfare of his lovely captive.

We must now return to the period when Constanza was first restored to consciousness. The youthful officer had, with delicate address, given her up, after his chief had resigned her to his charge on gaining his vessel, to the care of an old negress, wife of the steward of the schooner, who, with that instinctive sympathy which is the characteristic of woman even of the old and ugly, for the young and lovely of their sex received her charge with many exclamations of sympathy and regret.

"Sweety lady ol' Juana hab pity much," said she, receiving her lovely charge, and laying her upon a sofa in the interior state-room of the vessel, which was fitted up with great taste and elegance. "How white an' sof' dis pretty han', wid de gol' ring but ol' Juana wont steal it off de little slender finger," she added, as an habitual disposition to do so was evident, by the sudden motion of her hand and eye.

"I wis' de lady would open de eyes," she continued, applying strong stimulants, and resorting to the usual means for restoring suspended animation.

"Hi, massa Théodore, you rub dat lily han', while I rub dis, an' bave de temple," she said, with an air of importance, fully conscious of the responsibility with which she was so unexpectedly invested.

The youth, who, at the command of Lafitte, had remained to assist in the recovery of the maiden, respectfully bent on one knee by the sofa, and with tenderness took the unconscious hand, brilliant with gems; and with the embarrassed manner of one who felt guilty of sacrilege, endeavoured to restore warmth and circulation to the lifeless member.

By degrees, the blood returned to fill the blue veins, her bosom heaved like the snowy breast of a wearied dove, and opening her dark eyes, she gazed vacantly about; but there was no soul in their expression no intelligence or consciousness of surrounding objects.

"She look, but she no see," said the nurse. "Marie! what big black eyes! dere she clos um' 'gen! but she get life now no matter poor lily 'ooman go sleep;" and the maiden, again closing her eyes with a deep sigh, placed her hand under her head, and on that soft and lovely pillow, rocked by the gentle motion of the vessel, fell into a sweet and refreshing slumber.

The kind old nurse watched by her couch with the anxiety and tenderness of a mother over the cradle of her infant, occasionally replying in a whisper to the interrogations of Théodore, as from time to time he came from the deck to inquire if she still reposed.

It was long past midnight, and still the lady slept, while the old negress waved mechanically over her a plume of the gorgeous feathers of some tropical bird, the light wind, which the motion created, gently lifting the raven curls from her blueveined temples.

"O, hi! dere massa captain," she said, lifting her finger in the attitude of listening, as she heard Lafitte, after giving his orders to the helmsman, descend to the cabin; "ol' Juana hope he no harm de lady he good man, sometime—and sometime he bad! but he hab good heart at de bottom ol' Juana know he do mos' much good as bad since she sail in de schooner;" and the old negress continued habitually waving her plume over the sleeper,

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and musing upon the character of the buccaneer chief, when a deep groan from the adjoining cabin, where he leaned upon the table, disturbed her reflections.

"Ah, dere Massa Lafitte in one ob his glooms," she said to herself; "de lady no fear noting now. Tank de saint," she continued, as she observed the maiden turn upon her side; "she stir she wake up; poor ting, how sorry she be when she hear her fader dead, and know where she be. If ol' Juana be bad 'ooman, she no bad to dis pretty chil', she hab no body to be kin' to her now but ol' Juana!" and the hideousness of the dark features of the old negress were redeemed for the moment, by the expression of kindness and pity which passed over them, as she thought of her helpless and lonely state. Besides her natural kindness of heart, retained in spite of her mode of life, there might have been some emotions of gratification, in having one of her own sex to relieve the dreary character of her rude existence.

The lady slightly moved, murmured indistinctly some name, while a sweet smile came for an instant to her lips; and before its scarce perceptible reflection faded from her cheek, she raised her richly-fringed lids, and like one awaking from a pleasant dream, looked peacefully around. Surprised, she surveyed a scene of taste and elegance unfamiliar to her eyes.

The state-room was fitted up in a style of gorgeousness, to which the wealth of many rich argosies had contributed. The maiden herself reclined on an ottoman of crimson velvet, ornamenting one end of the cabin. An alcove on her right, contained a marble laver, supported by the tips of the pinions of three bronze cupids, each holding in his extended hands silver vessels, containing various articles for the toilet. Over this stand was a mirror, set with a richly-chased frame of ebony, inlaid with pearl. The front of this recess was draped by curtains of blue and orange damask, which materials, entwined in festoons, encircled the state-room. Opposite to the alcove, under a costly swinging lamp, which cast a brilliant light through the room, stood an escritoire with a black marble top, supported by two leopards, also of marble, but so variegated as to imitate both in form and colour the spotted skin of those animals, nearly to the semblance of life. Upon it were strewn, of the costliest materials and most delicate workmanship, apparatus for writing; a superb guitar; a jewelled dagger, sheathed in a gold case; and a few Spanish and Italian poets, with one or two French and English authors of celebrity. An Alpine scene, done by a celebrated Florentine painter, set in an elaborately-carved frame, hung above it, while paintings of North American scenery adorned the other sides of the cabin.

Opposite to the sofa, occupied by the fair Castillian, stood, in a larger and deeper recess than the one containing the laver a couch raised high from the floor, and fancifully shaped like a sea-shell, covered with the richest material of intermingled purple and white. A thick curtain of green velvet, now partly drawn aside, was made to fall before the recess and entirely covered it from the eye. Against this couch leaned an antique German harp, of uncommon size and beauty, curiously constructed of the blackest ebony, and adorned with carved ivory-work. The floor of this luxurious abode was covered with one of those thick Turkish carpets, whose yielding surface betrays no footprint.

The maiden gazed upon the splendour surrounding her; at first with a wondering eye pressed her fingers upon her eyelids, and looked again, and again.

"I must dream!" said she in a low silvery voice, "Agata O, Agata!" and she looked up into the face of her attendant "what? no! I still dream," she cried, placing her hand over her eyes, as though endeavouring to collect her thoughts "Oh, Maria! what a dream! what a fearful dream I have had!" and again she removed her hands, and gazed wildly round the room. She now heard distinctly the sound of rushing waters, and was conscious of motion.

"Father, father! where am I?" she shrieked wildly "this vessel the dashing waves! Hah! who is it that calls? Oh God! Oh God! I know it all all!" she shrieked, as the deepmellow voice of Lafitte, addressing her from the inner cabin, fell upon her ear; and the wretched girl buried her face in her hands, and shed burning tears.

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"Señora, I would speak with you!"

"Ha! that voice again miserable Constanza! utterly lost lost!" she exclaimed. Suddenly her eye rested upon the gemmed stiletto lying upon the escritoire.

"Holy Virgin, forgive me! but thus I can save my honour!" and she sprung for the weapon.

"Bon Giu! Help, massa, help, she kill herself!" cried the terrified Juana.

The pirate threw open the door, but before he could enter, the unsheathed weapon was grasped in the elevated hand of the maiden; her eyes were uplifted, full of a sublime and holy devotion.

"Forgive me, blessed Virgin!" she uttered with wild and affecting energy, and the glittering dagger was descending into her breathing bosom, when her captor sprang forward, and the weapon was sheathed in his intervening arm.

"My life, lady, rather than thine!" he said, as he drew it forth.

"Oh, that it had been thy life!" she exclaimed, while her beautiful and excited features expressed the intensest mortification at her disappointment; her dark eye kindled with anger, while her colourless lip showed maidenly apprehension. For a moment she stood in the attitude in which she had been arrested, with these several passions agitating her bosom; but the last overcame all other feelings, and with clasped fingers, and the uplifted eye of a Madonna, she said, imploringly and with touching eloquence.

"O, Señor, I am your captive—but ransom, a king's ransom shall be yours, only let me go in peace and honour. I implore you by your mother! by the blessed virgin! by your hope of heaven! by your fear of hell! See! I kneel to you! Oh, Señor, I know I am in your hands, but, as you hope for mercy, show mercy now!"

"Rise, lady I swear!" and Lafitte bared his brow, and kissed the cross-hilted dagger—"I swear by my hope of heaven, my fear of hell, by my sainted mother, and by the Holy Virgin, that you shall remain in all safety and honour!" The sincere voice in which he repeated her adjuration the solemn eye, and devotional manner, re-assured the agitated girl.

"Oh, I would believe you, Señor, yet," she suddenly exclaimed, "my father! where, oh, where is he?" And, although the moment before, she had shrunk from the touch of her captor, as he extended his hand to raise her from her suppliant posture, while she kneeled before him, she now clasped him by the arm, and with a trembling voice, scarcely articulated

"My my father! Oh tell me—where?"

"Be calm, Señora. You shall know all, but "

"You have murdered him!" she shrieked.

"Nay, lady, he has not been murdered—he—"

"He lives not!" she cried, with terrible energy in her voice, fixing her eyes upon his face, as if she would read in its changing expression what she sought, yet trembled to learn.

"Without violence, he died upon his bed."

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"Died!" she shrieked; but the next moment, with altered voice and manner, she murmured,

"Died? died! he then is dead dead!"

Mournfully she spoke, and her fixed eye betrayed the temporary alienation of her reason. "On his bed too and where was Constanza, to close his eyes? Dead! dead? They tell me so that my father is dead! and Constanza living? Oh that she were dead also! How blessed it must be to die! The good old man is happy now; he cannot see his daughter's shame and misery. They tell me he died on his bed! But they tell me false!" she cried, suddenly changing her abstracted manner, and low melancholy voice "Oh, you have murdered him" she wildly shrieked, while she pointed at the wounded arm of Lafitte "there is blood upon your hand my father's blood Murderer! murderer! Nay *Lafitte!* Lafitte! I can call you by no other name, that will so express my detestation, and your crime' and the look which accompanied her words, was the more withering, from the extreme beauty of the features upon which it dwelt.

"Señora, I beseech you be appeased," he said, with a tone indicative of wounded feeling. "Don Velasquez was not slain; he died naturally: there was no hand laid upon his person. Calm your feelings. You think me guilty I am, but not so guilty as you believe. If you will hear me a few moments" he proceeded, as he saw she listened with some attention, and less excitement, to his words. "I will tell you all."

The maiden remained silent but slightly inclined her head, with the air of one who would listen.

"Hebérto Velasquez" he continued, "you start! guided my party to the vault containing your father's treasure, on condition, that he should share half the booty while the whole weight of the act should fall upon me. You were alarmed, and, during the removal of the gold, your father, seizing a pistol, shot Velasquez, who was below with us, dead."

"Velasquez dead! and by my father's hand?"

"Even so, señora."

"Then, Heaven is just!" she exclaimed.

"The alarm was given," he continued, "we were surrounded. I entered the room above" here he bowed low, while a deep flush mantled his dark cheek, which was slightly reflected from the maiden's, who, with conflicting emotions, listened to the pirate's relation "There, I first saw, you, never, lady, to forget you! I left your presence, and headed my men; but, pressed on every side, I was forced to retreat to the villa. I sprung into the room, and you fainted. The thought flashed upon me, that I could save my life, and gain my vessel, by protecting pardon me, lady, by protecting my body with your sacred person. I caught up your lifeless form, and, holding you before me, retreated, step by step, till I gained my vessel: and, to this protection, lady, I owe my life!" he added, with feeling.

"But, my father?"

"Worn out and feeble, during the tumult around him, he expired."

"Alas! he was ready to die!" she said, calmly, "I have long schooled my heart to part with him but not thus oh! not thus!" and, leaning her head upon the table, the lovely orphan gave way to her filial grief.

Lafitte left her to the indulgence of her sorrows, and after delaying, in his own cabin, to attend to his slightly-wounded arm, ascended to the deck.

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A faint tintge along the eastern horizon, announced the coming dawn the night breeze had lulled and the sails, at every lift of the vessel, upon some larger sea, flapped heavily against the masts. The watch were sitting, or standing, with their hands thrust into their bosoms, around the windlass the officer of the deck paced his lonely round the helmsman stood at the helm and, like its master-spirit, directed the course of the yielding vessel, steadily towards the invisible point of her destination. The land had disappeared, save an irregular waving blue line along the horizon, which might be mistaken by the unpractised eye for the edges of a distant cloud, but in which, Lafitte recognized the fast disappearing mountains of Jamaica. All else was the broad heaving ocean, and the bending blue sky, in which, here and there, twinkled a solitary star, and the pale western moon, like a timid novice, modestly veiling her face, at the approach of the morning sun.

CHAPTER VI.

"There are few lovers who can bear, with philosophy, the rejection of their suit. But when, in spite of this rejection, the lover makes his unrequited love his guiding star in the path to honour and distinction, and, without hope, lives that he may be still worthy of his mistress, he is more than a philosopher he has gained a victory over himself, and deserves, above the conqueror of armies, the admiration of mankind."

More.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN LAFITTE AND CONSTANZA ITS RESULT A CHANGE IN HER DESTINY.

Morning had advanced nearly into noon, when the commander of the schooner, who, wrapped in a cloak, had thrown himself upon the deck to refresh his weary frame, was aroused by a slight touch on his shoulder.

"The lady, sir!" said Théodore.

"What of her, Théodore?" he exclaimed, with a foreboding air, springing to his feet.

"She desires to speak with you, sir."

"Has she slept till now, Théodore?"

"No, sir, she has been all the morning weeping. She is now calmer, and desires an interview."

"Say to her, that her slightest wish shall be obeyed. I will attend her," he replied. And, turning to ascertain the position of his vessel, and the rate she had been running while he slept, he descended into the cabin, and delaying, for a few moments, to change his dress, marked with traces of the late battle, for one more beseeming the presence of a lady, he tapped lightly at the door of her state-room, and was admitted by Juana into the presence of his fair captive.

Constanza had recovered her usual self-possession, and maidenly dignity of manner, though her cheek was pale, her lip tremulous, and her eye brilliant through tears. As he entered, she rose from the ottoman, struck with his fine figure, displayed to advantage by the rich dress he wore, and motioned him to a seat.

"Señora, I have obeyed your summons," he said, with deep respect.

"Nay, Señor, it becomes not the captive to issue commands; it is for her to obey! Señor," she added, with dignity, and yet with timidity, "I have solicited this interview with you, from my knowledge of your native generosity of character however it may have been clouded and perverted by circumstances, which, I am willing to do you the justice to think, may have been beyond your control. Now that I have seen you, and know how nobly you can act,

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if you will be guided by the more generous impulses of your own bosom I feel that I am not casting too much upon the success of this interview."

"Señora, you have only to speak to be obeyed," he replied, with much respect in his voice and manner. "All that I can do, shall be done, to atone for your injuries, and mitigate your grief."

"Most sincerely do I thank you, Señor I have not, indeed, hoped too much!" Here she hesitated to proceed, and her manner betrayed embarrassment.

"Speak, lady! what can I do for you?"

"Give me my liberty, Señor!" she replied, firmly fixing her full dark eyes upon him, while her heart palpitated, and her cheek paled, as she watched the effect of this demand upon her captor.

He had anticipated her request, and replied, unmoved

"Where, lady, will you go? Your father! forgive me, that I inadvertently touched so sensitive a chord! But, lady, have you where to go?"

"Oh! no, no! but any where but here!" and she buried her face in the folds of the drapery.

"Señora," said he, mournfully, and in a melancholy voice, "this is the bitterest moment of my life. That I am despised and proscribed of men, I care not! I can fling back their taunts: but, when so lovely a being turns from me with fear and detestation, then do I feel the galling of the outlaw's chain! Lady!" he continued, suddenly changing his tone to one of deep earnestness, "it is said, there is pardon of the Holy Virgin for the greatest crimes: and will not one, who must so nearly resemble her in person and spirit, also forgive?"

"Oh, Señor, speak not blasphemously! You have all the forgiveness I can bestow. Would it could avail you hereafter! But oh, let me go hence, if, then, you hope to be forgiven."

"Where will you go, Señora? *Why* will you go?" he said, with impassioned energy. "Here, you shall be sacred from intrusion. No footstep shall approach you unbidden. It shall be my whole duty to render you happy but oh, desert me not! You feel an interest in my welfare then do not leave me. You are the angel that would guide me back to honour and virtue. I already feel the holy influence of her presence upon my heart. Leave me, lady; and with you, will depart, forever, these better aspirations. Again the dark spirit of my destiny, whose seat a purer spirit has assumed, will usurp once more his empire! Oh, leave me not to my own dark fate extinguish not, forever, the only star of hope that has ever beamed upon my ill-fated bark! Lady stay! behold me at your feet!" and the impassioned outlaw, who had spoken his feelings with that intenseness peculiar to his impulsive character, kneeled before the maiden.

"Señor captain, kneel not to me," she said, stepping back with dignity "Speak not to me, thus! I cannot listen to language like this. I am your captive, but" she continued more earnestly, "oh, talk not to me thus. I would speak of my deliverance. If one so weak and simple as I am, can aught avail your return to society, cheerfully will I do all, that a free maiden, may do. Señor, my prayers, my influence, if I can command any, shall be yours but Oh! use not to me such language! I would go, Señor!" she added, quickly.

"You, then, despise me," he said, in a deeply-agitated voice; "You, then, despise me! Just Heaven, strike home I am thy victim! Listen to me, lady," he added, in a calmer voice. "In youth, I loved a maiden much like you; but my love met no return; and for that passion I became an exile from my father's halls. Love made me what I am may it not open for me a bright and virtuous future? Speak, lady! and bid me live to virtue to heaven, and to you!" and he gazed earnestly, his features beaming with the faravour of his passion, up into the face of the troubled

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girl as he kneeled before her. The maiden was deeply affected by his impassioned appeal.

"Rise, Señor I do not despise you I deeply feel for you but I cannot, must not listen to your language! Yet you have strong claims to my regard, knowing you as I do. You have shown me a character, which, while the exhibition of it has surprised me, will ever command my esteem. I must always honour the native nobility and generosity of your character! fallen indeed, yet aspiring to the height from which you have fallen. Oh, sir, forget this hasty passion for a lonely maiden who cannot return it, and be the being, proud in conscious virtue, you seek to be! Let your desire to return to the paths of honour, depend upon no contingency in which I am involved. Go forward, Señor, independently of extraneous circumstances, and make your own just perception of duty your guide, and you may yet be what you wish to be what the world would desire to have you what I sincerely pray you may become! But think not of me my affections" and brow, cheek, and bosom were mantled with rich blood, as she added "my heart my love is another!"

The chief still kneeled at the feet of the fair Castillian. The tones of her voice had long ceased, and yet he moved not. His features became deathly pale, his eye grew darker, and his lips were painfully compressed, while his chest heaved with strong emotion. For a moment he continued to kneel in a silence that appalled the heart of Constanza. Then slowly elevating his form, he stood up to the full height of his commanding figure, folded his arms upon his breast, and gazed upon her for an instant with a bitter and sad expression upon his features. But when, at last, with a great effort, he spoke, there was a calmness in the deep tones of his voice, which fell forebodingly upon her heart.

"Lady, it is well! Ever thus has been my wayward and ill-directed destiny! Forgive me, Señora, I will urge no more my fatal suit. I have loved you, Señora (nay, listen, lady, I may tell you now) I have loved you how fervently, heaven and my own heart alone can tell! But it has been a beautiful and happy dream. No more may I look upon you but as a distant worshipper upon the shrine of his idolatry. A few short hours have changed me, lady! For your sake, I will seek a name of honour among men; and when hereafter you shall learn that Lafitte, the outlaw, earned laurels, and a name, and perchance a death, in honourable war remember it was your love that guided his bark out of the gulf of crime your love that wafted it on to honour. Then, lady, do justice to his memory!"

The rejected suitor, then, turning with much emotion in his manner, hastily quitted the state-room.

"Sail, ho!" rung in his ears, as he entered his own cabin. Hastily concealing his gay apparel under a garment more befitting the deck of a piratical vessel, and the presence of his men, he ascended to the deck, and sought, in its bustle and activity, to forget the causes which agitated his bosom.

"What do you make her out?" he shouted to the man aloft, in a stern tone, that startled even his men, with whom his trumpet-like voice was well familiar.

"A brig, sir standing to the south-east, with her courses hauled up, and under top-gallant sails."

"Can you see her hull?"

"Not yet, sir; but she rises rapidly."

"Lay down out of that, sir," said Lafitte, impatiently; and immediately he sprung forward with his glass, ascended the foremast, and standing on the cross-trees, closely surveyed the stranger. In a few minutes he descended, and ordered the helmsman to steer so as to gain the wind of her.

"What do you make her out, sir?" inquired his second in command, Ricardo, a swarthy Spaniard, with an unpleasing eye, but otherwise a good-humoured countenance, half shaded by a forest of black whiskers, who was

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smoking a segar, as he paced the leeward side of the deck.

"A merchantman, bound probably into Kingston."

"Ho, there men!" shouted the lieutenant; "to your guns, and see that they are all prepared; and be ready, boarders."

"Aye, aye," cheerfully responded the crew; and there was at once a bustle of warlike preparation on board. The crew, which numbered the day previous about sixty, now cut down to forty, by the severe losses of the preceding night, engaged with alacrity in preparation for the expected fight.

"This preparation is useless, Ricardo," said Lafitte; "she will not resist us; and if she is bound for Kingston, I shall not injure her and the lady below must be sent back in her."

"Cielos! without ransom, señor?"

"No I give my share of last night's booty as her ransom. Does that serve your purpose?"

"Señor Captain, it does. I would give more for the glitter of a good Mexican dollar, than the sweetest smile that ever dwelt on pretty maiden's lip. Miraculo! Captain, you soon weary of this lady's favours."

"Silence, sir the lady goes to Jamaica in yonder vessel, if it be bound there," replied Lafitte, sternly; and descending into the cabin, he once more sought the presence of his captive.

"Lady," he said, without entering her state-room, "there is a vessel now approaching, and if, as I think, it is bound for the island, you are free to depart in her. Where would you prefer making a landing?"

"At Kingston, Señor I have an uncle there. I would land at Kingston! Oh, sir," she continued earnestly, and advancing towards him, "jest not with my hopes am I indeed at liberty?"

"Lady, the uncaged bird is not freer than you shall be within the hour."

"May God bless you, generous sir!"

"Nay, I *dare* not keep you here," he replied; I have not confidence in my own strength of purpose I fear for you, remaining absent, you are only safe; whilst I, who would wish to forget, must live only in dwelling on your image. Adieu I will again wait on you when I ascertain the character and destination of the vessel."

When he gained the deck, she was plainly visible about a league to leeward, under press of sail, evidently endeavouring to escape. She had hauled from her course several points since she first hove in sight, and now stood south before the wind, about a league distant.

"Shall we give chase, sir?" inquired the lieutenant.

"Aye, we must come up with her! put her away;" and the schooner falling off a little, with a freer wind, darted rapidly after the stranger, who was using every exertion to escape. But the buccaneer rapidly gained on her, and in about half an hour the chase was within the range and command of her guns.

Ten cannonades frowned along the pirate's deck, and a gang of fierce and reckless men, some stripped to their waists, and armed with pistols, knives, and cutlasses, stood around each gun.

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"Clear away that starboard gun amidships," shouted the lieutenant

"All clear, sir."

"Pitch a shot then across her fore foot."

The seaman stooped to the gun, and with his eye on a level with the piece, gave it the proper direction.

"All ready, sir."

"Fire!"

The little vessel trembled and recoiled under the loud report of the gun, which had scarcely ceased ringing in the ears of the crew, who watched the ball as it ricochetted over the water, marking a line of foam as it passed just across the bows of the vessel, when the brig threw her main-top-sail to the mast, hoisted American colours, and awaited the pleasure of the pirate.

"Lower and man the boat go on board, Theodore, and ascertain what she is, and where bound," said the pirate, as the schooner approached nearly within hail of the stranger. The pirate lay to until the return of the boat Lafitte the while leaning over the quarter, gazing in silence upon the vessel.

"Well Théodore?" he inquired, as his messenger returned.

"She is an American brig from New Orleans, bound to Porto Rico, but will touch at Kingston, if there be gold to be made by it."

"Aye, gold gold! well, they shall have it."

In a few minutes Constanza had changed the warlike vessel, and gorgeous cabin of the pirate, for the homelier accommodations of the peaceful and plain merchantman.

"Lady, adieu," he said, taking his leave on the deck of the brig; "you may soon forget me, but while my heart throbs with life, never can I forget Constanza Velasquez. That name shall be the talisman of a more honourable destiny for I cannot be linked with guilt, bearing your image in my heart. Lady, farewell Théodore will accompany you to your friends, and you will also have Juana, to wait upon you."

"God bless you, Señor how deeply I feel my debt of gratitude to you I shall ever remember you with friendship may God and your country receive henceforth the duties you owe to each. Farewell, and the blessed Maria be your protector!" and she extended her hand to the chief as she spoke, who tenderly and ardently pressing it to his lips, sprang over the side into his boat. He waved his hand to her distant figure, as he stood once more on the deck of his schooner, which immediately resumed her former course, while the merchant vessel, again making sail, stood steadily towards the port of her destination.

CHAPTER VII.

"No phenomenon of nature is invested with the sublimity of a tempest upon the ocean at midnight. The incessant thunder the fierce lightnings the continuous roar of the agitated waters the driving clouds the flashing sea and the loud sound of the rushing winds what sublime accompaniments! How little, then, in comparison, is man! And yet how great, as guided by his genius and intellect, he fearfully commits himself to the deep, and on a few planks skilfully bound together, rides careering on the storm."

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A STORM ITS EFFECTS A BUCCANEER CHANGE OF DESTINATION.

The sun went down that evening with an angry aspect lurid clouds were piled around him, and the western skies wore that brassy hue, reflected upon the leaden waters, which, in those seas, is the precursor of a storm. The commander of the brigantine, which had now become the temporary abode of Constanza, was standing upon the quarter-deck, watching the huge masses of piled-up clouds, and threatening appearance of the heavens, with an anxious eye.

"Make all snug," he said, turning to his second in command, after a long survey of the brewing tempest. "We are likely to have a hard night of it you had better send down the royal and top-gallant sails, and single reef the top-sails."

The necessary orders were given by the mate, and speedily executed by the active seamen; and the brig held on her course, steadily, under her lessened sail. The clouds rapidly rose in the west, and extended along the heavens, gradually unrolling like a scroll, till the massive edge of the huge embankment hung, like a beetling crag above the vessel, casting a black shadow, over half the sea.

"Strike the top-gallant-masts, and close-reef the top-sails and stay-sail," shouted the captain, quickly, as the clouds came careering on, driving before the invisible, and yet unfelt tempest.

The night was fast setting in, though the red twilight, still lingered in the east while along the western horizon, both sky and sea, were enveloped in terrific gloom. Suddenly the light breeze which had wafted them along, died away and a fearful stillness dwelt in the warm air, while respiration became painful. The sailors stood at the several posts, where the coming danger might most require their presence conversing in low tones with each other now watching anxiously the gathering storm, which momently threatened to burst upon their helpless bark or now, with an inquiring gaze, marking the face of their captain a veteran seaman, with his head silvered by the storms of sixty winters.

He stood near the helmsman wrapped in a long drab pea-jacket, buttoned closely at his throat a glazed hat, with a broad brim, upon his head, and a trumpet in his hand. His eye was full of care, but wore no expression betraying doubt, but rather a consciousness of being able to contend successfully, with whatever might occur a consciousness originating in long and successful experience. His features were calm, and his voice full and natural, when, occasionally, he addressed his officers, or the helmsman.

Suddenly a flash of lightning shot along the face of the black bosom of the cloud, like a glittering serpent and the air was rent with a report so loud, that every startled seaman placed his hands suddenly, and intensely to his temples. A tomb-like silence succeeded, and the dark cloud unrolled, till it covered all the heavens, encircling the horizon in a fearful embrace.

"What, my lovely passenger!" said the captain, with gallantry, as the slight form of Constanza met his eye. "The thunder has alarmed you! shall I attend you to your state room?"

"No, oh no, Señor, the cabin is too close It is but thunder, then! I thought it the firing of cannon! We are not pursued! Bless thee, Santa Maria," she continued mentally "I feared that dangerous man had changed his mind I did him injustice. But oh, that I were safe beneath my uncle's roof! Is it far to Kingston, Señor?" she inquired.

"Twelve leagues, lady if we safely weather this gale, we shall be there by morning."

"Thank you, sir, for such cheering words; but is there, as your words imply, danger? See! that light upon the sea! what is it?" she inquired eagerly, pointing to the west.

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"Now we have it stand ready, all!" he shouted, as a line of white foam, stretching along the horizon, caught his eye, as he looked up at her exclamation.

The vessel lay broadside to the path of the coming tempest, and so great was the calm, that the helmsman had no control over her. The captain, gave his several orders with professional rapidity, and energy.

"Hard—a—weather hard—up, hard—up, for your life!" and he sprung to the helm, but the head of the brig remained immovable in the same direction.

"Good God! Head her off, or we shall be capsized! lady below, below youngster," he cried, to Théodore, "see to her!"

Every precaution was taken for the safety of the brig, that experienced seamanship could suggest: the old man stood grasping the helm with a firm hand, while, with a calm, and unblenching eye, he watched the advancing hurricane. Onward it came ploughing up the sea, which boiled, roaring and foaming before it a moving wall of surge.

Constanza, with one hand grasping the companion-way, within which she stood, and the other resting upon the arm of her young attendant, gazed fearfully upon the visible presence of the tempest. Her bosom heaved irregularly her cheek was pale, and her lips shut with expectation but there was a sublimity in the scene which she loved, and which, chained her to the spot.

The lightnings flashed fast and fierce out from the black clouds, which seemed suspended close above their heads, and run like veins of gold along the heavens. The thunder came peal upon peal, like reports of artillery, rattling along the skies, and reverberating around the horizon, died away in the distance in low, indistinct mutterings. The glassy waves between the vessel and the rapidly careering tempest, began to heave, and while every man held in his breath with expectation, the brig rolled heavily, and within a few moments of the time when the distant moan of the tempest was first heard, with a loud roar, the storm of wind and wave burst upon the devoted vessel.

"Now look to yourselves!" shouted the captain; and the wild waters leaped over the brig with the noise and body of a cataract the furious winds twisted the light masts like withes and the brig was borne bodily down by the irresistible force of the tempest, and lay prostrate upon her beam—ends.

The weather main-chains were wrenched like threads, with all their rigging, from the sides of the vessel; and the main-mast, bending like whalebone, broke off with a loud crack close to the deck. A wild cry mingled with the roar of the tempest, while the live thunder leaped, and the lightnings glared about their vessel, as if in mockery of human suffering.

"Cut away the foremast lively, men, lively!" cried the captain, clinging to the quarter-rail half emerged in the sea; and the mate, who was prepared for this emergency, run along the elevated side of the ship, and with an axe severed, one after another, the distended stays, which flew wildly into the air, lashing the sea as they fell. The remaining one parted with a sharp report before the axe descended, and the unsustained mast, which lay level with the water, after a few vigorous blows by the same daring hand, snapped off a few feet from the deck, and a large wave, lifting it up like a straw, bore it, with all its rigging, far away to leeward. Immediately the relieved vessel righted and floated amid the tumultuous ocean, an unmanageable wreck.

The moment the hurricane struck the side of the vessel, Théodore, holding firmly the arm of Constanza, drew hastily the slide of the companion-way, the doors of which were closed, over the place where she stood, and the waters swept harmlessly over her. But the violence of the shock would have thrown her down, had not the young buccaneer, with great presence of mind, rapidly adapted their position to the sudden inclination of the vessel. Alarmed, she stood with her crucifix clasped to her lips till the vessel righted, when, at her repeated request,

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Theodore drew back the slide to allow her to look forth upon the tempest.

What a scene of wild sublimity met her gaze! The heavens were pitchy black, over which the lightnings played in streams of fire the thunder rolled continually in one prolonged and incessant reverberation the sea was illuminated with phosphorescent light and raging with a loud roar, while vast masses of water, rising from its bosom on every side, would swell into gigantic billows, and burst into a head of glittering foam.

The vessel, with her upper deck flooded, plunged heavily into the deep gulfs which yawned on every side, threatening to entomb her. The whole scene that met her eye was one of sublime, but fearful desolation. The old man, with his saturated grey locks streaming in the gale, stood at the helm, which he had seized when the brig righted for the helmsman had been borne off into the sea, and his far-off wail for help had long before died in the more melancholy howlings of the storm.

"This is indeed fearful!" she exclaimed. "Poor, old man he has lost perhaps his all but his life is safe. Safe?" she repeated, despairingly; "Oh, who can say that one life is safe in this appalling scene!"

"Nay, lady, the bite of the storm is over we only hear his growl," said the boy; "at any rate, it can harm this old hulk no more. We are not far from land, if it were but day we could see it. Cheer up, lady there is no more to fear."

"I fear not, señor, for myself," she replied, calmly; "but that venerable man! he is perhaps a parent it is for him, and for you, I feel you have, perhaps, a mother and a fair sister, whose lives are wrapped up in you!"

"No, lady," he replied, sadly; "I am a parentless boy. There is none to call me brother. I can remember once loving, both a mother and sister, but they now sleep in the sea. Captain Lafitte found me a lonely and dying boy on such a wreck as this he is all I have to care for me."

"And does he care for you?"

"Lady, he does. His is a stern nature, and wild deeds are familiar to him. Yet he has deep affections. Lady, he cares much for me! He imagines I resemble one his brother, I believe, though he seldom speaks of it who met with some mischance in boyhood for that resemblance also am I dear to him."

"Do you love him, boy?"

"Do you love your father, lady?"

"Oh, speak not of my father alas, he too is dead!"

"Pardon me, Señora but thus I love my benefactor."

The lady mused a moment upon the thoughts which her companion's answer had called up the expiring gale sporting with her dark locks and mantilla, which floated like a white cloud around her head.

The lightning now became less frequent and intense the thunder rumbled only along the distant horizon the dark clouds, from whose bosom burst the storm, broke in huge masses, the thin edges of which grew lighter, while a spot of the deep, blue sky, in which sparkled a solitary star, could be seen at intervals between the driving masses. The waves grew less and less in size breaking no longer like volcanoes bursting into flame, but regularly in snowy caps, or rolling onward, smooth, unbroken billows.

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All at once, beneath an opening in a cloud in the east, the sea shone with a silvery light, and Constanza, who had watched the various phases of the storm, and the rapid changes of the scene, with a pleased and wondering eye, had scarcely exclaimed,

"Look señor how beautiful! what can pour that light down upon the sea?" when the breaking clouds, sailing before the receding gale, displayed the moon shining in unclouded brilliancy upon the heaving sea glancing her welcome beams over the waves in a path of tremulous light, and falling like a smile from heaven upon the lonely wreck.

"Ha! what! a sail! God be thanked!" exclaimed the captain, as, after lashing the helm, he made one of the group at the companion-way.

"Look, young sir, with your keener eye just in the moon's wake no it is the cap of a wave!"

"It is a sail, sir!" exclaimed the youth "I saw distinctly the outline of a main-sail, and then it disappeared as though by the rolling of the vessel There! the sails look black against the moonlight!"

"I see it, boy you are right," answered the captain, in a lively tone; "she is within half a mile of us."

"The blessed Maria forbid that she should pass us by!" ejaculated Constanza.

"We will remedy that," said the old commander, cheerfully; and descending into the cabin, he joyfully with a large blunderbuss.

"This will make more noise than a trumpet," he said, cocking it; "but we will first wait and see if she does not come toward us."

"I saw her distinctly, sir," said Théodore, "while you were below, and she appears to be a large schooner lying to."

"We will hail her then," said the captain; and holding the blunderbuss high above his head, he pointed it in the direction of the vessel and fired. The report of the piece, to their ears, yet familiar with the roar of the tempest, sounded very faintly.

"I fear they will not hear it," he said, "it hardly seemed to go twice the length of the brig towards her."

The heart of the maiden sunk, and she involuntarily grasped the arm of the youthful sailor.— There was a moment of anxious suspense, when a light flashed upon their eyes from the stranger, and the heavy report of a large gun came booming across the water.

"Thank God! we are safe!" exclaimed the captain. "She must be an armed vessel, from the free way she burns powder."

"She is making sail, sir," said Théodore, after gazing a minute intently at the vessel she is a schooner her masts and main-sail are now plainly visible; she has a main-top-mast stay-sail set, and carries top-sails with jib and flying jib She is now standing. No! do I see rightly? She is standing from us, sir!"

"She is, indeed " hastily exclaimed the captain, in a disappointed tone. She must have mistaken our situation. We are so low in the water, she could not see us till close aboard of us. Show a light upon the stump of the mainmast!" he shouted.

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Before the seaman he addressed reached the forecastle, Théodore had sprung below, and returned to the deck with the swinging lamp, which hung in the cabin, and, raising it on the end of the blunderbuss, held it above his head.

In silence, and with heart-rending anxiety, they watched the success of their beacon, and, in a few minutes, an answering light from the stranger, filled their bosoms with delight. The vessel now tacked, and stood towards them, often appearing and disappearing from their eyes, as the dismasted brig rose upon some larger billow, or descended into some profounder cavern of the waves.

Their deliverer came towards them, with tall and stately motion his sails rounded with the lulling breeze, and his prow flinging high the spray, as she bounded forward.

"I should know that vessel," said Théodore, quickly, as she came nearer. "Yes! it is sir!" he said, turning to the captain "that is a buccaneer!"

"Lady, dear lady!" he said, as a slight exclamation escaped Constanza, "be not alarmed! I am surety for your safety. That is one of our squadron I am known to the commander he shall convey you in safety to Jamaica."

The maiden spoke not, but with clasped hands and tearful eyes, silently looked up to heaven, as if she looked for that protection there, which seemed denied her on earth.

"Wreck ahoy!" shouted a stern voice from the schooner, which was now under the stern of the brig, showing four ports to a side, and from the numerous dark heads peering over the hammocknettings, apparently full of men.

"Captain, your trumpet! allow me to reply. Your safety depends upon it!" said the youth, taking the instrument from his passive hands.

"Ho! the Julie!"

"Who the devil are you?" replied the first hailer.

"A prize of Lafitte's, bound into the rendezvous, and dismasted in the squall."

"Is that Théodore?"

"Even as you are Sebastiano! Send a boat for the prisoners; and, afterwards, take out the cargo. It is valuable."

"Be not so ready, my good youth, to bestow what belongs not to you" said the old man, eagerly interposing.

"There is no alternative, sir; he must have all. And what avails it to you now, whether it go to the use of good Sebastiano, there, who is making such commendable haste with his boat or, as must inevitably have been the case, to the bottom of the sea! You must ask of Sebastiano no more than life. He will argue the point with you, and demonstrate to his, if not to your satisfaction, that he pays well for the cargo, by saving you from the dolphins."

The boat, riding over the huge seas, now balancing upon their summit, now disappearing in their hollow, at length reached the wreck, and a heavily-built man, who had passed into his third score of allotted years, stepped on to the deck of the brig.

"Oh, Théodore Señor Théodore!" scarcely articulated the trembling maiden, clinging, with nervous apprehension, to his arm.

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"Do not be alarmed, Señora," he replied, encouragingly, "I can manage this lump of bone and muscle, as I would a chained bear. Ha! my good Sebastiano!" he added, addressing him with much freedom, "I greet your jocund phiz with more of welcome than I ever dreamed I should do."

"By the twelve apostles! always including the worthy Judas," growled the buccaneer, in reply, casting his eyes over the wreck, "but you have made clean work of this. Sathan, himself, seemed to lend his bellows, and a spare hand, to help blow out the gale to night. The Julié once carried a holy father, and the devil could'nt hurt her, so we were safe. Santa Madre! if it had been in broad noon, it would have blown out the suns eye--Cielos! but who have we here?" he continued, raising his voice, on discovering the figure of the maiden, half-concealed behind the intervening person of the young buccaneer. Instinctively, the terrified Constanza withdrew herself from the rude gaze of the rover, and closely veiled her face.

"It is a lady," he said in his ear, "who goes on large ransom to Kingston: She must be treated," he added, firmly, "with respect. It is the express command of Lafitte."

"Señor Lafitte's commands are gospel to me " he replied, with deference in his gruff tones. "Señora. Yo espero que su alteza veo en perfecta salud "he said, addressing the assured Constanza, and bowing with blunt respect in his manner.

"This vessel being in a sinking condition, Señora," he continued, "it has become necessary to remove you. In all things, captain Lafitte should be obeyed; but circumstances, as I can readily prove to you, often render obedience impossible, as for instance "

"Come, Sebastiano, the lady will hear your conclusion on board the Julié. Is your boat ready?"

"All ready, Señorito Théodore."

"Ho!" he cried, "make room for the captain's lady to pass. He is to take to himself a wife, according to the command. Now it is good to marry hombres, first, because if this generation should not be given in marriage, the next "

"Good Señor captain Sebastiano!" exclaimed Théodore, with some impatience.

"Well, well, Señorito Théodore, the boat is ready in proof of which "

"Hold hard, there, men!" cried Théodore "jump in, sir," said he to the captain of the brig, who reluctantly obeyed. "Now allow me to fold this cloak about your form, Señora, hold firmly to my arm Juana, step into the boat, or you will be overboard Now wait till the boat rises again There! step firmly! Done like a seaman! Señora!" said Sebastiano, as he aided Théodore in handing her into the boat. "What a light foot for a royal boy!" he added aside to him.

"Shove off! Now give way!" he said aloud, with a professional brevity unnatural to him; and, in a few minutes, the party were safely landed on the deck of the schooner.

Constanza assured, from the respect shown her by the buccaneer, and the manifold influence of Théodore over him and his crew, that she had nothing, at present, to apprehend, retired to a little state-room, to which he conducted her, and, wearied by the trying scenes through which she had passed, threw herself into one of the berths of the rude, but comfortable, cabin, and was soon buried in profound and peaceful sleep.

Théodore now took the pirate aside, and explained to him those facts which he did not choose to disclose before the crew, ever ready to mutiny on the slightest occasion.

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"Now, Sebastiano," he said, after the most valuable freight had been removed to the schooner from the brig, which soon, with a plunge, disappeared beneath the surface, and the seamen, placed under the hatches, with some attention to their comfort, as released prisoners of a former capture by their captain, and sail once more made on the schooner, "Now, good Sebastiano, we must put into Kingston to-morrow. This lady must be landed, according to the terms of the ransom, "

"Now, look you, my very worthy youth, whom, next to captain Lafitte, I hold in all respect and for three reasons "

"I will hear your reasons another time," replied the youth, quickly "You must to Kingston to-morrow."

Here a discussion of some length took place, in which Sebastiano convinced his young friend, that, on account of certain recent notorious captures, in that vicinity, he would risk both his own, and the necks of his men, and his vessel, if he approached that port, as several armed cutters were already out in search of him. Such was the cogency of his arguments, that Théodore acquiesced; and Sebastiano explained to the ill-fated maiden the necessity of adopting another course than that they originally intended to pursue.

The schooner, therefore, under the orders of captain Sebastiano, steered for one of the rendezvous of Lafitte's squadron, before alluded to, situated at the head of the bay of Gonzares, in the Island of St. Domingo.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Prince. Said you the noble duke was taken prisoner? Messenger. Yes your highness, and most strangely—Sword in hand, like a brave knight, he entered the breach at the head of his soldiers, and before ten of them could follow him, the wall above fell down and choked up the gap a score of feet in height—making a second wall. Prince. And so he was caught with a mere handful of men within the beleagured city! Messenger. It is too true your highness."

A PIRATE'S DECK A DUTCH BUCCANEER CHASE STORM ENCOUNTER A PRISONER.

The French goëlette, or tender, which bore the fanciful name of EULIONE, having on board the commander of the French frigate "Le Sultan," after separating from the larger vessel on gaining the offing, sailed, as we have before mentioned, southward, in the direction of Cartagena while the former steered easterly for St. Domingo.

The object of Count D'Oyley, in taking an opposite course to that of his frigate, was to make surer the chance of intercepting or overtaking the pirate whom he sought, and who, he supposed, had sailed for one of his two rendezvous in the West Indian seas an uninhabited island near Cartagena, or the secluded bay on the west coast of St. Domingo.

With the speed of the wind the little vessel flew over the water, promising, by her unequalled velocity, soon to gain the advantage which the buccaneer had obtained by many hours precedence. The bosom of the young Frenchman swelled, as, glancing over the side, he observed the rapid motion of his vessel flinging the spray to her tops, and leaving a long track of boiling foam astern. And his eye passing over the decks lighted with pride and pleasure, as it met the dark tiers of guns on either side, the circles of muskets and boarding pikes around the masts racks of cutlasses and pistols lining the quarter-rail and upon the gallant band of seamen whom he had picked from his frigate for this expedition, on account of their experience, fearlessness, and fidelity.

Leaving the impatient lover on his pursuit of retributive justice, we will precede him to the shores of the Spanish main, toward which his vessel was rapidly borne.

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Noon held her burning sceptre over the southern Caribbean sea, where our scene now opens, veiling the tremulous outline of the distant hills of St. Martha in a gauze-like haze, while the sun, in his high tropical altitude, was reflected with dazzling brilliancy in the glassy bosom of the waters.

There was not breath enough to toss a curl on a maiden's brow. The surface of the ocean was undimpled, and sleepily rolled its polished waves towards a coral reef, dotted here and there with clumps of low mangroves, upon which they broke with a sudden roar sometimes leaping quite over them, and mingling with the calm waters of the lagoons, which stretched between them and the beach of the main land.

Beyond this reef, and nearly opposite to the St. Domingo gate, rising and falling upon the swells with a swan-like motion, a xebec, or three-masted schooner rode at anchor. Every spar and line of rigging was painted upon the water with the accuracy of reality. Each mast consisted of a single black stick, crossed obliquely by a long pliant yard, upon which was brailed closely up a lateen sail suspended about half the altitude of the mast from the deck. The hull, which was about ninety feet long, was constructed with great breadth of beam, and flush from stem to stern. Like her spars it was painted black, with the exception of a narrow ribbon of red paint drawn around it just below the gunwale. From her unusual breadth amidships, the eye would be deceived in estimating her tonnage too large, but the extreme sharpness of her bows more than qualified this unusual width, and while it contradicted her apparent burden promised unusual speed.

Two large boats were lashed in the centre, and a smaller one hung on each quarter. Directly amidships, and just before the mainmast, on a revolving carriage, was mounted a long gun, while in sockets sunk in the frame-work around it were several thirty-eight pound shot a size proportioned to the vast calibre of the piece. Besides this frowning emblem of war on either side of the vessel, and half run out of the ports, which were thrown open for free circulation of the air, were three cannon of different calibre and metal two of them being cast out of brass and originally intended for heavy field artillery, the others of iron, carrying eighteen and twenty-four pound shot. The arms of Spain were impressed on one, while the crown of Great Britain and the eagle of the United States, were stamped in bold relief upon the remainder.

The gun carriages were constructed of heavy live oak, stained red, and rigged with chains and cordage to keep them in their places. Bags and hammocks were stowed away in the nettings in the bulwarks, which were the height of a man's head and impervious to musket balls. A forecastle, mainhatchway and companion-way were the only passages of communication between the main-deck and lower. Around the first were congregated, under a canvass awning, spread from side to side of the vessel, about a score of men, in whose harsh and varied countenances a physiognomist might recognize individuals of many nations. Although the dark hair, gleaming eye, and full red lip of the Spaniard, the swarthy cheek and inferior face of the Portuguese showed what countries they most numerously represented.

Some of these were enjoying a *siesta* after their rude meal, which they had just shared together others were reclining in various easy and indolent postures upon the deck, with segars between their lips, laughing and jesting or playing tricks upon their sleeping fellows. One was kneeling near the windlass, muttering in a low tone, and lazily fingering a string of black glass beads, held in his hands, while one or two, with folded arms, paced moodily and silently the little clean space under the awning not occupied by their shipmates.

These men were dressed nearly alike, in blue, checked, cotton, or canvass trowsers, bound round their waists by a red, blue, or white sash and without shoes or stockings. Conical caps, of various colours, in which red and blue predominated, were worn upon their heads lying beside them on the deck, or thrust into their bosoms. Some of them wore woollen shirts of the same colour of their caps, with the sleeves rolled up, and fastened at the neck with gold and silver buttons, or else thrown back over their shoulders exposing broad shoulders and Herculean chests. Every man was armed with a long double-edged knife with a broad blade, stuck without a sheath in his girdle, upon the haft of which, as they slept, walked or conversed, their hands mechanically rested. For, in a community like theirs, where a hasty word is spoken at the price of the blood of the speaker, it became necessary

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that each one should bear upon his person, at all times the means of defence and offence.

Heavier weapons, in the shape of cutlasses and pikes, stood around the masts, and in other convenient places, ready for their grasp in the moment of battle.

Under another awning, spread over the larboard gang-way, and shading the space occupied by two of the guns, was assembled another and larger group, whose dress and mode of passing the sultry hours of mid-day were similar.

On the opposite side of the deck, without the shade, and in the sun, lay a negro upon his back, with a grotesque expression upon his ungainly features, playing with a monkey, which he held struggling in the air, and who had been curtailed of his natural and most ornamental appendage, whilst, undoubtedly for the preservation of symmetry, his ears had been shorn after the same fashion.

Half a dozen boys, white, black and yellow, whose heads displayed all the varieties of carroty, woolly, and strait black hair, were gathered about him, their coal black eyes sparkling with glee. Each of these neophytes to the trade of buccaneering, was naked to the waist, from which depended an apron, or a pair of loose trowsers, (abridged,) from dimensions adapted to men of much larger growth. Small, sheathed knives, which were stuck in the belt, or string confining their lower and only teguments, were oftener in use for malice or mischief, than the broader blades of the men.

One of these youths, whose robes would have required much enlargement to rival the primitive fig leaf was occupied in pricking, by way of practice in his profession, the hams of the suspended monkey; and delighting himself, and his particoloured companions, in the contortions and yells of the animal.

Farther aft, was spread an awning, whose scolloped edges, bound with some bright-red material, indicated due consciousness of that superiority which appertains either to the quarter-deck of a ship of the line, or a pirate-schooner. Beneath this gay awning reclined various individuals, whose rank on board the schooner entitled them to protection from the sun farther astern, than the other lessfavoured occupants of the vessel.

From the stays, which on either side supported the after or mizen-mast, was stretched, about three feet from the deck, a hammock of net-work, in which lay a heavily-framed man, whose breadth of shoulders indicated great physical power, while the rotundity of his short person betrayed the bonvivant. His head was large, and covered with red, bushy hair; his complexion, naturally fair, was now changed to a jocund red; his eyes, small, deep set, and gray his forehead fleshy, and his cheeks full, and hanging; while the lower portion of his face, drooped into that second, and pleasing fulness, which bears the appellation of "double-chin." A pair of white jean trowsers, enveloped his rotund, lower limbs while a loose gingham coat, was wrapped partially around his body. His height, or rather length, as he lay in the open hammock, appeared less than five feet, and judging from the lines of years which graced his visage, and an occasional tuft of gray hair, interspersed in the burning bush, which covered his phrenological organs, his age might have been a little above forty-five or six.

At the time we introduce him to the reader, he was lying with his face upwards, and one leg hanging out of the hammock, smoking a long fantastic German pipe, and idly watching the little blue clouds, as they circled above his head, rolled along beneath the awning, and floated astern, into the outward air. A half-naked African waved over him a large fan, made of the variegated feathers of some gorgeous Mexican bird whom he would occasionally take his pipe from his mouth to curse, for roughly blowing some more beautiful wreath, which had won his eye breaking into a host of flickering clouds. The slave's skill, seemed to consist in cooling the atmosphere around the head of the smoker, without agitating the spiral wreaths which were satisfactorily, and at regular intervals, emitted from his large, vermillion lips.

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On the deck, nearly under the hammock, reposed two other figures, whose dress, and arms, which they constantly wore, in connection with their presence on the quarter-deck, indicated them to be officers. A fourth figure, with dark and handsome features, rendered unpleasing by an habitual, sinister expression, with a form slender and athletic, calling to mind one of the athletæ of ancient Greece with flowing white trowsers and loose gingham frock, confined to his waist by a yellow silk sash which also secured pistols and a cutlass leaned in an easy attitude against the binnacle, his muscular arms bared to the shoulder, and folded over his breast, while the smoke of a segar curled unheeded over his head. His eyes were habitually fixed upon the northern horizon, visible between the awning and the quarter rail, but without that consciousness which indicated attention to any particular object. All at once, they lighted up, and dilated, while his brow was lowered over them, as though to shade, and strengthen his vision and with his head and body advanced, he looked long and steadily, towards one point of the horizon.

"Vat dat you shee, maat," slowly interrogated the corpulent personage in the hammock, as his eye, by chance, detected the change in the attitude, and manner of his officer. "No saail, mine Got heh!"

"A sail, I believe it is, captain my glass here, you black imps jump!" he cried, and the troop of urchins, leaving the monkey in the midst of his martyrdom, sprung for the campanion-way, but were distanced by the *sans-culotte*, who the next moment placed the spy-glass in the hands of the officer.

"A schooner, with a gaft top-sail, and top-gallant mast I can just see the peak of her main-sail!" he said, after looking a moment through the instrument.

"Heh! dat shall pe Mynheer, captain Lafitte to pe shure! shee if dere pe royals?"

"She has none set I can't well make out her spars at this distance but she brings a breeze with her, whoever she be! her upper sails belly out like ,," and looked round at the corporeal curvature of his captain for an illustration, with a sly smile of Castillian humour.

"None of dat, Mynheer Martinez, you are put a strait spar vereas I'sh am always under full topshails, to pe shure. Tam dish hot climate if haal don't lay under dish tam Caribbean shee den I'sh neber ecshpect to shee it it melts a maan down, like trying out fat in de cook's kettlesh. Hugh, hugh, hugh! it takes mine breat from out de body when I'sh open mine mout, dis so tamn hot" Puff, puff! "Dere! dat wash a purty curl, wid de ring in de middle like de shmoke from de mout of de cannonsh," he exclaimed. Turning growlingly to the slave, "Curse you, plack nigger, vat sall mak' you plow in dis deble sortish style I'll toss you ofer-poard to mak' de breesh be coming to pe shure."

"I make her out now, distinctly," said the first officer "she is a schooner of about seventy tons, with fore-top-sail, and top-gallant-sail set. Caramba! she is walking down this way with a bone in her teeth."

"Ho! there forward stand by to get under weigh, the breeze we have so long been wishing for is coming upon us now, with a light heel and moreover, we are likly to have a breeze of long shot, by the saucy looks of this stranger," he added, as before one of those sudden and strong winds, peculiar to that climate, after a lengthened calm, the vessel rapidly approached, showing a tier of ports on her starboard side, which was next to them, out of which the heads of five or six guns bristled, with a very warlike air.

"Hah! vat ish dat you shays, maat," exclaimed the captain, with some quickness; "hol' dish hammock tort, you Congee nigger, vilst I gets out Dere! vas dere ever such tamn hot vedersh dish teck is like de oven vat baked Shadrach, and his brod'ren. Hugh!" and the portly commander of the schooner standing upon his legs, after many ponderous sighs, and irrelevant ejaculations, took the glass from his mate, and looked steadily at the advancing vessel.

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"Mine Got, it ish true he vill be carry ten kuns in hish teck to pe shure, and full of mansh," he said, with energy, as the schooner now within two miles of them, hauled her wind and stood towards Cartagena, seen indistinctly in the distance through the heated atmosphere, which danced with a tremulous, wavy motion over every object. With its silvery beach battlements groaning with cannon, its heavy towers, convents, and monasteries, and surrounding eminences, strongly fortified, with their sides dotted with picturesque villas, the city with its suburbs, slept beneath the glowing noon, in the silence of midnight.

The breeze now ruffled the surface of the water around their vessel, breaking it into myriads of little waves, which emulously leaped into the air, as though to welcome its approach.

"Man the capstan; heave up the anchor!" shouted the mate, sternly and every sleeper sprung to his feet, and every idler and jester became at once active and serious.

The capstan soon flew merrily round, and at the brails and halyards of the lateen sails, ready to obey the orders of their officer, stood various parties of the crew.

"Show the trading lugger," he added, and the guns were hastily drawn in, and the ports closed, so as to present a plain broad side to the stranger.

The anchor was soon hanging from the bows the triangular sails of each mast spread to the breeze the jib, which extended along the short bowsprit, was hoisted, and the vessel bending low before the wind, moved through the water with increasing velocity.

"Shall we try him captain?" said the mate, coolly, retiring to the quarter deck, after getting sail on the schooner.

"Dry--vivty tyfils! Tamn! noting else sall be got peside, from dish chap, put iron piscuit in te pread pasket to be shure," said he sympathizingly, laying a hand upon that important portion of his body "tyfil a pit sall ve dry him, Martinez."

"Then, now we are under weigh, shall we steer for Gonares?" he inquired.

"Yes, Mynheer Martinez de hatches are as full as an English--mansh"

"Or a Dutchman's Captain!" interrupted Martinez, with a wink to his junior in command.

"Letsh me shpeak Martinez," grumbled the captain good--humouredly. "or a Tutchmansh after Chrishmash tinner dere is no more room for de more cargoesh if we take more prishes Put de helm up for Gonaresh!"

Obedient to the braces the sails swung round until they lay nearly parallel with the length of the vessel and close--hauled on the wind, lying down to leeward, so that her gunwales dipped deep in the water the vessel left the shores of Cartagena behind her, and stood for St. Domingo.

She had sailed on this course but a short time, when the stranger, who was standing in the opposite direction, also changed his course hauling close on the wind and running so as to intercept the buccaneer.

"Martinez, dish looksh shqually one, two, drie, vive guns on hish shide." said the captain as he observed this measure, "he ish a cruiser ve musht fight or show him our heelsh, and vy sall ve fight, ven dere ish no purpose ve can take no more coods put he vill, may pe, take ush to pe shure! It petter not pe fightings Heh! Martinez"

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"As you say sir I suspect he is in chase of our vessel we can hardly cope with him. Set the gaft topsails, and hoist away the spencer," he shouted; and this last sail, with three small triangular sails stretched from the topmasts, which were of one piece with the lower masts, now spread to the wind, gave additional speed to the vessel. Groaning and straining through every joint, she parted the green waves before her, flinging them around her bows, and promising to distance the other vessel, which having the wind on the pirate, now rapidly neared him.

It now became the object of the pirate to escape from the armed vessel, which was evidently trying to cut him off to this end all his energies were now directed. The vessels were rapidly approaching the same point, which, once passed, the pirate felt there was a chance of his escape.

As he was giving various orders to increase the speed of the vessel by securing the guns, or changing their position; and tightening the braces, the stranger suddenly run up the French flag, and a puff of smoke from the side of his vessel was immediately followed by the report of a cannon, and the skipping of a round shot across their wake, within a few fathoms of the stern

"Heh! vivty tyfils! he shpeaks mit de iron trumpet Martinez," continued the captain with an energy unlooked for in a man of his corporature "ve musht lame him or dis nicht de tolphins vill eat a goot supper, from the potty of Mynheer Jacob Getzendauner to pe shure!"

"Clear the starboard guns and double shot them stand ready to give him a broadside Here Jacobo, Andrea, Manuel! where are your ears? level that long gun and let him have it from stem to stern as we cross his bows, make a clean sweep through him! now stand ready all!" shouted the young Spaniard to whom his captain seemed to have resigned the more active duties of command; and springing upon the hammock nettings he watched with a deliberate eye the motions of the approaching vessel.

The pirate was standing nearly due north, close hauled upon the wind, which was from the north-west, and running at the rate of about eight knots, while the French schooner was standing nearly in a south-western course, also close-hauled with every thing drawing endeavouring to keep to the windward of the pirate, who was using every effort to prevent the success of this nautical manoeuvre. They were within less than half a mile of each other when the mate sprung upon the quarter-rail to watch the favourable moment to disable his opponent. The faces of the men and officers in uniform upon the decks of the strange schooner were easily discernable by him and he observed that on board of her every preparation was made for action.

"Can we cross her fore-foot, sir? said he, turning to his captain, who stood by with a face expressive of some anxiety but more resolution

"No no Martinez tish an impossible if ve letsh him go acrosch our cutvater he vill sink ush, to pe shure "

"Shall we give it to him?" inquired the Spaniard, "it is our only chance!"

"Aye hoisht avay de crosh and het, and tunder mit de kuns."

At his command a black flag, upon which was painted a red cross, surmounted by a Death's head, fluttered at the mast-head.

"Now fling open the ports well aim each gun, let go sheets and braces all!" he shouted, as the Frenchman began to show his weather ports now she rights, give it to him fire!" One after another, in rapid succession, the guns of the starboard broadside were fired at the schooner, and the pirate had the satisfaction of witnessing her fore-topmast fall over the side, cut in two by a shot. The wounded vessel yawned and fell off from the wind, whilst the pirate crew shouted like demons at their success.

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"Well done my men! braces all-hard-a-weather!" cried the mate, cheerfully.

Once more under steerage-way, the buccaneer shot ahead and to windward of the chase, who, wearing round, gave her a broadside which tore up her forecastle deck, killing two men, breaking an arm of one of the young apprentices before introduced to the reader and slightly injuring the bow-sprit.

The pirate now moved over the water with rapidity, leaving his wounded pursuer far astern, though still slowly in chase. With his glass he could detect the men aloft repairing the rigging, and setting the topmast while every other spar and sail that could be made available was brought into use.

Night found the vessels more than a league apart, their repairs, completed, steering the same course, and still the pursuing and pursued. The wind, after the sun went down, gradually increased, and at midnight a storm lashed the waters into foam. The vessels were separated from each other in the darkness, and their crews were engaged until day-break in a battle with elements, instead of each other. As the morning broke the gale abated, and by the increased light the pirate saw his opponent lying to within a third of a mile of him to windward.

"All hands to make sail," he shouted, but the stranger had already discovered him, and was spreading his canvass, and bearing down upon him.

"Now we must fight captain!" he said to his superior officer, who had just come to the deck—"we have no chance of using our guns in this sea. Dios y St. Jago," he hastily exclaimed, "they are preparing to board us Ho! there boarders, all! repel boarders!" he shouted.

Cutlasses and boarding pikes were rapidly passed from hand to hand along the decks the men stripped to their trowsers, placed their pistols in their belts and in three divisions at the bows, stern and midships, headed by the captain; Martinez and an inferior officer, they stood sullenly and resolutely to receive their foe. The sea was rolling in large waves, over which the armed stranger rode lightly, as he advanced to engage with the pirate. The vessels were now within hail of each other.

"Ho, the schooner, ahoy!" was borne across the water upon the wind, and distinctly heard above the surging of the sea "Strike your flag or no quarter!"

"A Carthaginian cruiser!" replied Martinez, as the flag of that state was displayed at the peak.

"What is that he says," inquired Count D'Oyley, who had hailed, to his young companion Montville, who stood by his side "a cruiser! a pirate, as his well-shotted guns told us but last night. Boarders be ready I may find here what I wish," he added to himself, "or a guide to the present rendezvous of their chief Lay her alongside!" he cried, as the vessel came close to the pirate "now grapple!" he shouted, in a loud energetic voice and the vessels came together with a dangerous shock.

Drawing his sword he waved it over his head, shouting "Allons mes braves!" and bounding over the bulwarks, he leaped with one bound upon the deck of the pirate, followed by Montville. Before his men could equal his rapid movements, the pirate's crew had discharged their guns on the side next to the schooner, the recoil from which, and the simultaneous shock of a huge wave, breaking upon her stern, parted the two vessels with violence, and a succeeding wave swelling to a vast height bore them at a great distance apart. The count was engaged immediately hand to hand with the Spaniard while young Montville, was saved from being run through the body in a dozen places, by the interference of the captain, who disarmed him by a blow of his cutlass, and grasping him, thrust him down the companion-way into the cabin.

"Vasht dere, mine mensh!" he cried to the crew, who were rushing upon the French officer; "vasht dere let Martinez here have dis pretty pit o' fight to himself. A good poy is Martinez let him fight to pe shure!" and

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while he spoke, the sword and cutlass of the combatants rung as they interchanged fierce and rapid blows.

"Hold! are you Lafitte?" cried Count D'Oyley, parrying the weapon of his antagonist.

"Yes, señor, I am Lafitte if it please you!" replied Martinez, eagerly, after an instant's hesitancy.

"Have at you, then to the death!" cried the count, raining the blows upon him with a skill and energy which it required all his activity and presence of mind to parry. The fight was long and desperate the eyes of the Spaniard flashed with a snake-like brightness, while the countenance of the Frenchman glowed with fierce and determined energy. Three times had his sword passed through the arm of the Spaniard, who, with a chivalry worthy of a nobler cause, was willing to lose his life as the personator of Lafitte, rather than confess himself a less notable antagonist. Once had his weapon gashed the breast of the Frenchman, when the captain, who had with difficulty restrained the buccaneers from rushing aft and cutting down the stranger, knocked up their weapons.

"Dis vill pe petter stopped, Martinez dish ish mine prishoner he vill mak de ranshom monish. I vill tak your sword, Mynheer."

The count, wounded, and weak from loss of blood, surrendered it, and at the command of the captain, was conducted by two of the crew into the cabin.

The mate, hastily staunching the blood from his slight wounds, looked over the side and saw the enemy at a distance, with her rudder shot away, tossed about at the mercy of the waves, and wholly incapable of renewing the contest. He then gave orders to make all sail for the rendezvous and in a few minutes the schooner stood on her former course, under pressure of all her canvass.

CHAPTER IX.

"Our plans are often thwarted by the means we make use of to insure success. This is frequently independent of all our manoeuvering, and befriends us when circumstances seem most adverse."

Edwards.

PIRATE'S RENDEZVOUS CAPTIVES STANZAS SCENE IN A GROTTO.

The scenery of the north-eastern portion of the Gulf is varied by immense gorges, flanked by precipitous cliffs, indented with caverns, many of which are of great extent, sometimes penetrating into the bosom of the rocky ridges several hundred feet. The Cibao mountains, an elevated range, commencing near Cape Espada, terminate at Cape St. Nicolas, on the extremity of the most northern of the two western tongues of the island. At this point the main spine of the mountain separates into several precipitous promontories, one or two of which end abruptly at the sea-shore, over which they form precipices many hundred feet in height.

These cliffs share the peculiar features of the wild scenery of this region, and caverns, and rocky ravines, nearly enclosed above, are excavated by the hand of nature, or some convulsion of her empire, in great numbers along their bases. The loftiest of these Alpine branches, after running out an isolated mural precipice into the sea, for more than half a league, ends in a bluff about three hundred feet in height, the edge of which, covered with rich woods, juts several yards out over the perpendicular face, like a stupendous roof. Beneath, the water was very deep and clear, displaying, to one looking down from the cave, thousands of many-coloured sea shells.

About twenty feet above the surface of the water, the face of the rock receded, leaving a terrace, against which a vessel might lie so closely, that one could step from it on to her yards. This terrace was about thirty feet broad,

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and upon it frowned a heavy gun placed on a carriage. Beyond it opened the mouth of a vast cavern, which, with many sinuosities, penetrated far into the base of the cliff. The entrance was irregularly formed, in shape somewhat resembling a gothic gateway, though of gigantic dimensions. In front of this entrance spread the broad gulf of Gonares, which flowed unbroken to within about half a mile of the cavern, where it met, with a loud roar, two nearly parallel ridges of high rocks, extending from the base of the cliff, leaving a narrow, deep passage from the sea for small vessels, quite to the foot of the rock, or vestibule of the grotto beneath, in front of which, widening into a small basin, it formed a safe and convenient shelter.

This cavern had long been used by the buccaneers as a general rendezvous a repository for their treasures, and a prison for those captives whom they detained for the purpose of drawing ransom for their liberation. Here also they resorted to repair their vessels, and to receive the instructions of Lafitte, who made this rendezvous of his fleet only second to that of Barritaria. To this scene we now transport our readers about a week after the expedition against the villa of Señor Velasquez.

The principal apartment of this grotto consisted of an interior chamber, illuminated by a solitary lamp, burning in a projecting shelf of the cave. It was about forty feet in diameter, and nearly circular, rising into a lofty dome, from the nave of which hung a stalactic mass of open work, resembling a huge chandelier as it reflected in numerous brilliant points the rays of the little lamp beneath.

Crystallized icicles, and innumerable fanciful stalactic creations, hung around the chamber pilasters of the same beautiful material, terminating in half-formed arches, stood out in fine relief from the dark sides, united by delicate lattice-tracery. The dome itself was carved, with the accuracy of architecture into the richest fret-work. Shaded niches were half concealed by exquisitely arranged folds of thin plates of stalactite. The roof was open to the blue sky, through which one or two trembling stars could be seen glancing among the waving foliage. Vast rocks lay upon the floor of the room, fallen, apparently, from deep niches in the sides and ceiling, while regular forms, like statues, pedestals, and columns, either stood, or were strewed about the chamber. At the extremity of the cave, a small, glittering cascade of water gushed from a crevice in the side, and with a monotonous sound, rung upon the rocky pavement beneath, and after flowing over it, like running glass, for a few feet, disappeared in a deep pit opened in a recess of the cave, and could be heard, after long intervals, reverberating in the vast depths, as it leaped from shelf to shelf, till the sound was lost in the bowels of the earth.

One side of the cave was covered by fantastic stalactic drapery, which fell in a broad sheet to the floor.

The only entrance to the cavern, before which paced a sailor-sentinel, was narrow, and lighted near the outside by a lamp, which had once hung in a ship's cabin, suspended from the low ceiling. From this passage branched others, for a short distance, terminating sometimes in small rooms, at others in deep pits and mere crevices in the rock. Many of these branches, or lesser caverns, contained chests, tables, chairs, arms, and garments, strewn about hammocks, cooking utensils, and other indications of being occasionally occupied. Naval and military weapons, with a few articles of ship furniture, were scattered about the room, and bales of goods were piled in recesses around the cavern.

In one of these recesses, terminated by a stalactic sheet, almost transparent, dropped from the low roof to the rocky pavement, and forming one side of the niche, was spread a strip of rich carpet, strewn with bamboo leaves, upon which reclined a figure, half obscured in the gloom of the deeply-shaded vault, buried in sound, but feverish sleep. His head was uncovered, displaying a profusion of chesnut hair; his brow was pale, and his eyelids and temples were transparent from illness. His form was partly wrapped in a dark blue cloak, upon the folds of which rested his left arm, bandaged as though to protect a wound. The rays of the lamp in the larger chamber, half interrupted by the projecting sides of the niche, fell obliquely across the upper part of his face, leaving the lower portion in deep shadow. A broken sabre and a shattered pistol lay near him, the relics of a recent fierce conflict between the prisoner, for such he was, and the young Spaniard Martinez, his captor, in attempting to escape from the cave.

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There was a deep silence in the cave, uninterrupted save by the breathing of the sleeper, which was irregular, and occasionally the low rumbling of the distant surf, reverberating along the passages, and nearly lost before it came moaningly into the inner chamber of the grotto.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a low voice, apparently from some concealed recess, singing a plaintive air. The words were Castilian, and flowed from the lips of the invisible singer with melancholy cadence.

I. The virgin moon, with timid hand, Unmoors her silver boat; And inexperienc'd to command, Loves near the earth to float. II. Each night, she tries the gentle gale, And plies her silvery oar; Each night she spreads a broader sail, And further leaves the shore. III. How boldly through the azure sea Her little bark she guides! Before the gentle breeze, how free And gallantly she rides! IV. Now half her heavenly journey through, Each sail is flung amain! The prize she seeks through heaven blue, Is found to lose again. V. And steering gently for the shore, Where first she sought the gale, With hand as timid as before, She furls her snowy sail. VI. Thus Hope unmoores her fragile boat, And boldly tempts the main; Winning the daring height she sought, To fall to earth again. VII. So Love, yet bolder, leaves the shore, And fearless sails the sea; With flowing sheet and plying oar, He courses gallantly. VIII. Bravely he bears him for the prize, Nor sooner is it won, Than, as the moon wanes in the skies, Love, love, alas, is gone!

The voice was soft and silvery in its tones, yet the sleeper, like one on whom a finger is lightly laid, started and opened his eyes as the first notes fell upon his ear, and gazed wonderingly around him, as if spell-bound, until the last tremulous notes ceased, and silence reigned again throughout the solemn vault.

"Do I dream that voice! it is hushed! I must be dreaming!" he exclaimed, starting with energy and strength from his couch, and gazing wildly around him "Ah! it was but a sweet dream this cave! this wounded arm alas! I am a prisoner! Kind heaven, I thank thee for this happy dream!" he exclaimed, fervently. "And is it indeed a dream? may not her released spirit have been hovering over me in my sleep, and soothing my burning slumbers with that air I loved to hear her sing on earth. Oh, blessed spirit!" he fervently cried, under the influence of his fevered imagination, dropping upon his knee, "if thou art indeed near me, bless me with that angelic melody. Sweet Constanza! if I may not see thee, let me hear thy voice once more!"

"Who calls upon the name of Constanza?" fell upon his ear, in the liquid and melancholy accents of the song.

"Mon Dieu! it is it is she!" he exclaimed; identity of circumstances, and places, and recollection of the causes which brought him there, suddenly returning. "It is it is she Constanza! Constanza! speak! are you there?" he cried, turning to the side of the niche from which the voice proceeded, and placing his lips to the thin stalactic wall. "It is D'Oyley that addresses you!"

"Alphonse! my own Alphonse!" she exclaimed, her voice trembling between hope and fear; "can it be you? no! no! Alphonse is far, far away, and knows not the fate of his poor Constanza!"

"God of heaven! it is indeed Constanza!" exclaimed the count, assured. "Dear Constanza, I have come to release you it is your own Alphonse! and no other! Is there no way of getting to you?" he cried, suddenly endowed with almost supernatural strength, at the same time eagerly seeking some mode of ingress to that part of the cavern where she was evidently imprisoned. There was no reply from within to his anxious inquiry.

"Tell me, Constanza," he continued, raising his voice; "Do you know the passage that leads from without to your apartment? Direct me, and I will pass out master my guard enter, and rescue you! Speak dear Constanza!" he earnestly added; but the echoes of his own voice through the hollow cavern, only replied to his eager words.

'She must have fainted, or Heaven be blessed! here is a passage!' he added, with delight, as his eye glanced from the stalactic drapery separating the vaults, to a heavy iron pike which lay upon the pavement; "this shall do my

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purpose!" and seizing the weapon, he struck with violence upon the transparent and brittle surface of the wall, and repeating the blow, with additional force, the stalactic sheet gave way, broken and shattered like ice. In a few moments, under his heavy strokes, a breech was made through the partition, and a stream of light passed through the aperture into his part of the cave. Inspired to greater exertions by this success, he redoubled his efforts. But finding his strength failing before he could effect an opening sufficient to admit his body, he cast his eyes round for some more powerful agent and they rested upon a broken spar leaning against the side of the outer cavern. This he grasped, and with all his remaining strength, bore it heavily against the breech, when, after repeating his efforts, a large mass fell inward and left a broad opening. With an exclamation of joyful surprise, he sprung through the passage into the apartment.

It was an immense chamber, dimly lighted by a lamp, suspended, in chains, from the low ceiling. The walls, where they were not stuccoed with grey stalactic incrustations, were black. He paused a moment at the entrance, to give his vision power to perceive, through the mysterious half-illuminated darkness, the dimensions and details of the vault.

Through a large crevice above, he saw, faintly shining into the aperture, the moon, which, probably associated with the thoughts of her lover, suggested the song he heard. There appeared one inlet to the apartment, on the opposite side, which was now closed by a heavily barred door. In the centre of the chamber, under a kind of canopy made of canvass, was spread a rug, dyed of many brilliant colours. An old negress sat upon her heels, at the side of it, fast asleep, yet waving over the unoccupied carpet, a tuft of feathers. A basket of fruits, and a silver basin of spring water, stood near her, and various costly articles for the toilet, and a clasped missal and a guitar, lay upon a velvet cushion, placed at the head of the mat.

There was no other furniture in the vast cavern, which was silent and desolate its distant extremities scarcely perceptible in the perpetual darkness which reigned there.

"Where has she disappeared?" exclaimed the lover, as his eye surveyed these details, without meeting the object he sought. Springing into the chamber, he started! as, lying by the side of a fallen stalactic pillar, he saw the lifeless form of the Castilian maiden.

He kneeled by her side, and placed his lips upon her own. They were scarcely warm with life, and the throbbing of her breast was faint, and her pulse, as he pressed his finger upon her wrist, was like the dying vibration of a harp-string. Raising her, he bore her to the canopy, and placed her upon the humble couch, which, by the kindness of Theodore, had been placed in the chamber, awakened the old negress, and, with her aid, after a long time, restored her to consciousness.

"Blessed Maria! where am I?" faintly inquired the maiden, as she gazed around her. "And did I hear his voice can it be real! oh! it was too much! too much joy!" and she looked eagerly up into the face of the negress.

"Juana, is it only you?" she added, in a disappointed tone. "Of what was I thinking?" And again she closed her eyes, as if endeavouring to recal some pleasing vision. "Did you not hear a voice, Juana? It was his, yes! it must have been his! I thought it Lafitte's he can speak like him, when he will, but it was his. D'Oyley's! my own Alphonse's!"

"Alphonse is near you, dear Constanza! look up," said the count, and she felt her hand pressed ardently, while a warm kiss was imprinted upon her lips.

Opening her eyes, and fixing them full upon her lover, who had retired a little, when animation first returned, lest his sudden presence, like the sound of his voice, should again throw her into insensibility.

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"Is it, indeed, Alphonse?" she joyfully exclaimed, and, for a few moments, the lovers remained locked in each other's arms.

"What," she at length said, "have I not suffered!"

"I know it. I know all, Constanza! but, let us think of escape," he added "Can you sit up?" and raising her from the mat, sat beside her upon the cushion.

"Oh, what have I not suffered!" she repeated, leaning her head upon his shoulder, and bursting into tears. "I know not how, amidst all the dreary scenes I have passed through, I have retained my reason. And yet I live! and bless thee! dear Maria! all I love on earth, is by my side my own Alphonse!" And she pressed him to her bosom, as if she feared he would again be separated from her.

"And still, my Constanza! in all these wild and fearful scenes surrounded by such beings in the power of such men still, *my* Constanza? Forgive me, sweet one! but if you have suffered wrong, dearly shall you be revenged!"

"Constanza is still the Constanza you left her!" she cried, with emotion, while the rich blood mounted to her cheek, as she hid her face in his bosom; "although a prisoner, I have been treated with honour," and, as she spoke, truth and innocence were written upon her pure brow, too plainly to be misconstrued and, clasping her in his arms, he exclaimed, "Too much happiness! Protector of the innocent!" he added, looking upward, "I thank thee!"

We will briefly pass over the story Constanza related to her lover, in which she detailed the incidents connected with her first capture from her father's roof her liberation by the pirate her second capture by one of his vessels, and her landing, the day before, at the cave. She also informed him of the departure of the vessel, which captured her, on another expedition spoke of her lonely and desolate situation in the cavern, whither she was conveyed on leaving the vessel, and, in grateful terms, mentioned the kindness of young Théodore, who visited her occasionally, and had shown those attentions to her comfort, with which she was surrounded, and also secured to her, notwithstanding the objections of the pirate, Sebastiano, the attendance of old black Juana; who, with a fidelity, peculiar to the negro, had never left her from the time of her capture.

CHAPTER X.

"Some of the severest naval battles in which we have recently been engaged, in the West Indian seas, were between our cruisers and the pirates who infest them "These daring men, had fortified themselves in the natural caverns, abounding in those regions, in some cases rendering them almost impregnable, from which, in large armed vessels, they issued and spread devastation among our commerce."

Residence in the West Indies.

PLAN OF ESCAPE A SURPRISE FIGHT WITH AN AMERICAN CRUISER LAFITTE.

The night had far advanced before the Castilian maiden completed her relation.

"Dearest Constanza, how much you have passed through! and this Lafitte he has magnanimity of soul, which, in a man of his lawless character, surprises me. But men, however lost to virtue, are never wholly depraved. The heavenly spark will yet linger in the heart, though hid from the eyes of men, and now and then will break suddenly out into flame.

I must meet this man there is a nobleness about him that captivates me, and the more so, that it was unlooked for. Now that you are safe, dearest Constanza, my revenge is gone I would know and redeem this extraordinary man.

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But," he added quickly, "let us escape from this fearful spot. He is not here to control the wild beings that surround us. There are several boats lying in the basin. Once outside we can seize one of them, and a few hours sail, will take us to the Mole, near Cape St. Nicholas, where we shall be safe from pursuit. This Théodore, of whom you speak so warmly, will he not favour our escape?"

"Ask him not, Alphonse he would not refuse. Ask him not although his benefactor be an outlaw, let us not tempt him to betray him. I would rather wait the return of Lafitte, than implicate this youth in our escape."

"You are right, noble girl! There is," he continued in a low, eager tone "but a single sentinel, at the mouth of the grotto, and here are weapons;" he exclaimed, with joyful surprise, as his eye rested upon a pair of pistols left by Théodore, "and loaded too! with these, and this pike, I can overcome all opposition. Come Constanza, my brave one! this shall be the last trial of your fortitude. Lean upon my arm heavier! the occasion has given me back my full strength. Juana, will you go with us or stay with the pirates?"

"Ol' Juana go wid young buckra lady. If she be nigger she lub de lily 'ooman. Ol' Juana neber leab her if massa say."

"Take up that basket of fruit, and this carpet and cushion, to place in the boat and follow then, good Juana," he said to her, placing the pistols in his belt.

Then conducting Constanza, through the breach he had made in the wall, he led her into the chamber he had occupied.

"And here was your prison!" She said with feeling "how lonely you must have been here, and wounded too! But blessed be the kind Maria for this meeting! If we escape not I can die cheerfully in your arms. Happy thought! If we fail in our purpose, we can die together. Oh let us hasten, Alphonse!"

The count, lingered a moment to remove the lamp from the wall. "Here Juana," he said, giving it to the slave, "go before with this light, we will follow some distance behind you in the darkness. The sentinel will perhaps let you pass to the outside, or if he stops you, to ask any questions, draw him aside and so glare the light upon his eyes, that we may pass him unseen. Have you tact enough for it."

"Hi! yes massa, Juana un'stand ebery ting she know how mak fool ob Gaspàr."

The faithful slave, her singleness of heart singularly preserved in the rude life she had passed whom the gentleness of Constanza had devoted to her interest moved silently in advance, through the narrow passage, which after many windings, opened upon the terrace. The count, followed at a short distance, so as to be invisible in the shadow cast by the intervening person of the slave the trembling Constanza leaning upon his arm, which passed around her waist, supported her drooping form. Solitude reigned in silence around them. Solitary cells branched out on either side, whose gloom, the rays of the lamp could not penetrate.

The walls were encrusted with gray stalactite or black, and covered with deep mould. As they advanced, the passage became narrower, and the roof descended within reach of their hands. All at once they entered a large dome, open to the sky a hundred feet above them, waved heavily in the night winds, the branches of trees, overhanging the verge thin white clouds drifted along the sky, and burning afar off, here and there appeared a star.

"Oh that we were as free as those clouds!" exclaimed Constanza, gazing upward at the lovely scene. "How happy I shall be to behold the blue heavens once more, and feel that I am free. Oh! that dismal cavern! To-night I awoke and the moon was shining down upon me, through a small crevice in the ceiling. It fell full upon my face, and I felt it was the augury of happiness. The song you taught me, and say you love to hear me sing, came involuntary

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to my lips and I had hardly ceased when I heard your voice, and sprung at the sound and when I reflected a moment, I feared it was not yours; but, when assured of it, the tide of joy was too great! Oh the joy with which my heart bounded when I saw you bending over me!"

"Dearest Constanza!" he exclaimed, pressing her to his heart.

During this brief conversation, they had traversed the pavement of the dome and entered a dark narrow passage, which, after a few steps, grew broader and higher, and the cool wind came circling past them, from without.

"Hold Juana!" he called in a suppressed voice, "we are now near the mouth do you recollect my instructions?" he inquired, as the negress obeyed him. "Hark! what is that a gun another a cannonading! Heaven avert danger! Constanza my dearest one! be not alarmed!" he said, feeling the form of the maiden shrink and tremble, as the loud reports fell upon her ear "exert all your firmness for now we need it," he added, cheerfully and encouragingly, as he warmly pressed her hand, and, parting the rich hair, he imprinted a kiss upon her brow.

"I will I will Alphonse it was but a momentary weakness I will nerve myself for this hour of trial, I will be worthy of you." "Thank you, dearest now remain here in this niche, with your faithful Juana, while I go and reconnoitre. Nay, do not be alarmed, I shall not expose myself to danger. I cannot forget that your life and happiness depend upon my caution. I will be with you in a moment," and rapidly as the darkness would permit, feeling his way with his pike, he advanced towards the entrance of the cave.

The firing still continued, and every succeeding report appeared nearer. Suddenly a ray of light, pencilled along the wall, caught his eye and turning an abrupt angle, a lamp suspended above him, glared brightly upon his face. Starting back into the shadow of the projecting rock, he looked cautiously forward and saw, although at some distance, the mouth of the cave, beyond which, was a glimpse of the moonlit bay and the figure of a man, relieved against the silvery sheen of the sea, standing upon a projecting rock, far from the entrance of the grotto. This he concluded must be the guard, who had left his post attracted by the cannonading, with which, was now mingled the firing of musketry, and the shouts of combatants.

The officer passed hastily under the lamp, and approached the entrance with a noiseless footstep. Within a few feet of the exterior, was a shelf elevated the height of a man above the floor. This he lightly ascended, fearing to emerge into the moonlight, where the sentinel might observe him. From this point, thrown into shade by the overhanging arch of the cave, he obtained a view of the strait which led from the base of the cliff, between lines of rocks to the open sea.

About a mile from the shore, clouds of white smoke rested upon the water, from which could be seen the sails and spars of a large vessel, apparently a brig, above which rolled dense volumes of smoke, accompanied by the roar and flash of cannon. Nearer the shore, and just entering the narrow avenue which led from the sea into the basin, at the foot of the cave, was a large schooner under press of sail, occasionally discharging a gun at the other vessel, which appeared in chase of her.

As the count climbed to the shelf, the cannonading ceased, the smoke rolled away over the water to the leeward shore, and circling up the cliff settled upon their summits, and the clear moonlight shone quietly upon the scene, whitening the canvass of the approaching vessel, which was now passing up the strait. The large vessel was discovered lying to, and three boats apparently filled with armed men for the light glanced from many musket barrels and cutlasses, as the boats pulled silently and rapidly into the shore.

"A buccaneer chased by a cruiser!" he exclaimed. "Heaven grant she may be captured. There is a better chance of our escape than I looked for if victory side with the right."

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The schooner now approached so near the termination of the long rocky passage, that the voices on board reached his ears, with the sound of hasty feet upon her deck, the creaking of rigging, and the rushing of the water, as she ploughed it up before her. He watched her until she almost came under the cliffs, so that the tops of her masts were level with his eye, when she bore up into the basin at the base of the rock, and was laid with great skill alongside its perpendicular face. Loud voices of men mingled with fierce oaths and execrations, and groans of wounded men rose tumultuously from below.

"Ho, there! Gaspàr! The rock, ho!" shouted a stern voice "Are you asleep? bring the gun to bear upon the hindermost boat, and discharge it."

Gaspàr who had deserted his post for a moment, to witness the chase, sprung to the platform and swinging the piece round, levelled it, then rushing into the cave, and passing directly under the count, he seized a match lighted it at the distant lamp, and returning, applied the flaming rope to the loaded piece. A deafening report followed, and the nearest boat became at once a scene of confusion, while shrieks and loud voices filled the air.

"Bravely done, my good Gaspàr!" said a man who, ascending the rigging of the schooner, and stepping along the fore-top-sail-yard, sprung upon the terrace.

The count, as the figure of the stranger was relieved against the sky, thought he had never seen so commanding a person, so much muscular power united with such grace and activity.

"This must be Lafitte!" he exclaimed, mentally. The individual who attracted his attention turning at the moment, the moon shone full upon his face, displaying his fine aquiline features his dark eye, and brown cheek.

"It is indeed he! That face and form can belong to no other," said he mentally, drawing himself farther within the shadow of the rock, that he might observe, unseen, the movements of the buccaneers.

The pirate had hardly ascended to the platform before he was followed by a dozen of his crew, who, with astonishing rapidity, mounted the rigging after him, each man heavily armed, and many of them wild and fierce-looking men nearly as brown and as naked as savages.

"Ho, there below!" shouted their leader. "Bring the guns to bear on those boats, and rake them as they come up the passage."

The boats, one of which had evidently been struck by the shot from the gun fired by Gaspàr, rapidly advanced, although the one injured by the ball and which had taken the lead, was now laboriously pulling on last of all.

They had yet some distance to row directly in range of the gun on the platform, and exposed to the fire of the pirate's schooner, which was drawn up before it, presenting with her broadside facing the enemy, a formidable battery.

"Let them come within pistol shot!" exclaimed the leader, "then wait the word Aim every piece at the stern of each boat Powder and balls here, for this gun, charge her briskly, men! and with double shot Ho, the Gertrude!" he shouted, looking down upon the deck of his vessel "think you have men enough on board, Ricardo, to hold her if too hard pressed retreat and join us they are sending another boat from the brig we shall have enough to do be cool and firm, remember all of you, we fight at an advantage, and no man will forget he fights for his head."

"Fire, Carlos!" he cried in a loud voice after giving his orders, and disposing his men on different parts of the platform, and around the gun. "Sink that nearest boat, and you shall command the schooner."

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Half a dozen flashes gleamed above the rock, and the whole broadside of the schooner, which commanded the whole breadth of the channel, was discharged at once. As soon as a cloud of thick smoke which rolled up before the platform was b'own along the cliff the pirate bent an eager eye upon the boats, which, still to his astonishment, approached uninjured, and with renewed velocity.

"Holy devils! who aimed those guns," he shouted in a voice of thunder. By the God that made you, men! you shall rue such boy's play. Away from this gun!" he shouted, sweeping a circle around him with his cutlass as he sprung to the gun, and with a single hand, wheeled it to the verge and depressed it upon the leading boat. Then, snatching a match from the hand of one of his men, he applied it to the powder.

"Ha! blessed St. Antonio," he exclaimed, as a loud crash, and shouts, and yells, followed the report; and the smoke drifting away, he saw a score of men struggling in the water, and clinging to the oars and fragments of their shattered boat.

"Fire upon them, men," he shouted, "makey our pistols ring merrily one more broadside, Ricardo, and I forgive the last," he cried, with exultation in his voice and manner. But the other boats were too near for the large guns to bear upon them, as emerging from the straits, they rapidly approached, one on the quarter, and the other on the bows of the schooner. Those belonging to the last boat who were not shot in the head as they swam, were either picked up by the other boats, or gained the rocks on one side of the basin, or with uncooled daring, reached the schooner just as the remaining two boats struck her side.

With the courage of lions, the, till now, passive men, leaped from their boats, and poured over the vessel's side, in spite of the desperate struggles of the buccaneers, to hurl them over into the water. In a few seconds the deck of the schooner exhibited a scene of fearful carnage. The pirates were overpowered by the superior numbers of their opponents, and began to give way. Their chief who had his hand upon a stay, and was about descending to endeavour, to turn the tide of battle, witnessing the unequal contest, paused and shouted to them to mount, and leave the vessel to the enemy. All at once the rigging was alive with the pirates, who ascended, before their astonished foes, with often practised activity, and threw themselves from the yards upon the terrace.

"Up men, follow them!" cried the leader of the party who had boarded the vessel "never let American tars be outdone by those cowardly Spanish cut-throats!" and he sprung into the rigging as he spoke, rapidly followed by his band; and ascending, with reckless daring, he gained the topmast cross-trees, crossed the yard, cutlass in hand, and sprung upon the terrace into the midst of his foes, before his real character was discovered.

"Over with him!" cried a dozen voices. "Heave him into the sea!" and a host of cutlasses were brandished about his head. But he was so rapidly seconded by his men, who leaped from the yards upon the rock as fast as they could follow one another, that the pirates had not time to deal him a fatal blow, before each one found himself in mortal combat with an American sailor.

Long and bloody was the fight. Living men were hurled upon the deck of the vessel below with terrific violence, or into the deep flood beneath. Blood flowed like water, and the cries, groans, and shouts of the combatants rose wildly in the air, multiplied into a thousand echoes among the cliffs. The pirates numbered about fifty, and the force of the Americans was nearly equal. The deck of the vessel was deserted, save by a solitary figure crawling about; and wounded and slain men were locked in the deadly embrace in which they had fallen from the cliff, and limbs and bones were strewed in great numbers through the vessel. The fight raged fiercely directly in front of the cavern, and the pirates at last, hotly pressed, retreated to its mouth.

Here their leader, whose form the count had seen like the genius that directed the battle, whenever the fight raged hottest, whose voice of command and encouragement was heard above the din of the conflict, and whose arm carried death wherever it fell. Many of his men had fallen around him, yet he remained cool and undaunted; and collecting his followers about him, he slowly retreated down the terrace to the entrance of the cave.

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"Press him hard drive him to his den, my hearties!" shouted the officer who had first ascended the rigging, and who, through the whole conflict had fought with that daring and unabated energy for which American sailors are distinguished.

The terrace was strewed with the dead and dying; and Lafitte, with half the original number of his men, stood near the mouth of the cavern, fighting hand to hand with the officer, who had sought him out, like a tiger at bay.

The count had remained in his concealment a witness of the fight, until the retreat of the pirates towards the mouth of the cavern, just within which he stood. As they filled the entrance, full of alarm for Constanza, whom he had left in the grotto, he suddenly sprung from the elevated station upon which he stood during the fight, on to the floor of the cave, and flew towards its interior. But the noise he made alarmed the buccaneers, who turned and gazed upon his retreating figure with astonishment.

"We are surprised!" shouted several voices, and two or three of the pirates darted after him, and before he could pass round the angle in the passage, near which the lamp was suspended, he was compelled to turn upon his pursuers and defend his life. Two of the pirates assailed him at once, and he had only his pike to parry the blows of their cutlasses, when a thrust of his weapon through the sword arm of one of them caused him to drop his cutlass, which, with an exclamation of joy, the count seized, and rained blows upon his unwounded antagonist, whom he soon disabled. But before he could avail himself of this advantage, he was assailed by others of the band, who, on hearing the cry that they were taken in the rear, left the mouth of the cave, and turned their blades upon their new enemy.

The passage was narrow, scarcely admitting the wielding of their weapons with full effect. At this point the fight now became desperate. Driven into the cave by their opponents, and finding their way obstructed in the rear, the buccaneers fought like fiends. Five of them fell beneath the cutlass of the count, who, fearing the fatal consequences of their entrance to Constanza's safety, and aware that his own life also was at stake, and perhaps actuated by a desire to second the attack of the American sailors, fought with the power and effect of an armed phalanx in his single arm.

The American officer had fallen severely wounded before the vigorous attacks of the outlaw, and leaving the less distinguished of his antagonists to his men, the victor turned upon the daring stranger, who, single-handed, stood defending the narrow passage.

"Santo Diablo! whom have we here? Give back, men give back! he has sent enough of you to the devil;" and treading over the dead bodies of his men, who had fallen by the hand of the desperate Frenchman, he shouted, "Let me cross blades with this stranger," aiming, as he spoke, a blow at the head of the officer, which was parried and returned with the skill of a master of the weapon.

For several seconds their rapidly clashing weapons rung against each other, flashing fiercely in the light of the lamp suspended above their heads.

The count, weak from his former wounds, and bleeding from fresh ones, soon began to show signs of exhaustion. His opponent discovered this, and changing his mode of fighting, used all his skill to disarm him and take him prisoner.

"Surrender, sir it is madness to contend against such odds," cried the pirate. The only reply he received was a stroke from the count's cutlass, which nearly cleft the thick cap he wore through to his head. Enraged, the pirate raised his weapon, throwing all his muscular power into his arm for a decisive blow, when a wild shriek rang through the vault, and Constanza suddenly appeared before them with a terrified eye, her luxuriant tresses dishevelled and floating over her shoulders, and her mantle disarranged in her struggles to break away from her faithful attendant, who would have held her.

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The pirate started at the shriek and figure of the maiden, indistinctly seen in the obscurity of the cavern, and suddenly arrested his weapon, but too late to withhold the blow, which descended with half its original force upon the defenceless head of the count. He staggered and fell into the arms of Constanza, who, with an eye in which timidity had given place to resolution, caught his head upon her bosom, over which sprinkled the warm blood of her lover, and erecting her figure to its full height, with her disengaged arm, she drew a pistol from his belt, and levelled it at the heart of the buccaneer. The motion brought her brow under the full light of the lamp, and he, with an exclamation of surprise, as he recognized, in those full features, stamped with heroic energy and woman's self-devotion, the fair Castillian, for whom, but a few days before, he had made magnanimous sacrifice of his love.

"Doña Constanza! can it be!" he cried, in amazement. Then instantly changing his tone, he laid his hand upon his heart, and said, with a voice of emotion and humility, "Fire, lady! thus shall be expiated my crime!"

The pistol dropped from her hand "Lafitte!" she exclaimed, after an instant's silent surprise, during which doubt and confidence struggled within her bosom. "Oh, what have you done? This is your bloody deed. Help, help, or he will die in my arms!" and tearing her mantilla, she attempted to staunch the blood which flowed freely from a slight cut in his head.

"Forgive! forgive! lady!" cried the chief, springing to her assistance. "Leave this wounded stranger to me those shouts tell me the enemy are retreating. Go, señora, I will attend you; such a scene as this is not for your presence. Leave him to my care I see you feel an interest in him! that is enough for me—he shall be cared for as if he were a brother. Nay, nay," he added, suddenly changing countenance; "as if he were Constanza Velasquez," and he spoke the last words tenderly.

She resigned him to his arms, and cried earnestly,

"Bear him into the inner cave. The light, Juana!" and with eager footsteps she preceded the outlaw, who bore the wounded officer in his arms. Entering the cave originally occupied by the count, and directing him to be laid on the bamboo rushes in the niche, she kneeled beside him, and forgetful of the presence of the chief, seemed wholly absorbed in her wounded lover.

By the activity of Juana, the presence of mind and experience of the outlaw, and the angelic tenderness of the maiden all those attentions which his state required, were completed, and the count, who had not been wholly unconscious, although he betrayed his sense of consciousness only by an occasional writhing of his features, fell into a broken sleep. From the moment she kneeled by his couch, she had remained silent; but when the eyes of her lover were closed, she looked up into the face of Lafitte, who, after his services were no longer required, stood, with folded arms and a thoughtful brow, gazing in silence upon the scene.

"Señor Lafitte!" said the lady, "did you know of his capture?"

"No, lady, nor your own! I am surrounded with mystery. Why do I find you here? Why this interest in this wounded man?" he suddenly exclaimed, striking his forehead, "ah! can it be! it is ?"

"The Count D'Oyley of the French navy, Señor, to whom I am betrothed," she said, with feeling and dignity.

The face of the pirate changed, and a slight flush passed across his brow. But this momentary exhibition of feeling gave place to an expression of interest.

"Lady!" he said, with a slight embarrassment in his manner, "this officer shall be cared for. I regard him as a sacred trust! moreover, he is free from this moment! Tell me, lady, how you came to be once more a captive voluntarily to share a prison with him? Resolve this mystery, which I cannot fathom."

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

In a few words she related to him the incidents of her re-capture, and her conveyance to the cavern the expedition of her lover his capture their meeting in the cavern and their attempt to escape, just as his vessel was chased in by the American cruiser.

"Would to God, lady, you had both escaped, before I had again met you! But, adieu! Señora, I must leave you for the present," he exclaimed, as the report of the gun at the mouth of the cavern reverberated through the long passages of the grotto. "Where is Théodore, lady? I will send him to you."

"I know not, Señor, but perhaps he is near. He was sleeping in the outer apartment, by the door, when I left it. I thank you, Señor," she added, struck with the outlaw's delicacy, in proposing Théodore to watch over the count "Juana will call him happy youth! he has slept amid all this storm of death!"

A loud shout without, now called Lafitte away, after assuring her that she should be sacred from intrusion, and Constanza was left alone by the couch of her lover. Clasping her hands, she raised her full eyes to heaven, and remained several minutes: the pale lamp painting, with light and shade, her lovely face, lost in devotion. "Thy will, not mine, be done," she said aloud, with a voice of resignation, as she rose from her devotional attitude, and with a more cheerful brow and lighter heart, she turned and addressed her young attendant, who, with surprise pictured upon his countenance, was listening to the strange recital of the events of the night, which Juana, with characteristic volubility was detailing to him.

"Shame upon my drowsy eyes," said Théodore, with evident mortification in his manner, "You find me but a poor knight, lady. But who is this pale stranger?" he exclaimed, inquiringly, as his eye fell upon the handsome features of the wounded count.

"He is an officer of the French navy, the count D'Oyley. Théodore, you have heard me speak of him," she added, with a faint and sweet smile, "he is severely wounded; I fear I need your aid to nurse him."

The youth expressed his devotion to her slightest wish, and, placing himself near the sleeper, passed the succeeding hour in listening to the thrilling tale, told by the maiden, with an absorbing interest, that swallowed all time but the present moment.

CHAPTER XI.

"When, from sentiments of honour, and desire to act justly towards those over whom he may possess temporary power, a man renounces the cherished idols of his bosom, preferring their happiness, with the certain forfeiture of his own, he has achieved the greatest victory of which he is capable. A victory over himself.

Sherwood.

A COLLOQUIAL SCENE INTERIOR OF A BUCCANEER'S RENDEZVOUS SOLILOQUY, OR STRUGGLE BETWEEN HONOUR AND PASSIONS AN INTERRUPTION.

The morning broke upon the watches, and found them still by the bedside of the wounded officer. His wound had been rather a severe contusion, with the side of the pirate's cutlass, than a deep cut.

After passing the remainder of the night in feverish slumber, he awoke, as the hand of the maiden was gently parting the hair from his brow.

"Is it you, sweet one?" he said, with a faint smile the whole scene of the preceding night coming, at once, to his recollection! Have you been watching by me through the long hours of the night! How kind, Constanza! But

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speak!" he added, suddenly rising, "tell me where is my antagonist, the buccaneer, who wounded me? Did I not see you near me, when I fell? I have a half-consciousness of being caught by you. Devoted Constanza! was it not so? and was I not borne, by some one, back to this cave? Who was it? was he wounded? or 'looking with anxious affection into her face, "you, my dearest! were you hurt?" he continued, with feverish rapidity, as the various scenes he had passed through, came, indistinctly, and unconnected, to his mind.

"Nay, nay, dear Alphonse! I cannot reply to all your rapid questions. You must not rise so soon be quiet. There is no danger to you, or me!"

"But I am better, dearest!" he said, playing with a truant tress, which hung over her temples. "I am better! my sleep has been refreshing."

"But your wound?"

"It is but slight, although it must have been given with a good-will at the time; a little patch will make all sound as ever. But, my sweet Constanza, do not be alarmed! Who was the pirate that fought so fiercely? Ah!" he suddenly exclaimed, as his eye rested upon the slight form of young Théodore, who stood within the niche "whom have we here?"

"The youth, Théodore, of whom I spoke," she replied.

"Ah! I remember! Monsieur Théodore, pardon me, young sir! I owe you better courtesy! You have loaded me with a debt of gratitude.

"Speak of that at another time, Monsieur, your health requires silence and repose," replied the youth, remarking the mixture of indecision and energy in his manner and language, which he attributed to the fever of his wound.

"Not so, my good youth. I must thank you now. Yet, I know not how! You are a sailor," he continued, after a moment's thought; "will you take a midshipman's berth on board the Sultan?"

"I thank you, but I need no reward for performing my duty, if I have deserved any. I have sufficiently received it, by knowing that I have been instrumental in adding to this kind lady's happiness. A kind word from her lips is more than I dare hope to ask!" he added, with a blushing brow.

"You are modest, for a protégé of Lafitte, fair youth," he replied, smilingly, "but this lady will not only give you words of kindness, I think, but her white hand to kiss! will you not, Constanza? and this, as you hint, were honour enough, for belted knight in days of Charlemagne."

Constanza, with a sweet smile, presented her hand to the youth, who, bending over it with an air of devout respect, pressed his lips lightly to the taper fingers.

At this instant a foot-fall was heard, echoing through the chamber Constanza had occupied, and she had hardly said

"It is Lafitte," when the outlaw appeared at the breach in the stalactic drapery of the cave, and before passing into the apartment, gazed silently for a few seconds upon the group.

When Lafitte left the lovers, after the count had fallen asleep, he traversed the long passage with a rapid tread and an aching heart. He found the terrace strewed with dead and dying; several of his men leaning with an air of fatigue against the sides of the cliff, or upon the cannon, which had just been fired at the retreating Americans, who, driven over the verge, sprung into the water, or slid down the stays to the deck, with the loss of more than

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

half their number, besides two wounded officers, one of whom they bore from the deck into the boat, severely hurt. Then with rapidity they pulled rapidly down the passage to their vessel.

"Ho, Carlos! below there!" he shouted.

"Carlos es muerte!" said faintly a wounded pirate, who rested on his cutlass.

"Ha! dead! Ho, the deck there fire upon that boat! Do you mean to let them man the brig again and blockade us? Fire!"

"No es possible, señor," cried one from the schooner. "Los Americans have spike all de gun."

"Spiked the guns! Maldicho! how was that done, Matéo?"

"No se, señor! no es possible to tell. I hear de click, click, five six time, when one sailor run over de gun to de boat; and when I put de prime ob de horn in de hole, dere was no hole dere, all fill up with big rusty nail."

"Spiked, ha! well, let them go they will be glad enough to get out of this and show the old rock the stern of their brig," said he, quietly.

After Lafitte, with much humanity, had attended to the wounded, and given orders for the disposal of the dead, who numbered seventeen of the Americans, and more than twenty of the buccaneers, he placed the watch for the remainder of the night, and then, last of all, attended to his own wounds, which, though not severe, were numerous. He entered the cavern, and passing the spot which the count had defended, and from which the bodies had been removed, he traversed the passage for a few yards, and then turned into one of those recesses which the fugitives had supported; niches, which opened before him as he advanced, increasing in height and breadth. Although perfectly dark, he traversed this new avenue with an unfaltering footstep, and like one familiar with its details.

About seventy paces from the main passage, he came into a small vaulted apartment, lighted fitfully by the flickering flame of an expiring fire, which had been kindled near the centre against a fragment of rock which had fallen from the side of the grotto, and rolled into the middle of the floor. Several chests, such as seamen use to contain their apparel, rude camp stools, a round polished table, with a marble top, piles of cordage, rolls of canvass, and heaps of old sails, with many other articles necessary to the repair and preservation of vessels, filled the sides of the apartment.

On a projecting shelf, at the extremity of the cave, stood a costly pier-glass, the height of a man, with radii diverging from a point near the centre, as if a bullet had shattered it. One of the chests, the lid of which was up, displayed a number of cutlasses and pistols, and a pyramid of shot, adapted to the calibre of the piece of ordnance at the mouth of the cave, was piled at one end of it, and laid against the wall, tied up like faggots, were several bundles of pikes. In a distant niche, placed one upon another, were several kegs, half seen indistinctly in the obscurity, covered by a tarpaulin, which had been hastily displaced, and branded "poudre à canon."

A long table, of that construction best adapted to a ship's cabin, extended nearly across the cave, about half way between the fire and the sides, which were perfectly smooth and black, and no where incrusted with stalactite.

An upturned bench lay near, and parallel with the table, upon which stood, in bacchanalian confusion, bottles of French wines, glasses, deep plates, and tureens, with vessels for preparing coffee. It was without a cloth, wet with spilled wine, and strewed with fish bones, and fragments of bread and meat.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

Mattresses lay about the floor, and one or two hammocks were swung across from side to side. at the left hand of the shattered mirror was a recess, terminating in a heavy door, apparently constructed of the plank of a ship, as circular apertures once filled with spikes, and the traces of other adaptation of the material than the present, sufficiently indicated.

This part of the grotto was evidently appropriated by the buccaneers as the armory, store-room, and hall of feasting and carousing.

It was silent and deserted as the outlaw entered, except by the ungainly figure of his slave, Cudjoe, who lay with his naked feet to the fire, his head closely wrapped in a soiled blanket, fast asleep, preferring the embraces of Somnus to those of Mars, from which he had escaped at the commencement of the conflict.

Lafitte gazed upon the scene around him with a bitter smile.

"And this," he said, with a cloudy brow, after standing a while in silence, "this is my abode! the outlaw's home! this my domestic hearth this my social board for the plaudits of such as I command for the boast of a beast like this slave! Is it for this I live! alas, I have lived in vain! all, all in vain!" and he paced the cave with an agitated step, while hatred for his present life, aspirations for an honourable career, and love for the Castilian maiden, filled his mind with conflicting emotions.

"She is in my power once more," he hoarsely whispered; "have I not made sufficient sacrifice in letting her once depart! Is my passion again to be immolated upon the altar of self-denial! Yet I may not use the power I possess. I love her and only to honourable love shall she be sued! But will she listen! Listen! am I mad listen with her hand upon the brow, and kneeling beside the couch of her betrothed husband! Success is now doubly walled up against me. But if he die! ah, if he die! as he may as he must!" he added with a ringing voice, and starting at the guilty thoughts which stirred his bosom; but suddenly checking himself, he continued, in a lower tone "No, no, no! I am sick of crime! back, back, tempter I will win her fairly. Am I indeed so base as to wish this maiden ill to think of destroying so much happiness, when I can make it bliss! If he should not live then! then, perhaps! but no oh, God, no!--have I not stricken the blow—and will she place her hand in his, red with her lover's blood? Will she give her heart to be healed by him who broke it? But time, perhaps, might mitigate and veil over the bitter memory of the past and then," and his step became more elastic, and his brow clear as he spoke, but as suddenly changed again. "Alas! there is no hope for me! she never never can love me! —her spirit is too pure to mingle with mine. It is in vain for me to hope yet I must love her love her for ever! But I will school myself to think of her without passion worship her as a lovely incarnation of the Virgin!"

For an hour he paced the grotto, struggling with his passion, which, one moment gaining the ascendancy, filled his mind with dark and guilty purposes; but immediately yielding to the dictates of honour, and the native generosity of his character, he would picture forth scenes of happiness for her and her lover in the vista of the future. His step was irregular, his features worked convulsively, his brow was bent with the violence of the struggle.

"I will I will!" he at length said, suddenly stopping. "She shall respect if she cannot love me only with gratitude shall she remember Lafitte! They shall both be free, and this very day will I myself take them to Port-au-Prince. If I cannot make my own happiness, I will not mar theirs nay, I will make it I will teach my passion this step;" and his voice became calmer as he spoke. "As I now feel," he continued, "I think I could place her hand within his, and bid Heaven bless them. Yes, then I could seek an early death on the battle-field, or in the seclusion of a monastery atone for my past life by penance and prayer. Penance and prayer!" he repeated, with an altered voice, while a disdainful expression dwelt upon his lip, as though he had given utterance to thoughts of which he became at once ashamed. "Yes beads and rosaries! genuflexions and ablutions, fasts and confessions! cowl and gown! truly these would well become me! Yet, for all that, it may yet be to what my coward heart will drive me. Nevertheless, this lady shall go free, whatever shall be my future fate."

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He then threw himself upon one of the rude couches, and bringing the butt of his pistols round to the ready grasp of his hand, he sought in the oblivion of sleep, to forget himself.

Sleep! blessing both of the innocent and guilty! With thy presence thou visitest like the rain, both the just and the unjust. Angel of charity, messenger from on high, sent down to shorten half the weary pilgrimage of life! Sister of mercy the curse of Eden would have been unmixed without thee. Thou hast shared with us the heavy load, and cooled the sweating brow, and for us borne half the burden and heat of the long day of existence!

He awoke at dawn refreshed, and with a calmer breast. Low voices struck his ear, from beyond the door within the recess. He listened a moment in surprise, and then rising quickly he unlocked the door, and entered the apartment once occupied by Constanza.

The canopy and other preparations made by the order and attention of Théodore for her comfort, caught his eye for all parts of the cave was now visible by the daylight, let in from the crevices and apertures in the roof. His rapid glance also detected the breach made by the count, and he at once understood the object of it; and as he was advancing to examine it, the voices of the party in the adjoining chamber became distinct.

"Ha! my captive lover is better it seems," he exclaimed as the words struck his ear. "But, he has made a soldier's breach through this wall. Constanza then was placed here by that prosy fool Sebastiano; and thick-skulled, Dutch Getzendanner must place his prisoner within ear-shot. It is said there is no separating true lovers, and here is most visible proof of it. What have we here, Cielos! the maiden's sparkling crucifix, dropped in her flight," he suddenly added, eagerly seizing the jewel which caught his eye; "This next my heart forever!" he fervently exclaimed, pressing it to his lips "this shall be twice worshipped I devote it to heaven, and love," and he hung it around his neck by its chain, concealing the cross in his bosom.

"Protégé of Lafitte!" he repeated with bitter emphasis, as he overheard the words of D'Oyley. "Monsieur Le Compte thinks there can come nothing good out of Nazareth! Ha! how cavalierly he gives away the lady's hand to the boy's lip pity that so fair a scene should be interrupted."

"Señora, buenos dias tenga vm. Monsieur Compte, I trust you are much better. Théodore, welcome back again!" and as he entered the chamber, he grasped the hand of the boy with a smile of pleasure bowed coldly to the count, who was sitting on his couch of bamboo-rushes in the niche, and with an air of profound respect, bent low to the maiden.

"Pardon this intrusion, Señora, I knew not of this passage between the rooms, it being made since my last visit to our rendezvous, probably for greater facilities of intercourse," and he smiled meaningly, "and hearing voices, I came to learn from whence they proceeded."

"Monsieur," he continued "I am happy to see you so far recovered from your wounds. You are at liberty to depart, when you are well enough to be removed."

"I thank you, Monsieur Lafitte," replied the count, courteously, "My wound was but trifling. I am able to move; but, monsieur, permit me to say, how profoundly I feel your kindness extended to this lady!"

"Enough, count, I followed my own feelings. It is not for you to thank me," said he sternly "speak of your departure."

"If I am at liberty, as you say, I would leave at once. Have you any news of my schooner? you have I presume heard the particulars of my capture?"

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"Yes, Monsieur, in a few words from Gaspàr of your vessel, I have not heard. I will take you to Port au Prince, in my schooner as soon as she undergoes some repairs. She will be ready by the morning."

"Thank you, Monsieur; and this lady?"

"Shall accompany you, sir!" he replied in a deep voice, that drew the eye of the count upon his face, which reflected the agitation of his mind, produced by the question, and the associations which it called up.

"Sacre!" exclaimed the count, suspicious of the cause of Lafitte's emotion, suddenly flashing across his mind.

"Are you in pain, Alphonse?" inquired Constanza, with a changing cheek, as she remarked his exciting manner.

"No! yes! great!" and he laid his hand upon his breast.

Lafitte smiled scornfully, and he glanced at the officer with an expression of dislike. After a few moments, vexed at the silence of Constanza, who had not raised her eyes from her lover's face, since he entered, he left the cave accompanied by Theodore, whom he took with him, to ascertain more particularly than he had learned from Gaspàr, the details of their capture, and the events succeeding it.

While the pirate chief neglected nothing that could contribute to the comfort of Constanza, and the count, he refrained from visiting them during the day, resolved to have no farther communication with the lovely Castillian, lest his resoluton should forsake him and under the influence of passion, increased by the presence of the maiden, he should throw off all his honourable resolves for her happiness the consequences of which he dare not contemplate.

The struggle in hiw own mind was prolonged, and severe. At one moment he was ready to rush into her presence, throw himself at her feet, and plead his deep, unconquerable love at another moment he would feed upon the reflection, that she was in his power, and he resolved that he would not let her go. Again the wild idea of challenging the count to single combat, or the more guilty one of exposing him in his wounded state to die, would by turns fire his bosom. The exclamation of the count, which he had attributed to sudden pain, repeatedly occurred to him, and he curled his lip contemptuously as he said mentally,

"He is jealous of me. The proud Frenchman fears Lafitte may take a fancy to have so fair a prot égée; hatred for him could almost tempt me to detain this lovely flower, did I not love her so well as I too truly do did I not know that her happiness, which alone I seek, is bound up in him. Dios! he has a noble presence, and is a man a lady might well love yet I love her too well for this," he added with feeling. "The jealous count should rather thank my love for the lady's safety, than show his jealousy. If I loved her not, as I never loved woman Ha, a footstep! Who goes there? It is but fancy, or but a bat," he said as a slight noise, which he thought a footstep, at the extremity of the passage struck his ear. "But alas," he continued "Gertrude I have loved thee, thou art not forgotten. Well he shall have her" he hastily added, and God help me, he shall have her from my hand and I will have the approval of my conscience, for at least one disinterested act. To-morrow they go! and as he spoke he swung himself from the terrace on to the rigging of his vessel, and descending to the deck, forwarded by his presence, the repairs and preparations for sailing early on the morning of the coming day.

CHAPTER XII.

"The same kind, though not degree, of genius is as necessary to plan and direct the escape of an individual, from a perilous situation, as of an army."

Lamb.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Wine and wassail have taken more strong places than gun or steel."

Chesterfield.

PLAN OF ESCAPE JUANA AND THE GUARDS A STRATAGEM.

The stars burned like lamps in the clear, Indian skies. The air was motionless, and broken only by some alarmed bird fluttering chirpingly from tree to tree, or the suppressed moan of the surge profound silence reigned without and within the deep chambers of the grotto.

The guard, posted rather to give the alarm when vessels approached the shore, than to guard the prisoners, paced slowly along the terrace in front of the cavern, with his cutlass resting carelessly upon his left arm. The deck of the schooner below him was covered with sleepers, who, after the fatigues of the day, had thrown themselves upon it, in various positions. The remainder of the outlaw's crew were sleeping in the magazine of the cave, where Lafitte had passed the preceding night.

The outlaw himself, after promenading the passage in which we left him, a long time in troubled thought, threw himself upon the cold pavement, and also slept; but his dreams were of his lovely captive.

He was kneeling before an altar in a gloomy and gorgeous temple, beside a veiled female. A priest, in rich robes, was in the act of pronouncing a blessing over them. He was about to press her to his heart, when she suddenly changed to the bleeding corse of his young brother. He cried with horror and awoke.

Again he dreamed Constanza was struggling in the sea. He sprang into the flood to save her, when a gigantic monster, with large, beautiful eyes a knife buried in his bosom, and blood oozing from his temples, caught her from his grasp, and conveyed her from his sight, into the depths of the ocean. With a convulsed frame, he started from his dream.

A third time he slept. He was in the cathedral of New Orleans, and about to be united to Constanza, who stood beside him, veiled in white. She was just parting her lips to pronounce the solemn words which should unite their destinies forever, when the priest removed his mask, cast off his robes, and clasped her in his arms. It was the Count D'Oyley.

In the mean time, the count was in the chamber, lighted by a single lamp, where he had been borne the preceding night; but he slept not. Constanza, with her head resting upon his shoulder, slumbered peacefully, and her dreams were all of happiness.

"Constanza, my love! awake!" said her lover, gently touching her closed eyes.

He had long been engaged in ruminating upon his condition, upon the character of Lafitte, and the probability that he would be in the same mind in the morning, with regard to their liberation.

The more he reflected, the greater his doubts became, and when he recalled, with a feeling of apprehension and indignation, the language, tone, and manner, of the outlaw, in his interview with him in the morning, the detached sentences he had overheard when his footsteps interrupted his soliloquy, his confidence in his promises failed, and he at once resolved to make his escape before day; fearing even to remain through the night, subject to the caprice of his captor.

"Awake, love!" he said, softly, as he came to this determination.

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"What, Alphonse, is it you? Are there more trials for me?" and she looked up into his face, with her eloquent eyes, suddenly suffused with tears, and clinging to his arm, with nervous apprehension.

"No, my Constanza I think we may escape from this place I dare not trust Captain Lafitte's firmness till the morning."

"Oh, have you fresh cause for alarm or suspicion? Tell me! Leave me not in suspense;" and she looked with an alarmed manner into his face.

"No, love! but I fear he may change his mind, he is an impulsive being, and if we can escape, it will not be prudent to remain till morning."

"You have heard something, dear Alphonse! I know you have, that leads you to this sudden step, and you are still so weak oh, tell me all!" she added, earnestly "am I not worthy of your confidence."

"All, all confidence, dearest! Your suspicions are true! Not long since, when I walked along the passage to breathe the cooler air, at the mouth of the cave, I heard the voice of Lafitte, as you tell me is his habit, in soliloquy. Thinking I might learn something which in our situation, could be improved to advantage, I cautiously approached the gallery, along which he was pacing backwards and forwards, and heard sufficient to alarm me for your safety and my own, and to lead me to place but slight confidence in his promise, to take us to Port-au-Prince to-morrow, will you not second me, dearest?"

"Can we escape, Alphonse? and why should we fear to trust Lafitte? He is impulsive, it is true, but would not, I think, err intentionally, or deceive us. But I will go with you, dearest! never will I be separated from you again! Whom do I love or have to love or care for me, but you, my Alphonse! Oh, let us go: he may, indeed, be in another mood in the morning," she added, hastily, as some part of his first interview with her flashed on her mind, "Oh, I fear him much. I will go with you, let us hasten but how?"

"There was a felucca at the foot of the rock, which I saw, as I was brought in, a prisoner, containing a small mast. It was lying opposite the long passage. If we can gain this boat, unperceived, in an hour we will be beyond pursuit, and, with a light breeze, by to-morrow evening, be able to reach Port-au-Prince Now let us arrange our plan."

"Shall I waken Juana?"

"You would best, she may assist us materially."

The slave, who was asleep in the extremity of the chamber, was roused, with difficulty, from her heavy and dreamless sleep, by the count, who was now excited and cheerful, with the prospect of being soon far from the presence and power of one whom he suspected to be his rival, and from whom, consequently, he had every thing to fear. Besides his desire for personal liberty, he experienced the intensest anxiety for the safety and happiness of Constanza, whose health and mind, already affected by what she had passed through, he feared would be materially injured, if she should be again exposed to exciting scenes, or, in the morning, meet with disappointment.

He was, therefore, desirous of removing her, at once, to a place of security and quietude.

The old slave was informed of their project, to which she listened with attention and pleasure.

"Old Juana tink, massa Doly better wait till morning come, 'caus if massa Lafitte sa' he let lily lady and buckra gemman go free dey sure go as Juana 'tan here but den, if de lily Missy 'fraid Juana jess go 'long wid her."

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Thank you, Juana," said Constanza, "we find, that if escape is possible, we had best leave the cave to-night. In the morning, perhaps, the crew of the vessel might, as they often do, oppose his commands, and we should then be lost."

"Juan' know dat, well 'nough! How tink you get out, massa Doly? de guard 'tan at de mouf. de schooner down in de basin, full of men Its mighty diffikil to get way Massa Doly," she said, shaking her head, impressively.

"Speak low, Juana," said the count. "Listen!" we have thought of this plan. You have a husband on the schooner, I am told. Pass the guard, and say you wish to take some articles of clothing to him he will permit it this carpet, and these provisions, to place in the boat, shall pass as the clothing descend to the vessel let the watch on deck see you speak to him, but do not go below take your opportunity, and drop the articles into the felucca, or the schooner's boat, if you find it alongside again speak to the watch, and ply him with this spirit which I give you, tell him you wish to return for something, and that master Théodore may come back with you. Leave the impression, that is, make him believe, that you will soon be there, with Théodore. Tell the guard the same, and do not forget to ply the bottle freely. Then, if you can find a cap and cloak, belonging to Theodore, bring it with you here, and I will then tell you further our plans. Do you understand what I have said?"

"Is, massa Doly, ol' Juana no fool! She know jiss how to do. Leave Juana to herself."

Taking the flask of spirits, which had been left by the side of the invalid, and muttering, "Juana no de root put in dis, if massa Doly want make sleep come," the old African disappeared in the darkness of the passage. In a few moments her footsteps died away, and the lovers, in silence and expectation, awaited her return.

Half-way through the cave she turned into a niche, in which were many cooking utensils, and, taking a bundle of dry leaves and roots, from an aperture, she dropped a portion in the flask, and pursued her way to the mouth of the grotto.

"Who is there?" said the guard, as the dark form of the old slave emerged from the gloom of the cavern.

"What for you speak so loud and cross, Gil? nobody but ol' nigger don't be frighten."

"Diablo! Juana, you are ugly enough to frighten the devil" he replied with a loud laugh, "what are you crawling about for this time of night?"

"I want to see my ol' husband an' car' dese tings to him You know Gil--I've been among wid dis purty lilly lady, dis more dan week."

"Ah, ha, the Castillian," said Gil with a smile, "she is pretty, Juana you two together must very well personate light and darkness. But where is the lady that our wise captain loves so well as to give his own share of booty for her ransom?— Sancta Maria! but he must have taken a vow of chastity."

"You mity quisitive Gil--such as you no more shouldnt open your two ugly eye, to look at such a lady dan notin' at all."

"Ho now Juana you jealous," he replied tapping her on the cheek "But what have you in that flask the pure Jamaica or purer Santa Crux this goes to old blubber lip, the steward, I will wager, I must take a sip to see if it is not too hot for the old boy's stomach. You must be tender of your better half in his old age, Juana. Ha peh! peh! but this is made of the true grape. Hold, good Juana! don't be in haste. Let old Crisp sleep, he would rather rest his venerable limbs now, than smack his lips over the best quart of aquardiente he ever stole from the captain's cask"

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"Dere Gil, you hab drink 'nough" she cried interrupting him and seizing the flask "now jess hol' dis tight," she said walking out on a broad plank extending from the terrace to the cross trees of the schooner.

Assisted by Gil the old woman carefully descended the shrouds to the deck, which was strewn with the wearied and sleeping crew.

The watch drowsily leaned against the binnacle with a half-smoked and fireless segar in his lips; but as she approached him, he started when he discovered her by the light of a lantern, which hung in the companion-way.

"Juana, my beauty, are you picking the men's pockets of their spare reals? come here and let me talk with you!"

"Diego, how you do it long time I seen you how is my Crisp?"

"Why, just like yourself, Juana; he grows handsomer as they call the change in Congo, that is, blacker every day."

"Well I'm glad to know dat I'se come aboard to see him How long you been on watch, Diego?"

"It is four bells since, and now you've come it's five, my beautiful girl," he replied, with mock-gallantry.

"Now jess stop wid dat nonsense, Diego; you're always flattering me I'se got ol' and wrinkly now."

"Yet you've broken many a black lover's heart in your day when you lived in Louisiana; is it not so, bel' Juana?"

"I can't stop talk now Diego," said she complacently, "have you been two hours on watch? and no drink, noffin all time I dare say."

"You say most truly and sadly, good Juana," he replied, "Since Matéo got drunk on watch, and let a barge full of men come aboard of us, there's no more drinking."

"Juana know dat, Diego, well 'nough, and she just bring some fin to keep the dew from soaking de heart. I don't forget when you nurse my Crisp, when he got he head broke. Dere, Diego take two, tree swallow, and gib it back to me."

"Miraculo; my queen of clubs," he replied, gaily, "but you are a goddess! well this is good madre de dios! where got you such double distilled nectar? but never mind where it come from so that we know where it goes to," he added, placing the mouth of the flask to his own, and quaffing most generous draughts. "Bah, but you are a jewel, Juana. What's that you cast in the boat?" he added suddenly, and looking over the side.

"Only two, tree tings belong to Crisp. I don't like go below, and stubr dem sleep, dere, you tell him in de mornin', his close dere in de boat. Is massa Thèodore 'board?"

"No, it is his next watch too he'll not be down in time, I fear."

"Neber you fear, Diego, I'll bring him 'long. I'm comin down by and by to bring Crisp he jacket, an I'll wake him, and he'll come wid me. Just gib me one of his cap and him watch coat." Diego readily brought them, and said,

"Well, Juana, you are a nice girl, stay, let me take another sip at that flask. I would kiss you, Juana, for this," he added, taking the flask from his lips with a sigh; "but the spirit on my breath might give offence. I never kiss, fair Juana, after taking wine, without first smoking the flavour off with genuine Habana."

"Good bye, Diego, I must go; you al'ays mity 'ticular gemman," she replied, turning to go.

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"Adios, Juana, my jetty angel! such spiritual visits as your's are always welcome to Diego."

The old slave, satisfied that she had given him enough to intoxicate him, after carefully threading her way through the sleeping crew, slowly ascended the shrouds; while Diego, already excited by his frequent and potent draughts at the mouth of the flask, began to sing a Spanish bacchanalian song, parodied from Moreto, by some Castilian Lyceus, commencing

Hombres, vino, me mata Vino es mi muerta y mi vida Yo, de beber vino, vivo Y muero, por beber vino. La ra la, la ra la, la.

"Gil, you gone sleep! fy, Gil! guard go sleep on pos'," said she, stepping on to the terrace, approaching and shaking him, as he leaned against the face of the rock.

"Dimonios! what, old black witch?" he grumbled, ill-humouredly; "gi give me my aq a aquardiente to, diablo! but it is good," he continued, as he took another draught.

"You hab 'nuff; you drunk now, Gil?" she said inquiringly, wishing to ascertain how far her stratagem had taken effect.

"Give me more, yo you hag mor more, or I'll bl blow (hiccough) you in t-t-the (hiccough) s-sea hic, do hic do you hear hugh!" and he drew a pistol from his belt, and the expression of his face became ferocious.

"Dere, take little sip more, Gil dere, 'nuff, now;" and she snatched the bottle from him, at the same time dexterously spilling a part of its contents over the priming of both pistols.

"Curse you, Sathan's dam!" he quickly exclaimed; "is that the way you use good liq liquor." Then, after a pause, he added, incoherently, "how thick the sta stars are, and what other schoon schooner's lying side the Gertrude miraculo! Ju Juana you are de d double (hiccough) gi gi give me one of them flasks in your ha hand," and the intoxicated guard, no longer able to articulate distinctly, or support himself against the wall, slipped gradually from his upright position, and lay upon his side with his cheek resting upon the cold stone.

Satisfied with the manner in which she had obeyed her instructions, the slave hastened into the grotto, where the count and Constanza were waiting her return with apprehension and anxiety.

END OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER XIII.

"As no privation is so great as the loss of personal liberty, so no enjoyment is so great as its restoration."

President Edwards.

Count D'Oyley and Constanza an alarm upon the sea hope brightens.

Shortly after Juana entered the cavern, two figures, one slight and boyish, the other taller and stouter, came forth from the cave, passed with a hasty and suspicious tread by the drunken guard, whose pistols they secured, and crossed carefully the plank bridge over which the taller, who was in female apparel, carefully assisted the lighter, who wore a cap and pea-jacket.

On gaining the shrouds, the apparent female passed her arm around the waist of the boy, and supported his

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unsteady and unpractised footsteps down the descent to the deck.

"Now dearest Constanza, all your energy and presence of mind is necessary. There stands the watch with his head leaning upon the quarter rail, holding to a stay. He is not wholly intoxicated, but we must pass him as Juana and Théodore; now move lightly and firmly."

"Va usted a los infiérnos!" muttered one of the sleepers, as the count's foot pressed heavily upon his hand.

Constanza had the presence of mind not to scream, when the disturbed sleeper turned over upon his hard bed, and grumblingly fell asleep again.

"Who are you, there? Carramba! Is it you Juana? Por amor de dios! but that agua de vita of yours JuJuana my beauty, has made the schoo—schooner, and the bay, and the land, go rou—round in a merry reel," he said, slowly and thickly articulating "Fa la rá la ra lá, lá! But who is that Juana?" he said, suddenly stopping in the midst of a drunken pirouette. "Oh, I see! Señor Théodore. Your humble servant; I kiss my hand to you. It is your next watch Señor Théodore, your watch! Do you take Señor Théodore? I b—believe I am drunk or getting so but it's all owing to to that beauty there she fascinated me master Théodore, she fascinated me. There sweet Juana, hold up your pretty face, let me banquet on it. So, gi—give me a small sip more, one si—sip at that fl—flask; what kills may cure, yoyou know, Señor Théodore!"

The disguised count handed him the bottle, and while he was diligently engaged in quaffing its contents, he handed Constanza over the side of the schooner into the boat, and immediately followed himself.

"Ho! wh—where are you go—going, Juana? oh! I, I see, to get the clothe—clothes. Well, I'll take them up take them up," and as he made an attempt to reach over the quarter—railing, he lost his equilibrium, and staggering backward, fell across the companion—way, where he lay nearly insensible.

"Now, Constanza, dearest," said the count, "sit perfectly still. Are you alarmed? have you all firmness?"

"Perfect perfect, Alphonse," she whispered, "I can assist, if you require it."

"No no, dearest, brave girl! I shall need only your mental energies."

Cutting with a cutlass which he had taken from the deck, the painter, or rope which secured the boat to the schooner, he cautiously, and without noise, shoved off from her. Then seizing an oar, five or six of which besides a mast with a single sail lay along the thwarts, he wrapped a portion of the carpet which he severed for the purpose, around it, and placing it in the rowlock or cavity fitted for its reception in the stern, gently as though he plied a glass oar, he turned the head of the boat, and impelled her, by sculling, across the basin to the entrance of the rock—bound passage which communicated with the open sea.

Constanza, with a fluttering pulse but courageous heart, sat silently by him. Not a word was spoken, and not a sound was heard around them. Even the motion of the blade of his oar as it divided the water, was noiseless, and the ripple under the stem scarcely reached her ear.

They had now entered the passage, and with more boldness and assurance the count urged forward his little bark. Their bosoms began to swell with hope, as the schooner, the mouth of the cave, and the tall cliff gradually faded in the distance; when suddenly, the loud voice of one giving the alarm as they thought, fell upon their ears with fearful distinctness, curdling the current of life in the bosom of the maiden, while a cold thrill passed over the heart of her lover.

"We are missed," said the count incited to greater exertion, "but the chances are on our side."

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With a seaman's skill he worked the single oar, and urged the boat through the water with increasing rapidity.

But a single voice had yet been heard by them, and listening, they recognized the air of a song, which some one Diego, as they judged from the sound of the voice, was singing in a wild air "The winds are fair far on the main, The waves are dashing free, Heave, comrades, heave the anchor in, The order is "To sea!" Square broad the yards, trim down the sail, We'll bowl along before the gale! Heave O! heave O! ye ho! What life, so stirring, free as ours? Where'er we list, we roam: The broad, blue sea this gallant bark Our heritage our home. The white surge dashes from our bow, As fleet and far the waves we plough. Heave O! heave O! ye ho! Our bold and daring deeds resound In many a distant clime; Minstrels and gray-beard sires shall tell Our fame in after time When those who cavil at our sway, Forgotten, shall have passed away. Heave O! heave O! ye ho! Though landsmen frown upon our deeds, And deem us "men of fear," Bright-eyed signoras bend with smiles Our bold exploits to hear. Our life is in their smiles the brave They love, but scorn the coward, slave! Heave O! heave O! ye ho! We lack not gold a princess' dower Each brave heart may command; We lack not wine we've vintage rare From many a sunny land. No wants have we no cares we know! We're proud to call the world our foe! Heave O! heave O! ye ho! Here's lady's love bright gold and wine, Freedom from all control; Here's dastard's hate here's all that loves The free and fearless soul. Then bring the ruby wine fill high, Drain to the chief your goblets dry. Heave O! heave O! ye ho!"

"It is but that drunken watch," he said, as he listened to the last notes of the song dying away in the distance, "he has recovered from his momentary stupor, and is now giving vent to his excitement in a bacchanalian song. Would to heaven he had been as much of the animal as the guard. Be not alarmed dear Constanza," he continued, stooping to kiss her brow, "do not fear; there is no real danger;" and he still swayed vigorously to the oar.

"But may not Lafitte, who is so rigid in his exactions of duty, if he is awakened by this man, come to learn the cause and discover us? Heaven forbid! Holy Maria bless us, and aid us with thy presence!" and she sought her crucifix to press it to her lips, as she lifted her heart in devotion.

"Oh! Alphonse I have lost my crucifix, my mother's dying gift;" she exclaimed, alarmed, "my long cherished medium of communication with heaven! Oh! have you it?"

"No, dearest, you have probably dropped it."

"My sainted mother! it is an augury of evil. Holy virgin protect me!" and tears filled the eyes of the lovely petitioner, as with locked hands she gazed upwards.

"Calm your feelings, sweetest," he said cheerfully, "we shall soon be free. See! they pursue us not. Listen! the voice of the singer is scarcely heard; and look about you! we are just at the mouth of the passage with the open sea before us, and Port au Prince but a few leagues to leeward. Courage my brave Constanza," he added encouragingly. "Now we are out of the pass I feel the sea breeze already upon my cheek. See how it is playing with your hair. No, do not fear; do you see that bright burning star, deep set in the heavens, directly above us? That star, my love, I have always regarded as the star of my destiny whenever that is in the ascendant I am successful. Be happy, for with that eye of light open above us, we have nothing to fear.

"Feel the wind! how refreshing it comes from the sea! Now Constanza we will hoist our sail; and the gull shall not skim the water with a swifter wing than our little bark."

He raised the mast, and hoisted the little latteen sail, which swelling and distending as it caught the breeze, instantly depressed the boat down to one side, and impelled her rapidly over the water. Under the influence of this new agent, it sprung lightly forward, skipping from wave to wave and dashing their broken crests from her bows.

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The count who had taken his seat by the side of Constanza now that the boat was urged forward by the wind was congratulating her upon their escape.

She silently pressed his hand, and kept her eyes fixed steadily on the shore.

"Did you see that light?" she said, suddenly clinging to his arm.

The count, who was intent upon his duty of governing the boat, whose head he turned towards the entrance of St. Marc's channel in the direction of Port au Prince, where he expected to find his frigate, turned and saw the edge of the moon just appearing above the distant cliff and broken into apparent flame by the woods over which it was rising.

"No no, sweetest, it is the moon; a second augury for good. It smiles upon our departure. See now, as she ascends the skies, how she flings her silvery scarf out upon the waters."

"No no, not that, it was a flash. Hark! did you hear that?" she exclaimed, as the heavy report of a gun came booming over the sea.

"It is indeed a gun, and fired from the schooner; but be not alarmed, they can hardly reach us."

"Hark! what whizzing, rushing sound is that over our heads?"

"A bird, merely," said the count quietly; and then added to himself, "That shot was well aimed. Courage my dearest, this beautiful boat was built for sailing. If this wind holds, we shall make Cape St. Marc by sunrise, and then if we are pursued, which I doubt, we can run into the town but if not, we will continue on to Port au Prince, which is but fifteen leagues farther. Ah! there is another flash."

A few seconds after he spoke, the report of a second gun came sharply from the shore.

"Courage, Constanza! they cannot reach us now. That too was shotted," he added. "If they have discovered our escape, Constanza, dearest, they are firing at some object which they think is our boat. It will require time to take them off and put them on the right track. Blow bravely winds! Are you confident, dearest?" he asked, pressing her to his heart; "there is now no longer cause for fear."

"Yes, now I begin to hope we may yet escape. Heaven, I thank thee!" and she looked devoutly upward, the mellow moonlight falling upon her fair forehead, and adding a richer gloss to her dark hair. In that attitude something fell from her bosom, and rung as it struck the bottom of the boat.

"There is your crucifix, sweet Constanza," he said, bending to pick it up "What! no, a dagger! What means this?"

"My last hope on earth, if yon outlaw had retaken us," she answered, with firmness and emotion.

"God forbid! Constanza; noble spirited woman!" he exclaimed, embracing her.

Morning found the lovers in sight of the town of St. Marc. At the first moment of dawn the count eagerly searched the horizon for an indication of being pursued, and just as the sun lifted his disc above the inland mountains, his beams fell upon a white spot many leagues to the northward, and on the verge of the sky and sea.

Pointing out to her the pleasant town of St. Marc at the head of the bay of the same name, he suggested to Constanza the expediency of continuing their course to the port of their original destination; as the sail which he saw in the distance, even if in pursuit, was too far off to overtake them. To this she acquiesced with buoyant

spirits.

Before a steady wind, they now held on their way along the romantic and cultivated shores of the channel their bosoms elated with the hope of soon terminating their varied and trying adventures.

CHAPTER XIV.

Lesio. "Hast heard the news, Vesca?" Vesca. "What news?" L. The Pole's escaped, and carried with him my master's daughter." V. "The Saints! you jest, Lesio!" L. "'Tis true as the cross. My master has ta'en horse and half a score of followers and spurred in pursuit." V. "Heaven grant he catch them not." L. "Amen!"

An alarm discovery result pursuit.

We will now return to Lafitte, whom we left lying in troubled sleep on one of the rude benches in the cave upon which he had thrown himself, after having, with a severe struggle between his passions and desire to act honourably towards his fair captive, decided upon giving her and her lover their freedom, and convey them to Port au Prince in the morning. His sleep though deep, was still tortured with dreams.

A fourth time he dreamed. He was upon the deck of his vessel, contending hand to hand with an officer. At length he disarmed him, and passed his cutlass through his breast, from which the blood flowed as he drew out the steel. He uttered a cry of horror! It was the bosom of Constanza! A loud voice rung in his ears, which sounded like a chorus of triumph at the fatal deed. He sprung to his feet, and the cry "To arms to arms!" rung loudly in his ears.

"To arms, señor," shouted his lieutenant "a boat is in the passage we may be surprised!"

"The outlaw, shouting to the men who slept about him to arm and follow, hastened to the terrace, where two or three of the buccaneers had collected.

"Awake the crew in the schooner," he shouted. "Where is the guard? Ho! there! Ho! the guard! where is he?" he sternly demanded.

His commands, issued in the cavern, had been followed by a hasty and simultaneous rising of the sleeping crew, who had not heard the alarm given by Théodore, who, leaving a recess within the cavern where he slept, had gone forth to stand his watch, when the boat of the fugitives in the passage caught his quick eye, and he instantly flew to communicate his discovery to Lafitte.

There was now a bustle of preparation on board the schooner, when Lafitte gave orders to the crew to ascend to the platform and defend it. Having lost so many men in the severe fight of the previous night, he did not wish to expose the lives of his men needlessly.

"Up! who is that lagger there?" he demanded, as the form of the guard lying on the quarter-deck caught his eye.

"It is Diego, señor he is dead, or dead drunk," replied one of the men.

"Drunk? Throw him down the hatches, and leave him to the knives of the enemy, if there be any."

"Théodore, how do you make that boat? you said you saw her in the passage;" he inquired, turning quickly to the youth: "I can see nothing."

"Look sir! there! just beyond the farthest rock see! she has a sail, which I did not before discover she must

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have set it since."

"That boat is not approaching," replied Lafitte, after looking for a moment in the direction indicated by Théodore, "she is outside, and standing to the south. What can it mean?"

"Whoever it is, señor, they seem to have been ashore on mischief!" said one of the crew. "Here is Gil also drunk or dead."

The pirate turned as he spoke, and saw the body of the guard, insensible where he had fallen.

"Ho! a light here. He is warm," he said, placing his hand upon him. "Faugh! he breathes like a distillery. Up, brute, up!" he cried fiercely; but the drunkard remained immovable. With an execration, the chief raised him from the ground with an iron grasp upon his throat, and hurled him over the precipice into the sea.

"Say you the watch is drunk too?" he inquired, as the waters closed over the body of his victim.

"Yes sir, as dead as the guard;" replied the man whom he addressed.

"By the holy cross! I would like to know what this means!" he shouted.

"Diable! Now I think, señor," said one of the men; "somebody stepped on my hand while I was asleep, and I afterward dreamed of hearing a boat leave the schooner."

"Fool! dolt! dreaming idiot! there may have been good cause for your dream you deserve to be swung from the yard arm," he said, striking the man with the hilt of his cutlass. "But why do I daily light that match depress that piece Theodore, if you see the boat."

"Yes, señor!" replied the youth in a voice which had lost its former animation. He now began to suspect whom the boat contained, having, as the man spoke of his dreams, cast his eyes over the terrace and discovered that the schooner's boat was gone. Obeying the command of his chief, he levelled the gun high over the true mark which was now visible as the white sail of the boat gleamed in the rising moon while his bosom beat with apprehension lest his good intention should be unsuccessful.

The chief seized the match and fired the piece, the report of which reverberated among the cliffs, and died away like distant thunder along the caverned shores of the bay.

"A useless shot they still move on," he exclaimed. "See! the white sail glances in the moonlight. Do better than that." The gun was eagerly depressed and fired by Lafitte himself, with no better result, and in a few moments the object of their attention and alarm, was entirely invisible in the haze and darkness of the sea.

"I would give my right hand to know what this means!" said the pirate musingly.

"The schooner's boat is gone sir!" said one of the men hastily.

"Gone!" he exclaimed, springing to the verge of the terrace "Gone indeed! hell and devils! it is so!" he shouted, as apparently a new thought flashed across his mind. "That light here!" and seizing a lamp from one of his men, he rushed through the long passage into the inner cavern with rapidity, and entered the chamber recently occupied by his prisoners.

It was silent and deserted. He looked into every recess sprung through the breach into the opposite room, and called upon their names, yet the echoes of his own voice and footsteps only replied. Again he traversed the

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apartments, scaled the walls and searched every niche and corner of the room, before he was thoroughly convinced of the flight of his captives. Then he dashed the lamp upon the pavement, and muttered between his clenched teeth deep execrations.

For several minutes he paced the cavern like a madman; gradually he became calmer and spoke:

"They have escaped me then! she whom I worshipped has doubted my faith no! no!" he added quickly, "she has not; it was he *he!* I will pay him back this deed. Curse, curse the fates that are ever crossing me! Here I have been humbling my passion to his schooling my mind to virtuous resolves, for the happiness of this woman who despises me. For the bliss of this titled fool who doubts my word, I have let slip the fairest prize that ever fell into the possession of man. But the charm is broken now will I win her! There are now no terms between him and me. I will pursue him to the death, and her I will win and wear. She shall yet become the bride of the detested outlaw."

"Ho!" he shouted, without having formed any decisive plan to pursue with regard to the fugitives "Cast off and make sail on the schooner spring! we must overhaul that boat. Lively! men, lively!" he added, as hastily issuing from the cavern, he energetically repeated his orders for immediately getting under weigh.

The morning sun shone upon the sails of the pirate's schooner, many leagues from the point of her departure, crowding all sail and standing towards the south and east as the most probable course taken by those of whom Lafitte was in pursuit.

The outlaw was upon the deck which he had not quitted since the schooner left the basin, his eager eye scanning the faint lines of the horizon.

"Do you see nothing yet, Théodore?" he inquired of his young protege, whom he had sent aloft "See you nothing?"

"No, señor, the sun is just lifting the haze from the water you can see better from the deck."

"Sail ahead!" shouted a man on the forecastle.

"I see it," cried Théodore, "as the haze rises it is ahead, just off St. Marc's town. If it is the boat we seek it is useless to pursue it, as it has at least two leagues the start of us, and unless we take her out from under the guns of the town we must give her up."

"If it were from under the guns of the Moro, I would take her out," exclaimed the buccaneer chief. "Set the fore top mast studding sail we will yet reach them before they get under the land," he added, bringing his spy-glass to his eye.

"It is the boat!" he exclaimed joyfully after a moment's scrutiny; "I would know my little gig as far as I could see her. It is the fugitives! they have hauled their wind and are passing the port no doubt for Port au Prince."

"Now favour me, hell or heaven, and I will yet have my revenge!" he added through his shut teeth; and under additional sail the pirate dashed on after the boat of the fugitives.

Théodore descended to the deck after the discovery of the boat, with a thoughtful brow and a gravity unusual to his years and to the individual, who was naturally gay and light hearted, while a vein of delicacy, high moral sentiments, and an honourable feeling in spite of his education formed the basis of his character. Perhaps, however although gratitude in every shape should be a virtue; perhaps, it was shaded by a grateful attachment to his benefactor which influenced him to do that against which his heart and judgment revolted. Sometimes he had modified his obedience to the instructions of his friend and chief, and occasionally he had dissuaded him from

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insisting upon the act, or when this was impossible to appoint some other agent. Whenever he thought his own presence would diminish the amount of human suffering, he would often with the hope of doing good when evil was intended, overcome his own repugnance, and himself voluntarily become the agent of the outlaw.

Knowing the character of his protégé, and desiring when he parted from Constanza to render her situation as comfortable as circumstances would admit of, Lafitte had appointed his young friend to the pleasing and congenial duty of protecting her to Kingston. How he executed this task is well known.

In the fair Castillian he had taken a deep and lively interest; and her helpless situation, her extreme beauty and gentleness had captivated him and made him, if not her lover, her enthusiastic devotee. Her image was ever present in the waking hours of the romantic youth, and he could never picture a paradise without filling it with angels whose bright faces were only some beautiful modification of that of the Spanish maiden.

When the shipwreck of the brig again threw her into the power of Lafitte, knowing his impulsive character, Théodore trembled for her happiness. In the silence of his own bosom he had sworn that he would protect her from insult, even to the shedding of the blood of his benefactor. When he discovered the absence of the boat and her escape, his heart leaped with joy, and the darkness of the night alone kept him from betraying his emotion upon his tell-tale features.

Appearing to second Lafitte's anxiety to overtake them, he did all in his power to retard the preparations for commencing the pursuit. During the dark hours of the morning as he leaned over the quarter-rail watching with a trembling heart the indistinct horizon, fearing to look lest he should discover the boat, yet by a kind of fascination constantly keeping his eyes wandering over the water, his thoughts were busy in devising means to prevent the recapture of the lovers.

CHAPTER XV.

"No man, however abandoned, has utterly lost that heavenly spark by which he participates in the Divine Nature. "If charity rather than censure, governed our intercourse with the depraved, we might kindle this spark into a fire that should purify the whole man, instead of mercilessly quenching the smoking flax and breaking the bruised reed."

Newton.

Lafitte and Theodore persuasion a victory change of purpose.

When morning showed clearly the object of their pursuit, the cry of the sailor, which made the blood of Lafitte leap, sent the life-current of the youth's veins back to his heart chilled and dead.

"What means that sad countenance, my young child of the sea?" inquired Lafitte, playfully, as, in pacing with an elastic step, fore and aft the quarter-deck, he stopped and tapped lightly the shoulder of the boy who was leaning thoughtfully against the rigging, gazing upon the glimmering sail of the boat diminished in the distance to a mere sparkle upon the water.

"Want of sleep has paled you, Théodore. Go below and turn in, and when the watch is next called you shall once more become fair lady's page. Ha! your blood mounts quickly to your cheek! Nay, never be ashamed to be esquire of dames. It is the best school of gallantry for a spirited youth! Silent, sir page? and pale again! but I crave your pardon, my boy, I meant not to jest with you," he added as the youth's emotion although from a different cause than he imagined, visibly increased.

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"You do not jest with me, señor, my more than parent; but there is something weighs heavily upon my spirits. I cannot throw it off!" he replied in a serious and impressive tone of voice.

"What is it, Théodore? tell me freely. It must indeed be heavy to chill you thus; you are not wont to give room to sadness without cause a deep cause must there be for this. Tell me freely what so saddens your spirit, you have never yet asked favour of me in vain. Surrounded as I am by men who fear, but love me not, there is happiness in feeling that there is one whose attachment for me is sincere."

"You have been a greater source of happiness to me since first I took you from amidst the ocean than words can express. Till then my heart was like a wild vine running riot upon the dank earth; but you, my child, have caught up at least one tendril, and so trained, nourished and twined it about your heart, unpromising as it may have seemed, it bears some fruit of human affection."

"It tells too what the whole vine might have become." he continued sadly, "had it not been trampled upon and laid waste by him who should have cherished it, instead of being sought out and nurtured by the hand of affection. To all but you I am cast out as a loathsome and poisonous weed; and if I did not know that one human breast knew me better, I should be, if you can believe it, a much worse man than I am. It is this little tendril your love has nurtured which binds me to my species which makes me not forget that I am a man!"

"There is one other breast that does you equal justice, señor?" said the boy inquiringly and with embarrassment, as the outlaw turned away and walked the deck in silence.

"One other! what whose?" none but the all-seeing Virgin, who knows me by my heart, and not by my actions, as men know me. It is the will, not the deed, boy, which makes the guilt."

"Father Arnaud whom you sent for to Havana to confess the men, says differently," remarked Théodore.

"No matter what he said," replied the chief hastily. "The father was bigoted, and loved his wine too well for his doctrine, to be seasoned with the right spirit. It is the will "

"Ha! we gain on the boat rapidly," he said interrupting himself, and looking out forward, and then continued:

"It is the will, that stamps the guilt or innocence of an action. If I, waking suddenly from a dream discharge a pistol at the phantom which scared me, and pierce your heart, I am absolved by heaven of murder. I had not the will to slay you; there is no guilt involved in the act. But if I resolve to kill you and place the dagger in my slave's hand, and he strikes home the blow which releases your soul, then I am guilty, though my hand struck not the blow. No, no!" he added with energy, "I am not so guilty before heaven as I seem. God is merciful. I would rather He and all heaven should read my heart than man man! guiltiest of all, yet the most unforgiving of guilt;" and his lip writhed with a scornful smile as he spoke.

"But, señor," inquired his companion, his mind diverted from his anxiety for the fugitives by the language of his friend "you have been engaged in scenes of strife and carnage; was not the blow the agent of the will at such times?"

"Not always no!" he replied, after a moment's reflection, apparently appealing to memory "with but two exceptions have I voluntarily and deliberately spilled human life; for these I am accountable. May God in his mercy, assoilzie me for them! But am I accountable, strictly, for impulses which are beyond my control which are not truly my own acts? Seldom have I done deeds of violence, where I did not regret the fatality which impelled me to do them revolting at the act, of which at the same time I felt the necessity."

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"Then you resolve all actions into one single cause irresistible fate dividing them into three kinds accidental, impulsive, deliberative. But shall we not change the subject sir?" he added abruptly, as he thought of the fugitives.

"There is one, who regards you with the same feelings I do; she "

"She? Whom mean you? No, you do not mean her!"

"I mean the Castillian."

"Say you so, Théodore?" he said, grasping his arm. "You have been much with her. Do you know her heart?" and he looked steadily and eagerly into his face.

"It is not of her heart I speak, señor, but of her expressed opinions." The pirate's brow changed, but he listened in silence. "I have heard your name frequently upon her lips, and never as the world uses it. She spoke of you with interest."

"Ha!"

"The interest she would feel for a brother;" he continued, without noticing the interruption. "She asked me of your character, the tone of your mind, and indeed all I knew of you."

"And how did you speak of me to her?" he inquired eagerly.

"As I can only speak of my benefactor," he said taking and warmly pressing his hand; "As I, and no one else know you."

"Thank you, thank you, Théodore;" he said, moved at the generous sincerity of the boy. "And what said she further?"

"She alluded to her capture to her interview with you; and she spoke of and enlarged upon your generous nature; she said she could never cease to remember you with kindness, and that next to the stranger count, you shared a place in her heart."

"Said she so much?" he exclaimed, his eye lighting with hope. "Prosper me Heaven! and she may yet, voluntarily be mine!"

"But the Count D'Oyley, sir!" said Théodore with emphasis.

Abruptly changing his tone and manner, which were softened by his conversation with his young friend he exclaimed almost fiercely

"And what of him? Has he not outraged me? has he not stolen off, when my plighted word that he should have safe conduct to Port au Prince was yet warm upon his ear? what shall bind me to terms of courtesy to him? We gain upon them bravely;" he added eagerly, as he turned in his walk, and looked steadily ahead. "I almost fancy I can see the mantilla of the maiden floating in the breeze."

"And what is your purpose with the lady sir, if we recapture her?" inquired the youth with firmness and respect.

Lafitte started at this abrupt question, and his face flushed and paled again before he spoke.

"Purpose? purpose? purpose sure enough!" he slowly articulated.

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"Señor, you would not do the sweet lady harm?"

"Harm! what mean you sir?" he said, turning fiercely upon the boy and grasping his cutlass hilt.

"Forgive me señor! but rather than so gentle a creature should come to harm, I would be willing" he continued, mildly and firmly, "to pour out my heart's best blood."

"Do you dare me to my face, Théodore? do you presume upon my affection, to use such language? Know you that where deep love has been planted, hate takes deeper root. Boy boy, below!" and his anger rising with his words, he struck the youth violently upon the breast. He reeled against the main-mast, but recovering himself, with a face in which resentment and wounded feelings struggled forcibly, he silently descended to the cabin.

His captain paced the deck alone for awhile, with agitation in his step and manner, and then hastily followed him.

"Théodore, my son, my brother, forgive me that blow! It was an angry one, and I would atone for it. Oh! if you knew how I have been punished for a blow like that given in a moment of passion in early life, you would forgive and pity me."

The youth rose from the table, where he sat with his head leaning upon his hand, and threw himself into the arms of his benefactor.

"Forgive you! It is all forgiven. Ungrateful should I be to let this cancel all I owe you, my more than parent. I spoke warmly for the lady, for I feel much for her so gentle! so lovely! and then her whole soul wrapped up in her lover. Oh! if you could see how their hearts are bound up in one another how pure and deep their love how fondly she doats on him; you would I am sure you would, like me, be willing to sacrifice even your life to make them happy. For my sake," he continued warmly, "if you regard me for her sake, if you love her, pursue them no farther. Seek not to capture them. Oh! let them go free, let them be happy and their prayers will be for you; your name will be graven upon their hearts for ever, in letters of gratitude. What is your purpose, if you take them? It is true, they are almost in your power; but let them go in peace. Stain not your heart and hand with innocent blood, and far deeper moral guilt. Let there be no more marks of crime upon your brow; for oh! my benefactor, you cannot possess her even as your wife without dark and dreadful crime!" Observing that Lafitte remained silent and moved by his appeal, the noble and youthful advocate for innocence and love continued;

"You love her deeply, intensely. I know it is an honourable love you cherish. Let her still be free, and such it will be always, and your soul sinless of the crime I fear you meditate. But take her once more captive, and you debase her to the earth either as a bride or mistress. Your love will turn to disgust; and hatred instead of gratitude which now reigns there, will fill her breast for the slayer of her lover, the violator, even with the sanction of the Holy Church, of her honor, and plighted troth. Nay sir! please listen to me it is for your honor, from love to you, my best benefactor, I speak so freely. Do you not remember, just before Constanza left your vessel, I remarked how cheerfully you smiled, and what a calmness dwelt upon your brow, and how consciousness of doing right and governing your own impulses, elevated and ennobled the expression of your features?"

"I do, Théodore."

"And were you not then happy happier than you had been before happier than you have been to-day?"

"I was I was!"

"Was it not the victory over yourself, and the resolutions which on bended knee you made to the lady, that henceforward your course should be one that she would feel proud to mark Oh! was it not the calm confidence of rectitude, when you let the maiden go free, and the resolution to win an honourable name which thus restored

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peace to your bosom and composure to your brow, and ennobled you in your own mind with sentiments of self-respect?"

"It was it was, my Théodore."

"And were you not very happy; and did you not feel better satisfied with yourself than ever in your life before, when your eye dwelt upon the faint speck indicating the fast disappearing vessel which contained the being who had called up these holy and honourable feelings?"

"Théodore, I did my boy!"

"Oh! then why will you throw away this cup of happiness, when it is once more offered to your lips? why will not my excellent benefactor create for himself again, this happiness?" he said, taking the passive hand of his friend and chief, and looking up with an entreating smile in his face.

"I will Théodore, I will! you have conquered!" exclaimed Lafitte, touched by the passionate and affectionate appeal of his ardent young friend; and yielding to his better feelings, he said, after a few moments' affecting silence. "Théodore, you have conquered go to the deck and give what orders you will."

"Yet, for Constanza I will live; for her sake," he said mentally as the happy boy disappeared up the companion-way "I will become an honourable man. Oh! that some good angel would help me to do what I wish to do, but have not the power! Bright spirit of my departed mother!" he said looking upward calmly and thoughtfully, "if there is a communication between saints and men, give me thy assistance; temper my passions, allure me to virtue, make me to abhor my present mode of existence and refrain evermore from dying my hand in guilt. To thee, I offer my broken and subdued spirit; I am in thy hand, take me and mould me as thou wilt!"

"Sail ho!" shouted the lookout from the foretopmast head. The cry was again repeated by the officer of the deck at the entrance of the companion-way, before the pirate moved from his statuelike attitude.

"Where away, Théodore?" he quietly asked, as he slowly ascended to the deck.

"Off the starboard quarter, sir. I have put the schooner about?" he said inquiringly to his captain, looking with sympathy into his pale face.

"It is well, Théodore!"

"The stranger, sir, is in a line with the boat. If he should be one of our cruisers "

"True boy, true; we must watch over their safety. Alter her course again, we must see that they come not to harm."

In a few minutes the schooner was once more under sail, standing for the boat which was now about five miles ahead.

"What do you make her?" he hailed to the man aloft.

"I can't see her very distinctly now sir, she is almost in the sun's wake. There! now I make her out sir a large vessel, and very square-rigged. I think she must be a man of war. I can't make her hull yet, she's down, to her fore-yard, under the horizon."

"We must look out, and not run into the lion's den;" said Lafitte; "there is a stir I see among the craft in the bay of St. Marc, as though they suspected the wolf was abroad," he continued with a saddened smile. "Stir up the crew,

Ricardo."

"Aye, aye, sir. Forward there all! Be ready to tack ship," shouted Ricardo. "To your posts men." A momentary bustle ensued, and dispersed in different parts of the vessel, the crew remained silently awaiting the next command of their officer.

The stranger gradually rose above the horizon, and showed the majestic proportions of a large frigate, standing close-hauled on the wind out of St. Marc's channel. The boat containing the lovers, was now within a mile of the ship of war.

"That is the French frigate señor, that passed us the night we came out of the devil's punch bowl," said Ricardo.
"See, she has the French ensign flying at her peak."

"Ha! it must then be the Count D'Oyley's frigate," said Lafitte. "So we shall in our turn, have to play the fugitive."

"No, señor," said Théodore, "he will not pursue us; but were it not as well to put about. See, the boat steers for her."

After watching with his glass for a long time, and with much interest, Lafitte saw her run along side of the stranger, who lay too and took the lovers on board.

He then laid down the spy-glass, and giving in a calm and measured tone, his orders to put about and stand for Barritaria, with a melancholy expression upon his fine features, he descended into his state-room, leaving the command of the vessel for the remainder of the day, to his lieutenant.

BOOK III. BARRITARIA.

"Came you here to insult us, or remain
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?"

The two Foscari.

"And now he stood upon the dazzling height
For which he long had laboured."

The Conqueror.

" wealth, such as
The state accords her worthiest servants; nay,
Nobility itself I guaranty thee."

Marino Faliero.

CHAPTER I.

"It was a rational conjecture that, on account of the difficulty of ascending the Mississippi river, the British would seek a passage through the pass of Barritaria. It was also feared they would form an alliance with the Barritarian chief, to promote their object, as he was perfectly acquainted with every inlet and entrance to the gulf, through which a passage could be effected."

History of the war.

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Barritaria the chief and his adherents a strange sail a chase.

The third part, or natural division, of our tale, opens in that portion of Louisiana, described in the historical sketch of the Barritarians commencing the second book, to which we refer the reader, and six days later than the period with which we closed that book.

On the seventh morning after the scenes and events just related, nearly the whole of the fleet, consisting of thirteen vessels, over which Lafitte held command, composed principally of brigantines, polaccas, small schooners of that peculiar class known then, and now, as the "Baltimore Clipper," two or three gun boats and feluccas, besides many small boats with and without masts, were anchored in the little harbour behind the island, and under cover of the guns of the strong hold of the smugglers, crowning the western extremity of the island of Grand Terre.

Between these vessels and the smooth beach, boats were constantly passing and repassing, whilst the wild air of some popular French or Spanish song the loud laugh of reckless merriment, or bandied jokes, mingled with strange and fierce oaths, floated over the water to the shore with wonderful distinctness in the clear morning air.

On the southern or opposite side of the island, upon a gentle eminence commanding a prospect of the sea to the south while over the intercepting trees was an uninterrupted and distant view of the masts of the anchored fleet in various natural attitudes, was congregated a group apparently deeply engaged in watching the movements of two vessels standing towards the island.

The shape and number of sails of the approaching objects which engrossed the attention of the observers, indicated vessels of small and equal burden; apparently sailing side by side, and making, with all their canvass spread, for the western pass.

As they lessened their distance from the island, and their low hulls rose above the sphericity of the sea, the interest of the spectators became more intense. Suddenly a little triangular flag was run up to the peak of one of the vessels nearest the entrance to the lake, and at the same instant a light cloud of blue smoke shot suddenly from the side of the more distant vessel, and curled upwards, wreathing over her tall masts. This was followed by the sharp report, deadened by the distance, of a shotted gun.

The knoll upon which this party were assembled, consisted of a grassy swell, dotted here and there by a magnificent live oak, and terminating abruptly several feet above the sea in a perpendicular precipice of earth, formed by the encroachment of the waves, combined with the heavy rains characteristic of that climate, acting upon the loose and impalpable soil of those alluvial regions. Under a large and venerable tree, which, growing near the precipice, hung partly over it, casting a deep shadow not only upon the summit of the cliff, but upon the beach beneath, lay buried in deep sleep, like one who had kept long vigils the preceding night, the athletic form of the chief of the buccaneers, whose dress and appearance we will employ the time occupied by the vessels in gaining the island, to describe.

With a cheek browned by southern suns, his manly features gave no indication of that age which a silvery hair sprinkled here and there among his raven locks, betrayed. An ample, dark, gray roquelaure faced with black silken velvet, lay out-spread by the foot of the tree, serving him both for a couch and protection from the dampness of the morning, which the up-risen sun was rapidly dissipating before his warm and enlivening beams. One arm grasping a richly inlaid belt pistol in its conscious fingers was bent under his head, constituting the sleeper's only pillow, while the other was buried in his bosom. The blue collar of his seaman's shirt was turned back from his throat and neck, exposing them to the refreshing breeze of the sea, and displaying a depth and strength of chest, as uncommon in this day of physical degeneracy, as it was the birth-right of the men of a sterner age.

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Encircling his waist, was a gorgeous belt of wampun the gift of a Mexican Indian chief, as a token of his gratitude to him for preserving from violation his only child. In it glistened the handle of a dirk, and the curled heads of a brace of serviceable pistols. A black velvet jacket, a slouched sombrero, and a pair of full, long pantaloons ornamented with numerous bell-buttons, pendant from the eye by little chains, ringing with a clear tinkling sound at every tread of the wearer, with low wrinkled boots, peculiar to that period, completed the dress, and with the addition of a sheathed sabre mounted with costly jewels, lying by his side and within reach of his disengaged hand, also the arms, of the handsome and athletic sleeper.

At his feet, and comfortably stretched upon the cloak of his master, apparently dozing, but with eyes of watchfulness and intelligence that took notice of every surrounding circumstance, lay a noble dog, of that dignified and sagacious species, originally derived from the island of Newfoundland. Scarcely, however, and with strong struggles of self denial, did the faithful animal, with philosophy worthy of a stoic, resist repeated temptations to quit his post from time to time, presented him in the shape of certain comestibles, by a third individual of the party.

"Dat dog Léon, love stretch de lazy bone on massa cloak, more dan eat. Here, you wooly nigger, Léon, come get dis nice turkey wing for you breakuss."

Léon occasionally raised his eyes, and looked wistfully upon the tempting morcel, then casting them upon his master, reprovingly and negatively shook his head.

Upon a rude hearth, not far from the sleeper, burned a bright wood fire, over which, suspended upon a crane resting upon two upright crotchets, hung a large iron pot, the black cover of which was constantly dancing above the boiling water, which, with certain culinary instruments and preparations around, gave sign of an intention to break, by a substantial meal, the fast of the night.

Into this vessel, Cudjoe, as he progressed in dissecting a wild turkey, tossed, as he sawed them from the body, the severed portions, with which however, before consigning it to the boiling receptacle, he would provokingly tempt his fellow servant, the philosophical Léon, from his duty.

Cudjoe, this mischievous leader into temptation, whom we have before passingly introduced to the reader, was a young slave about four feet high, with a glossy black skin, ivory white teeth, two of which, flanking his capacious jaws, projected outwards, with the dignity of the embryo tusks of a young elephant. His lips were of ample dimensions, and of the brightest vermillion, the lower one hanging down, and resting familiarly upon his short, retreating chin. His nose, which surmounted, or rather stood in the rear of these formidable appendages to his mouth, was of vast dimensions, terminating in a magnificent expansion of the nostril, and threatening to encroach upon the province of his ears, which hung down in enormous lappels, as if welcoming the expected proximity.

His eyes were small, restless, and almost deficient in that generous display of white, characteristic of his race. One of these organs, he kept at all times hermetically sealed, while the other enjoyed that obliquity of vision, which rendered it difficult for the beholder to decide certainly as to the particular point their owner was directing his visual orb.

His neck, short, thick, and bull-like, was set into broad shoulders, from which depended long arms hanging by his side like those of the ourang-outang. and terminating in short stunted fingers, of which useful ornaments two and a half were wanting. His feet were broad and flat, of equal longitude either way from the base of his short legs, which were placed exactly in their centre; so that he seemed to enjoy the enviable facility of progressing in opposite directions without the trouble of turning his body.

His forehead, lined with innumerable fine wrinkles, was very high and round, down to the centre of which the reddish wool curled barrenly to a point, displaying a physiognomical feature, which was the mere mockery of that

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intellect it indicated. His voice or rather his voices, for nature charitably making up his deficiencies, had bestowed two upon him, in ordinary conversation was sharp and wirey, and pitched upon a shrill, discordant key; but when he sung, as he often did, the soft airs of his tribe for the amusement of his master, the melody of a syren seemed floating around the enraptured listener.

His natural disposition was gentle and affectionate; but when roused to revenge, he was more terrible than the uncaged hyena. Gratitude to his master, who captured him from a slaver, and subsequently saved him from an imminent and revolting death, had bound him to him with a faithfulness and attachment nothing could diminish, and death only terminate; while the shrewdness, activity and animal courage of the young and deformed African, rendered him a useful and necessary appendage to the person of his master.

The fourth and last figure in the group was a supernatural and decrepid old man, with a noble, yet attenuated profile, doubled with age and infirmity, with a sunken and watery eye, haggard features, a long, neglected, gray beard, and a few straggling silver hairs blowing about his aged temples. He was clothed in coarse and squalid garments, which he confined to his form with one hand, whilst the other sustained a bundle of dry fuel that he had just gathered on the skirts of the forest. From time to time, the old man would add a stick to the fire, and kneeling down blow feebly the expiring flames, while at intervals, he muttered indistinctly with that unconscious manner, characteristic of second childhood.

But the aged menial, was not only afflicted with imbecile dotage, but the rays of intellect were faint and flickering in his shattered brain. The light of mind was extinguished in mental night. The cistern was broken at the fountain. Who may read the dark page of that old man's life and trace out the causes which led to such effects?

Not far from the scene of the aged man's occupation, and within ear shot of the sleeper, four or five dark-looking men in the garb of buccaneers, reclined upon the sward, smoking and watching in silence the approaching vessels.

To the right of the knoll occupied by these groups, at the distance of half a mile, rose the strong hold of the buccaneers; while in the rear, and hidden from a prospect of the sea, interspersed among the trees and surrounding the fort, were several rude huts constructed for the habitations of those of the band, not immediately engaged in the duty of defending the battery. Upon the walls of the fortalice, and among the adjacent village of cots, figures dressed in various wild and fantastic, yet sailor-like garbs, were seen, either engaged under the trees cooking their morning meal, burnishing their arms, or hastening to and from the hold of their chief, as though busy with preparations for some important event.

By these individuals, the objects which had attracted the attention of Cudjoe, the old man, and the group of smokers had not yet been discovered.

"Who tink dem two vessel be, stannen for de pass on de win?" asked Cudjoe, pausing a moment in the midst of his dissecting operations, as his restless one eye, always on the alert, caught sight of the white sails of the two vessels, standing, with all drawing sails set for the island.

Old Lafon fixed his bleared eye-balls in the direction Cudjoe indicated by extending in his long arms a dissected leg of the turkey upon which he was operating, and shook his palsied head.

"See now, dey sail togedder like two gull on de gulf; dey jis de same bigness."

"No, no! the old man cannot see; two, did you say? Then shall one destroy the other. Alas! for two! it is an evil number," and he talked incoherently, mumbling the words in his toothless jaws.

The two vessels now stood in close-hauled, with starboard tacks on board. The one to leeward however, seemed to gain rapidly upon that to windward, who hoisted her colours, a broad English ensign, while a parti-coloured

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signal fluttered from her main-peak.

"By St. Jone, but dat is one dam English cruiser!" exclaimed Cudjoe as the colours were spread to the breeze, "and sacre debble, if dat aint one o' our own craf he chasin."

One vessel was now evidently in pursuit of the other. The pursuer was a large-sized English armed brig, while the chase was a brigantine, light-armed, but a very fast sailer, and every moment increasing the distance between herself and pursuer. Still she displayed no colours, when the brig fired a gun ahead, to compel her to show them.

At the same moment, the chase run up the Carthaginian flag, and returned the gun by a whole broad side.

The sleeper started from his deep sleep at the sound of the single gun, and with his sabre in his grasp, stood upon his feet, a tall, finely-formed and manly figure. His dark hair curled around his expansive forehead; beneath his arched brows glowed eyes of the deepest black, now sparkling like coals of fire as he glanced seaward at the approaching vessels. As the English colours of the armed brig caught his eye, his lip, graced by handsome mustachoes blended with his dark whiskers, curled with a cold expression of contempt; but as he gazed more steadily upon the vessels, a proud smile lighted up his sun-brown features.

"Here comes a timber of old England's wooden walls, banging away at the Lady of the Gulf, as if she had nothing better to do than to scale her guns at my vessels.

"Ha! that tells well, my good lieutenant!" and his eye lighted with pleasure as he saw the head of the Englishman's bowsprit and jib-boom shot away by the gallant broadside of the chase and fall into the water.

The buccaneer was now too far to leeward, to reach the pass without tacking; and before he could execute this nautical manoeuvre, the English brig ranged upon his larboard quarter.

"Well, Monsieur Johnny," continued the pirate quietly watching the movement of the two vessels, "if you fire your starboard broadside into my little clipper, we may turn the brigantine over to Cudjoe here for a riddling seive.

"Ha! she has grounded, and, now the Englishman has saved his powder;" and instead of firing her broadside into the brigantine, as her manoeuvreing threatened, the English brig leaving the chase, ran boldly in and came to an anchor close under the island, and about half a mile from the cliff upon which stood the group, who with various degrees of interest had watched the nautical movements we have briefly described.

"By the holy cross! but sir Englishman shows consummate impudence, firing his spare shot into one of my vessels, and then dropping his anchor in the face of my battery as if he had done me good service. Holy devil! but his coolness shall be warmed a little with red, iron bullets, if my little battery has not forgotten how to speak.

"Here Cudjoe, you beautiful boy, go as though the devil sent you, and tell Getzendanner I want to see him."

"An who but de debble do sen me?" chuckled Cudjoe, but very wisely to himself, as he went off like a second Mercury, marvellously aiding his progress up the slight ascent to the fort with his long arms, which he alternately applied to the ground with great dexterity and effect.

"Ha! he launches his pinnace! and it is prettily manned withal. And there flutters a flag of truce!" exclaimed the pirate, as he saw these indications of pacific intentions on the part of the brig.

"Blessed visit of peace! sending out round shot as its pioneers. Ho! my men!" he shouted. And his boat's crew springing from their recumbent attitude upon the grass, were upon their feet and at his side.

"To the boat! Let us reconnoitre this mysterious stranger, who thus saucily beards us to our very faces," he commanded, seizing his weapons and casting his cloak upon the ground. Hastily buckling his sabre around him, and placing his pistols in his belt, he descended the cliff followed by his oarsmen, and the next moment stood upon the beach.

CHAPTER II.

"Towards the close of the war, there appeared an armed brig on the coast, opposite the pass of Barritaria. She fired a gun at a vessel entering, and then tacked and anchored off the island. A pinnace, bearing British colours and a flag of truce was sent to the shore, conveying four British officers, who had come to treat with the chief, and endeavour to gain him and his adherents, which comprised a force of one thousand men, besides thirteen vessels, over to their interests. Upwards of two hundred men lined the shores when they landed, and it was a general cry among them, that the British officers should be made prisoners as spies. It was with difficulty Lafitte dissuaded the multitude from their attempt, and led the guests in safety to his camp."

Latour's War.

Prisoners mutiny soliloquy an interview.

The seamen placed their shoulders to the bows of the boat and shoved her off, while their leader, taking from one of his men a coarse seaman's jacket and tarpaulin, put them on, at once and effectually covering his richer dress, and concealing any indications of rank above those around him. Stepping on board, he seated himself in the stern sheets and took the helm.

"Give way men!" he cried in a low yet energetic tone of command; and the light boat shot away from the beach like an arrow.

In a few moments, he approached within hail of the pinnace, which, with steady pull was making for the shore.

"Boat ahoy!" hailed an officer in the full uniform of a British naval officer, who was standing near the stern of the boat leaning upon his sword, while another officer of the navy, and a gentleman in the military dress of a commander of infantry, were seated under a canopy in the stern sheets.

"Ahoy!" and the manly voice of the disguised rover rung full and clear over the water, as he replied.

"Where is your captain?" inquired the English officer, as the boats came close to each other.

The outlaw, preferring from motives of policy to conceal his real character, replied:

"If you mean the Barritarian chief, you will find him on shore."

"Are you of his band?"

"We can communicate any message to him," he answered evasively.

"I am the bearer of a packet to Captain Lafitte;" replied the officer, "I would know to whom I entrust it."

"We are of Captain Lafitte's party, and will execute any commission with which we may be entrusted, be its import peaceful or hostile," said Lafitte firmly.

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"What say you Williams, shall this business be entrusted to this stranger?"

"It is perhaps, the only alternative;" he replied cautiously; "he is, most likely, one of the outlaw's band, and will no doubt convey the packet safely to his chief."

"Ho! Monsieur, will you convey this packet to Captain Lafitte, and say to him that we will here await his reply?" demanded the English officer; and he proffered to him as he spoke, a large packet heavy with seals.

"I will, gentlemen; but had you not better see Captain Lafitte yourselves? If you will pull into the shore with me, I will notify him of your desire of an interview with him."

After a few moment's hesitation the officer complied, and the two boats were soon seen approaching the island, by the buccaneers on the beach, who, alarmed by the firing, had assembled on the shore in great numbers, armed and prepared for conflict, where they watched the movements of the boats with no little interest.

When they came within reach of the guns of the battery on the shore, and within hail of the beach, where nearly two hundred men had already collected, the disguised buccaneer, desirous of detaining the officers until he learned the contents of the package, stood up in his boat, threw aside the seaman's jacket in which he was enveloped and turning to the British officers, said calmly, but in a determined tone:

"Gentlemen, I am Lafitte you are my prisoners!"

The astonished officers, half drew their swords, and grasped the handles of their pistols.

"Draw no weapons gentlemen! you are, you see, in my power. I shall detain you but a few hours."

"Base traitor! Well is it said, you honour no flag but your own blood-stained ensign, if thus you recognise a flag of truce. The devil himself would respect that emblem of peace and honourable confidence!" shouted the Briton fiercely.

"Nay, sir officer, Do you bring messengers of peace at the cannon's mouth? Do you bear a flag of truce in one hand and a lighted match in the other? Peace, sir, It is you, sir, who tarnish the flag you accuse me of dishonouring?"

The boats had now reached the shore, and Lafitte springing out upon the beach, said:

"Gentlemen, I will take your arms "

"Jacques, hold these men," he continued, pointing to the crew of the pinnace, "under safe guard until further orders. Stand back! back men!" be called loudly to his followers. "Why do you crowd thus, with lowering brow and hand on weapon, around my prisoners?"

"Spies! spies! Muerto a los Ingleses, Down with the British! seize them hang them!" cried the multitude, and rushed forward with lifted weapons as if determined to seize them in spite of the stern discipline which usually controlled their fierce natures.

"Men, do you press me?" he shouted as they still closed around the Englishmen. "Back, hounds! or by the Holy God I will send one of you to breakfast in hell!" and he drew a pistol from his belt.

The most forward of the men at that moment laid his hand upon the arm of one of the officers, who stood between the buccaneer chief and the bow of the boat from which they had just stepped. The report of a pistol rung in the

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air, and the daring mutineer fell a corpse at the feet of the Englishman."

The crowd fell suddenly back, as they witnessed this summary act of piratical justice. "Away with this mutinous slave!" he exclaimed; and his followers near him, raised the corpse in silence and moved away to bury it in a hastily scooped grave in the sand beneath the cliff.

"There is nothing like blood to cool blood!" he said, quietly turning to his prisoners. "Now, Messieurs, let this severe but necessary act of discipline, assure you of my desire to secure your personal safety."

"Here, my brave fellows, you are but tools of subtler men," said he, turning to the crew of the pinnace, who sat moodily and in silence in their boat, expecting momently to be sacrificed to the violent passions of the lawless men, who, although awed into temporary passiveness, might the first opportunity, satiate their appetite for blood upon their defenceless persons.

"Here men, shove off this boat!"

The British coxswain looked at his officer for instructions.

"Put off, Carroll; but watch any signal from the shore," he said; and under the combined efforts of several of his own crew the boat shot out from the beach, the men stooped to their oars, and in a short time, were along side of their brig.

In the meanwhile the Barritarian conducted through the retiring horde, the English officers to his fortress, while dark eyes gloated on them beneath the lowering brows of men familiar with crime, pursued, until it had become a passion whose hands mechanically rested upon the butt of a pistol, or the handle of a dirk or Spanish knife.

The fortalice into which the chief ushered his prisoners, crowned a slight eminence of the island overlooking the sea to the south, and the lake or bay of Barritaria to the north, whose distant shore was marked by a low level line of cypress and other trees.

The quarters, or camp, as it was more frequently termed, of the outlaw, consisted of a brick edifice within the fort, constructed on a plan similar to those old Spanish houses still to be seen in the more ancient portions of the chief maritime port of Louisiana. The entrance to the fort consisted of a low, massive gate-way, before which paced a sentinel in the dress of a seaman, with a drawn sabre in his hand and a brace of heavy pistols stuck in his belt. On either side of this gate-way, was a row of barricaded windows, admitting light into several small apartments, used as store, sleeping, and guard rooms.

"Weston, close the gate and add three men to every guard! on your life admit no one without my orders!" said Lafitte as he passed into the fort.

The sailor whom he thus addressed lifted his hat and moved to obey the order, while his captain with his three prisoners passed through the gate-way into a rude court, around which were ranged several low buildings, serving as work-shops, store-houses, and quarters for the men who staid on shore. Several pieces of dismounted cannon were lying about the court, while a long, mounted gun, which turning on a pivot, commanded the whole of the interior of the defences, made use of in quelling domestic disturbances, stood in front of the buildings, just mentioned as the quarters of the chief. To this dwelling, after crossing the court, he conducted his involuntary guests.

"Théodore!" he called, stopping at the entrance: and the youth, with a pale, and as the Englishman thought, a strikingly intelligent face, came forth from a room communicating with the passage running through the building, with a pen in his hand as if the voice of Lafitte had interrupted him while employed in writing.

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"Théodore, conduct these gentlemen into the opposite building and tell Weston to place a guard at the door." "Gentlemen," he added with courtesy, turning to the officers, "I regret the necessity of placing you under temporary restraint, but the fierce humor of my men require it. They unfortunately suspect you visit our island under feigned pretences, while your real object is, to examine the coast for the purpose of making a descent:" and he looked at them severally and fixedly as he spoke.

"You will excuse me," he said abruptly after a moment's pause, "while I examine the package of which you are the bearer!"

"Cudjoe, see that the gentlemen are comfortable in their room and have refreshments placed before them."

The officers politely bowed to their captor, who returned their courtesy with dignity; and following their youthful guide, disappeared.

In a few minutes Théodore re-appeared in the court, closed behind him a heavy door, turning the massive bolt in the lock, and returned to the quarters of the chief, where he found him examining the contents of the package.

He was seated at a table in a small room, lighted by two barred windows deeply set in the thick walls overlooking the western pass, and affording an extensive prospect of the southern sea. The opposite window commanded the anchorage with its little squadron, and the bay of Barritaria, with the distant green line of the level horizon.

Five or six rude chairs, a large ship's table, and a seaman's chest were the only articles of furniture. Several charts, a few books, and bundles of filed, and many loose papers, lay upon the table.

For an hour, he sat perusing the official papers which had been placed in his hands, then laying them upon the table, and leaning his head upon his hand, he remained a long time buried in deep thought. Suddenly starting up, he cried:

"Théodore, conduct Captain Lockyer to me. What turmoil is that without?" he added with a raised voice, as loud words reached his ears. "Send Weston here!"

"Weston," he said rapidly, as the captain of the guard appeared at the door "run the long gun out of the port hole in the gate, and bring it to bear upon the blustering fools, and wait my orders to fire. See that it is well charged with grape."

"Aye, aye, sir!" said the guard, who had been recently promoted from the command of a pollacca to the defence of the fort. And the creaking of the gun-carriage as it was swung around to the appointed position, had scarcely ceased, when a heavy footstep was heard in the hall, and the bearer of the packet entered the quarters of the pirate.

"Be seated, sir," said Lafitte, waving his hand to a chair, which the officer occupied. "I have considered the propositions contained in these documents before me, and feel honoured in the confidence reposed in me by your government. But the subject of which they treat is of too great moment for hasty decision. I shall require a few days delay before I can return a final answer."

"Captain Lafitte!" replied the officer; "without commenting upon the circumstances which make me your prisoner, and which I am happy to acknowledge it is not in your power wholly to control, I will proceed, by communicating my private instructions, to second the arguments made use of by my superior officer, with which those papers before you have made you acquainted, for the purpose of inducing you to become an ally of England, in this her present contest, with the North American States. I am instructed to offer you a commission in his Britanic majesty's service with the full pardon and admittance into the navy, with ranks equivalent to what they now hold, of all under your command, if you will throw the weight of your power and influence into the scale in

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our favour."

"These are tempting and honourable proposals Monsieur, and as honourable to the gentlemen who make them as flattering to the subject of them!" replied the outlaw in a tone between irony and sincerity; "But do I understand you, that I and my officers retain command in our own vessels, provided that we substitute St. George's cross for the flag under which we now sail?"

"Such were not my instructions, Monsieur Lafitte. It is expected that the armed vessels which compose your Barritarian fleet, will be placed at the disposal of the officers of his majesty in the contemplated descent upon the coast."

"These are conditions with which I am not at present, prepared to comply;" answered the chief. "They are "

"But consider the advantages which will result sir, both to yourself and the numbers you command;" interrupted the officer. "You will be restored to the pale of society, bearing an honourable rank, (pardon me, Captain Lafitte) among honourable men. The rank of Captain shall be yours, if you co-operate with us, and moreover, the sum of six thousand pounds sterling shall be paid into your hands, whenever you signify your acceptance of the terms proposed. I beg of you sir, do not permit this opportunity of acquiring fortune and honour to yourself, but glory and success to the arms of England, who is ready to welcome you as one of her bravest sons, escape you."

"Sir, replied the Barritarian, your offers are extensive, too much so for an outlaw a banned and hunted man. Ambition will not allure me to accept them; for have I not power, fame and wealth as I am? Is the reward of ambition greater than this? what will it gain me more? Honor? desire of an honourable name? Alas! *that*, I have not. That that indeed, were a spur to drive me to your purpose. But will men confer honour upon dishonour? Will a pardon, a title, a station, make men think better of me? Shall I not, in all eyes, still be Lafitte? the branded, the despised, the feared and cursed of men? No no no! Yet," he added, as the image of Constanza passed across his mind, "I will think of it, Captain Lockyer; I will reflect upon your proposals. I wish to become a better and a happier man. Fate, passions, influence not principles, has made me what I am!"

"I will consider this matter sir," he added, coolly, casting his eye upon the paper which lay before him, with a manner that implied his desire to terminate the interview.

The officer however still lingered "I should think sir," he urged, "that little or no reflection would be necessary respecting proposals that obviously preclude any kind of hesitation. You are at heart, if not by birth, a Frenchman, Captain Lafitte, and therefore, in the existing peace between our respective nations, a friend to England. You are outlawed by the government of the United States; your name is held up to infamy, and a price is set upon your head by the executive of Louisiana.

"What have you sir, to bind you to America? The tie which alone binds the slave to the galley. The ties that bind you to England are many and may be increased a thousand fold. Promotion is before you among the gallant gentlemen of her navy "

"*Gentlemen!*" interrupted Lafitte sarcastically, "aye, gentlemen!" What Lethe can make the outlaw the gentleman? Sir, I may become a British officer daring, brave and gallant, may be but, shall I be recognized as a gentleman?

"No, no!" he added after a pause, and with bitter emphasis, "I must still be Lafitte the pirate!"

"Nay, Monsieur! nay, Monsieur!" said the Englishman touched by Lafitte's manner; "allow me to suggest, that with your knowledge of the coast and its narrow passes, your services will be of infinite value to the success of our arms against southern Louisiana. An army is now waiting in Canada to unite with the forces here, and it remains with you to promote the success of the step. It is on your skill, sagacity and knowledge we rely to bring

about this object."

"Truly Monsieur these are lofty schemes, well and deeply planned. Such inducements as you have offered to an honourable career, must not, nor will they, be disregarded. I must, however, deliberate before taking so important a step, as that proposed by Col. Nichols, your superior. Good morning sir."

"Théodore! conduct captain Lockyer to the guard room."

CHAPTER III.

"Lafitte having taken the earliest opportunity, after the agitation among the crews had subsided, to examine the pacquet brought by the officers, listened calmly to the splendid promises and ensnaring insinuations held out to him by the naval captain. He replied, that in a few days, he would give a final answer. His object, in this procrastination, being to gain time, to inform the officers of the state government of these overtures."

Latour's Memoirs.

Getzendanner, and the buccaneer. a signal. the mutineers.

The outlaw paced his room with a firm tread, after the officer left him, his brow contracted with thought and indignation, whilst the white line of his even teeth glittered from between his curled and contracted lips, upon which dwelt a sarcastic smile, expressive of the bitterest scorn.

"Poor fools! they extend the right hand to Lafitte, and say, 'come and help us, good sir pirate'!" said he, dashing the papers from him, and rising from his chair as the door closed upon his departing prisoner "Cunning diplomatists as they are! they shall find me the cunner. They seek my aid, and have come to ask it, with red hands bathed in the blood of my men. They carry aloft the flag of truce, as though a lady's white 'kerchief would cover their treachery. This Englishman thinks I have little cause to love my countrymen! Thinks he I have better cause to love England? Has she not hunted me down, worried and torn me. Pressed, imprisoned, or hung without ceremony, the bravest of my men; sunk my vessels, and chased my cruisers from the sea, with overgrown frigates? Verily! I have much cause to love her!"

"But, Massa! 'merica do worse nor dat; she take, she kill, she burn de craf'; she do, damma, much more ob de debil's mischief dan massa Inglish. She say she block you up in de bay, and play de debil wid de camp on de island, and send for to do it, dat brave cap'un Pattyson and if he come, he knock de ol' camp to pieces, or Cudjoe no nigger che! che! che!"

Lafitte paused a moment in his walk to and fro in his little chamber, as his reflections were thus interrupted. Cudjoe seldom restrained his thoughts in the presence of his master, who allowed him such license, not only because experience taught him that he might as well stop his breath as his tongue, but he had often profited by the shrewd observations to which his slave from time to time gave utterance, winding up every speech with a low chuckle, expressive of satisfaction.

"You say well, Cudjoe! My countrymen have given me little cause to love them neither. But, then," continued he, relapsing into his former thoughtful walk; "but then it is my country, and cursed be the hand that betrays either the country of his adoption or of his birth! She is my country, and I love her! No, proud Englishmen!" he added firmly, "you shall yet learn that there is not only honour among outlaws, but love of country pure and disinterested patriotism; and England shall learn, that the outlaw Lafitte is too honourable to submit to propositions which she had not honour enough to withhold. She shall learn, that, although she condescends to take the hand of a priced man, from motives of policy, that man feels that he rises superior to her when he refuses to

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accept it. No! there is more honour for Lafitte in serving his country as an outlaw, than in betraying her, with the deck of a line of battle ship, which he could call his own, under his feet. Where lies the greatest infamy, in those who propose to an outlaw, or in the outlaw who refuses to betray his country? Ho, slave!" he called sternly, as he concluded.

Cudjoe was at his side in a moment, with a long arm stretched to the handle of the door, while he stood in the attitude of one just about to run

"Hasten, and tell Captain Getzendanner I desire to speak with him."

This personage, with whom the reader is already somewhat acquainted, was standing before a three-cornered fragment of a mirror that once probably had reflected the features of some honest sea-captain, affixed into a lattice of a small hut, covered with palmetto leaves, situated opposite to that occupied by his commanding officer. The hut was about ten feet square, and so low that Captain Getzendanner, who was not very tall, unless five feet two inches be termed so, could not stand upright, without bringing the apex of his cranium in familiar contact with the roof. Besides a hammock slung athwart the room, the apartment contained a seaman's chart, and a dark inlaid mahogany table, that once, no doubt, graced the state-room of some fair lady, one or two chairs, and a planed board, then reclining against the side of the cabin, but which, twice a day, when he was on shore, laid horizontally from the top of one chair to the other, served effectually as a table.

Two or three cutlasses, a brace of pistols, small swords, carbines, muskets, boarding caps, and the various rude paraphernalia of a sailor's wardrobe, were hung, or strewn carelessly, about the walls and floor of the apartment.

The only opening admitting light to the interior, was a square window, defended by a lattice of reeds, which served at the same time to support the lieutenant's mirror, before which he had been performing the unclassical operation of shaving almost a sinecure with him, on account of the generous depth of whiskers and mustachoes which he allowed to grace his round physiognomy. The lieutenant was of that age, when silver begins, though sparingly, to mingle with the legitimate hue of the hair, and when, from a proneness to table pleasures, the person begins to assume a rotundity, which, from some imaginary resemblance, has been compared with that of a puncheon.

A Dutchman, and moreover a bachelor, he was a man of phlegm. From a snub-nosed cabin-boy, under a Hudson river skipper, he had passed through all the phases of a sailor's life, until an unfortunate predilection for certain golden sequins contained in a stranger's purse, who promenaded the quay at Havana, led him to seek a mode of life, where the distinction between *meum* and *teum* was less scrupulously regarded than in the pale of society.

"Mein Got, but in in dis little tamn tree corner, dere is no seeing half-quarter of a jentlemans fas'," and as he spoke, he dodged every way his red round face, gashed here and there with his razor, peering through his fiery red whiskers and bushy hair, like the full moon, (to venture such a comparison,) seen through the bright leaves of an autumn tree.

"Vat vool maks de fashion off shavin'. Blood and blodkins! if I cut one tamn more hair off my fas'! Abra'am was one wise mans, and he wore a beard a saint might shwear py, and dunder and blodkins! fader Abra'am vill pe nor petter man nor mynheer Capt. Jacop Getzentanner, to pe shure! Hi, you plack peast of de teyvil's tam, vat you poke your ugly snout in here for, heh?" suddenly shouted the lieutenant, as he saw, without the effort of turning his body, the reflection of Cudjoe's features in the glass, as he darkened the little doorway opening into the interior of the camp.

"Vat now, you elephantsh cub? Some infernal order before breakfast, I vill shwear! I vish Captain Lafitte, who ish a most exshellent sailor, and very much petter gentlemansh, vould get into the comfortable habits of doing business after breakfast ish eaten. It were petter for de digestions. Hi, you kunning ape I'll cut your ugly visand

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off if you pe saucy to pe shure!" and he brandished his razor, threateningly.

"Gi, Massa Cap'un Jacob, if you use dat instrum', you quicker saw him off Che! che! che!" and Cudjoe looked behind like a wary general, to secure a retreat.

"Hoh! hoh! hoh! you pe pretty near de truth," said the burly captain, laughing good-humouredly; "here, you take de razor yourself to saw off dose vite tusks. It vill help you peauty;" and the captain chuckled at his own wit, as he esteemed it, complacently in his own bosom; but the eye of the slave gleamed with rage, and a demoniac smile fearfully displayed the hideous features of his mouth for a moment, and then he echoed the laugh of the officer; but deep and bitter was the hatred which rankled in his dark bosom against him for tampering with his deformities. Lafitte, and he alone, could allude to them jocosely, with impunity; but it was seldom that he did so; whilst his followers, imitating his language and manner towards the slave, without penetration to discover the strong current of resentment excited in the bosom of the object of their rough witticisms, were sowing unconsciously seeds of revenge in the heart of the deformed negro, of which they were, in his own purposes, destined to reap the bitter fruits. He never forgot nor forgave the joke elicited by his natural deformities. To time and opportunity, while he passed by the present jest with a laugh, or apparently unnoticed, he deferred, whilst he gloated over his terrible schemes, that revenge, which he had sworn by Obeah, his most solemn adjuration, should be one day his.

"Vell, you peauty plack poy, vat do you vant mit me?" inquired the captain as he cleaned his razor upon the edge of the glass.

"Massa say him want see you? dem English capins dat come play de spy, make de water boil and all de fuss," replied Cudjoe, turning about to go, although in the opinion of captain Jacob there appeared no necessity for such a preparatory change in his position.

The slave walked grumbly to the quarters of his master. "Young elephant heh! saw de tusk heh!" and he ground his large teeth together, while the protruding objects of the officers jest, glanced longer and whiter from his huge red lips.

The portly captain after twisting his mustachoes into a fiercer curl, and placing on his carroty locks a broad brimmed hat, looped up in front to a silver button made of a frank piece buckled on a huge sword, placed his pistols in his belt, which he drew tighter with the air of a man who expects to meet, and is accustomed to, danger passed, not without some difficulty through the narrow door, and rolled along over the area to the quarters of his commander.

Entering the door of the passage leading to the room, he heard the heavy and measured tread of its occupant, pacing the floor, as his habit was, when his thoughts were busy, and matters of deep and exciting interest occupied his mind.

"De lion is lashing his sides mit his tail," said he, "captain Jacop Getzentanner look to your disretions."

"Come in," answered a low, stern voice as he tapped hesitatingly at the door with the point of his sheathed sabre. The visitor entered, and at a nod from his master, Cudjoe handed him a chair.

"Captain Getzendanner, I have sent for you. This is a time of action. You love the British, Getzendanner?" and he looked fixedly into the face of his officer, with his deep, searching eyes which let not a shade of expression escape detection and mental analysis.

"Tousand teyvels! Captain Lafitte," replied the Dutchman warmly, striking his clenched fist upon his knee. "Do I love de murterer of my proder? did dey not press him into der tam navy? and vas he not kill in de pattlesh? I love

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de hangman petter, vat ish one tay to tie mine veasand round apout mit de hemp."

"Well, I thought as much," replied Lafitte, "and knew you would rather swing to the yard arm, than do Mister Englishman service. Here are papers, but you do not read?"

"I vas read Teuche, ven I vas a leetle pit poy; put de smooth Inglish lettersh pe mitout handles, and I never could keep dem from slipping out of mine memorysh, and now tevfil a one is left behind put F to pe shure," said he, half seriously, half humourously.

"And that you remember from its resemblance to a gallows, ha! worthy Getzendanner? But a truce to this trifling. Here in these papers," and he struck emphatically the documents he held in his hand, "here are proposals from the Hon. W. H. Percy so says the endorsement," and his lip curled ironically as he continued, "Captain of his Britannic majesty's sloop of war Hermes, and Admiral of the naval forces in these seas, and from Lieut. Col. Edward Nicholls commander of his majesty's military forces on the coasts of Florida, to me simple Captain Lafitte." He then briefly stated the nature and extent of the proposition to his astonished lieutenant.

"Now, Getzendanner, I well know, for love nor fear, would you obey neither me nor Satan, but from hatred to the English, I can depend upon your cooperation; therefore I will trust you; but betray me and you know the penalty. Here, in this paper, you have my written instructions, which if you cannot read, Théodore, who is always in my confidence, will explain to you."

Théodore, at this moment, who was leaning out of the window which overlooked the sea, suddenly interrupted him.

"There is a signal flying on board the Lady of the Gulf, for your presence on board, sir."

"Ha! it is so indeed. What can Belluche want? why not send a boat? Have ready my barge, Théodore. Getzendanner, I must aboard; during my absence observe the strictest vigilance in the camp, and on your life, see that those Englishmen escape not; and that the excited crews of the privateer do not seize and sacrifice them to their suspicions. On my return, I will talk with those mutinous fiends, and you must aid me in giving a right direction to their roused feelings. Ho! there, you sea-dogs, are you ready?" he shouted from the window.

"Aye, aye, sir," came from the beach, where at the end of a small pier lay a large boat, in which, resting on their oars, sat eight seamen in red shirts and white trowsers, each with a red woolen cap upon his head. They were all dark, fine looking men, with muscular arms, whose sinews, exposed by the drawn up sleeve, showed in relief out from the surface like whip-cords. The glitter of their dark eyes, and the reckless expression of their faces, indicated that marked character, peculiar to men trained in the school of blood and rapine. They were seated two by two, on the four thwarts of the boat with their faces to the stern, where with his hand resting carelessly upon the head of the tiller, sat Théodore, who had preceded Lafitte, dressed in an embroidered jacket of velvet, and snow-white trowsers, with a richly wrought belt, confining a brace of costly pistols and a silver-hafted dirk. An eye, of the rich hue of the chestnut, sparkled beneath a brow whose fairness a maiden might envy, and a profusion of silken, auburn hair curled luxuriantly from under his blue velvet Spanish cap, terminated by a tassel, which, drooping over his ear, played with his delicately browned cheek in the passing breeze. An expression of resolution, calm and deep determination, the more severe, from its being foreign to features so delicate, compressed his lips, as he gazed upon the turbulent crews of the vessels lining the beach, talking loudly and fiercely of British spies, and occasionally whispering to each other, that their leader was about to sell them to the English as the price of his own pardon. At that moment, there was a movement among the multitude, which gave back on either hand as he advanced, and Lafitte came through the crowd to his boat.

"What means this turmoil, my men?" he said, in a conciliatory tone as he stepped upon the gunwale; "have you not confidence in me? These men are not spies. They seek restitution for those two London brigs taken by you

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before my return from my late cruise in the West Indies; and shall they not have it, if they state their terms in ready gold?" he said chiming in with their humour.

"Aye, give them their vessels if they give us their gold," cried several voices.

"Very easy said, my masters," growled an old weather-beaten smuggler near Lafitte, "but who is to handle the chink when its got?" and he cast his eyes moodily and suspiciously at his commander.

"Down with old Fritz;" said two or three who heard him; "our captain is all honour; we never have had cause to grumble at shares."

"Rest easy, my men," continued Lafitte in the same tone; "you shall have all things explained and understood when I return from the schooner. If there is a man who mistrusts Lafitte or doubts his word, let him step forward."

No one moved, and the next moment every hat was in the air.

"Give way," he cried to his young coxswain, and shoved off from the land amid the cries of, "Long live Lafitte viva Lafitte!" which rose long and loud from the fickle and tumultuous assembly upon the shore.

CHAPTER IV.

"Discipline among a community of outlaws can only be preserved by frequent and summary acts of justice." "Lafitte having occasion to leave the island for a short time, the crew seized the British officers, and placed them under guard. On his return, he released them, represented to his adherents the infamy that would attach to them if they treated as prisoners, persons who had come with a flag of truce. Apologizing for the disagreeable treatment they had received, and which he could not prevent, he saw them safe on board their pinnace."

Latour's Louisiana.

An attack from the mutineers interview with the British officers secret expedition.

The business of Lafitte on board the Lady of the Gulf relating to the private disposition of some specie, which, unknown to his crew, the captain had smuggled into his state-room, having no immediate connexion with our story, we shall leave him to transact without our supervision, and return to the prisoners confined in the guard-room of the fortalice.

"Well, Williams, we are in a fine pickle, cooped up in this seven-by-nine bit of a box, at the tender mercies of Lafitte and his merciful crew," said the naval officer, getting up from the rude bench on which he had been sometime seated in silence, and looking forth from the grated window.

"Damme," he continued, "if I ever saw such a swarm of gallows-looking cut-throats as were assembled on the shore to honour our debarkation! They need neither change of place nor body, to be fiends incarnate.

"You say true, Lockyer," replied the military officer addressed; "such black-browed villains would shame the choicest corps of Beelzebub's infantry. I have no doubt he would set up a rendezvous on this blessed island of Grand Terre, Barrita, or whatever else it is called, if he did not apprehend his new recruits would corrupt his old soldiers."

"But then," replied the naval officer, "their chief seems to be a man of other metal. I could hardly believe I was looking upon the celebrated Lafitte, when I gazed upon his elegant, even noble, person and fine features, in

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which, in spite of their resolute expression, there is an air of frankness, which assures me that he never would be guilty of a mean action, however familiar bold deeds of blood and battle may be to his hand. I have seldom seen a finer countenance nor a nobler presence than that of this same buccaneer. What a devil he must be among the women?" he added in a gay tone, passing his hand complacently over his own fine face. "I will wager my epaulettes against a middle's warrant, if he has not broken more hearts than heads."

And as he ceased speaking he stroked his whiskers, and glanced with much apparent self-approval upon his bright breastplate which reflected his handsome features as in a mirror.

"What think you," he continued, turning to the other naval officer by his side, "can we trust Lafitte in this matter? He seems to care for our welfare, nor would he have sent that fierce Spaniard to breakfast with his infernal highness this morning, if he had determined to sacrifice us. He might have suffered our massacre, without being charged with foul play. We are in his power safe enough! What fatal temerity could have induced us to let him inveigle us within reach of his guns? For such a blind piece of folly, if it does not end better than I foresee, I will throw up my commission and run a lugger between Havana and Matanzas, with a young savage before the mast, and a bull-headed Congo negro, for officers and crew. Curse me," he added, with much apparent chagrin, "but Captain Lockyer, you have run your craft hard aground; if you get clear this time, you may thank any thing but your own wits."

"Hark! there's a gun another a volley!" exclaimed the military officer.

"Good God! can these infernal fiends be attacking the Sophia?" exclaimed Captain Lockyer; "ho, there, guard! what, ho! what is that firing and commotion without?" he cried, springing to the barricaded window which only overlooked the court.

The guard, who was a heavily armed and tall Portuguese, with an air half-military, half-naval, preserved in keeping by a tall chasseur's cap, a sailor's jacket, and loose trowsers, paused a moment, while he took a huge quid from a roll of tobacco he held in his fist, and then turned to the window and replied, while a malign expression lighted up his full black eyes

"Holy St. Antoine, caballeros, but you need not be so warm! it is only a bit of a trial among the men, to see who is the stronger."

"How mean you, guard?"

"I mean, señores, that the party that proves the strongest below on the beach there, will either let you remain peaceably where you are till El Sigñor Captain Lafitte returns, or take you forth to dangle by the necks from the live oak before the gate."

"What! how you jest," exclaimed, in great perturbation, the officer of his majesty's royal colonial marines. "Villain, you jest!" and the fingers of his gloved hand, involuntarily sought the precincts of his windpipe, with tender solicitude.

"Jest! do you call that jest, señor?" as a loud shout filled the air, mingled with cries of "seize them! spies! swing them! down with the gates!" above which was heard the voice of Capt. Getzendanner, in vain exerted to quell the turmoil.

The officers, like resolute men determined to sell their lives dearly as possible, drew each a concealed dirk from his bosom, and stood with folded arms, facing the window which commanded the main entrance to the court from without, and towards which the noise was rapidly approaching.

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The guard himself, mounted a flight of steps leading to the flat roof of the guard-house, not only commanding a view of the ground outside of the defences, but of the whole island, the southern sea to the horizon, the passes, and the bay, with its fleet riding quietly at anchor.

"By St. Josef!" he exclaimed, as he gained the summit, and cast his eye beneath upon the tumultuous scene.

The whole green esplanade, or terrace, which sloped from the fort to the beach, was dark with a dense crowd of men, all under the intensest excitement, which they manifested by shouts, execrations, and brandishing various weapons in the air. The crowd, consisting of persons of all nations, tongues, and hues, mostly in the garb of seamen, seemed to the eye of the guard divided into two unequal divisions, one of which was assembled with arms in their hands around the gate, and near a large oak, growing by the fort, under the command of Getzendanner, who with loud oaths, a sabre in one hand and a cocked pistol in the other, was standing before another party, pressing towards the gate, some of whom were armed with pistols, harpoons, and heavy spars. The last, slung between eight or ten men, by ropes, in rude imitation of the ancient battering ram, threatened destruction to the barred gate, for which it was evidently designed.

The two hostile bands, with ready weapons, were eyeing each other with looks of hatred.

"Den tousand teyfils, and py all de shaints, you sall not pass into de camp, Miles Cosgrove to pe shure!" continued the lieutenant, his face livid with rage, and an eye full of determination, as a huge seaman, with an Irish physiognomy advanced, with a handspike, a little in advance of the mutineers, "you once shaved mein life, Miles, and I don't forget it; put, py Got himself, I vill make a port hole in your tam long carcass, if you move anoder step forward."

"Misther lieutenant," replied the Irishman calmly, lifting his hand to his hat, "we mane to hoort not wone hair of your head, but we are resolved," and he raised his voice so that all, even the prisoners in the guard-room heard his words, "we are resolved to seize them British officers they are spies! and they have either desaived Captain Lafitte, or he himself is a traitor! So stand aside, Captain dear, an' let us pass. You have but a handful of men to oppose us!" and he cast his eyes contemptuously over the small party of better disciplined buccaneers who rallied around their officer, to aid him in upholding that discipline, which they knew, could alone hold their dangerous community together. The number that met his eye was indeed small, for most of those who had at first opposed the measure, when they saw the popularity of the cause, espoused by the other party, like sager politicians on more distinguished theatres, wisely went over to the stronger side.

The Irishman then turned his eye back upon his own followers, numbering six to one of his opponents. "Be discreet captain, and let us pass peaceably into the fort," he said, with some show of sullen earnestness; "See you these men sir?" he added with increased ferocity, pointing to his rude and undisciplined force, "they will pass through that gate, if they pass over your dead bodies."

Captain Getzendanner finding resistance vain against such a fierce and overwhelming torrent, replied:

"On one condition shall you pass de gate: dat you give me your vord, Miles Cosgrove and I know de value you place on dat dat you vill only mount one guard from your mutinous crew over dem prisoners, till Lafitte comes on shore; and den refer de decisions of dis matter to him. Dis ish mein vish to pe shure!"

"I give you the pledge, misther lieutenant, that you ask," said the Irishman, who was mate of one of the pirate's cruisers.

"Den you sall pe admitted," he replied, and a cunning, treacherous expression glowed in his eye as he spoke, requiring more than the Irishman's penetration to detect. "Ho! dere Weshton, unbar de gate and obey your first ordersh?"

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With as rapid a step as was consistent with his corporeal dignity, the Lieutenant with his men, who might number about seventy, moved round the angle of the building towards a stockade or exterior fortlet, in the rear of the main defences, while the besiegers rushed in a mass to the entrance. Too impatient to wait the unlocking of bolts and bars, those who bore the suspended spar, rushed at half speed against the gate, which partly unbarred, gave way before the tremendous power of the beam, swung with tremendous momentum against it.

The forcing of the gate was followed by a shout, and a rapid and tumultuous rush into the narrow passage. All at once, a fearful cry burst from twenty throats

"Hold there! back! back! for God's sake hold!" cried the Irish leader of the assault in a voice of terror, and in another moment a match would have been applied to the long gun by Weston, in obedience to the command of Lafitte, repeated, as he left the passage to the gate open, by the wily lieutenant, though not understood by the mutineers at the time.

The appalled men uttered a shriek of dismay, and those who had the most presence of mind, fell flat on their faces, while the rest, in wild confusion and terror, crowded back upon each other uttering cries and imprecations of despair and fury.

At this fearful crisis, the bars of the grated window gave way as they were wrenched out, one after another by an iron hand. Lockyer sprung from the aperture grasping one of them, and overthrew his guard who attempted to intercept him; and, just as the torch was about to ignite the powder, to send a shower of iron hail into that living mass of human beings before its open mouth, the murderous hand was arrested by his irresistible grasp, and the flaming torch hurled far over the heads of the multitude, and quenched in the sea.

"By the twelve apostles, sir Englishman, you have saved your life by that bould act," exclaimed the astonished Irishman as soon as he could recover from his momentary surprise, as amid the cheers of his party, Lockyer drew back a step, and surveyed with a firm manner and folded arms the motley crew before him. "By St. Patrick, men, but we may thank that stranger that we did not make our dinner on grape shot and slugs."

A shout of "viva el Ingles! viven los Ingleses!" replied.

From the momentary check the mutineers received at the sight of the long gun, standing open-mouthed in their path, and on account of the sudden change of sentiment produced by it among those in advance, who had witnessed the bold and humane act of the gallant Englishman, it was easy to direct the current of their feelings.

"Give back now my honies. You see this Englishman is no spy or he'd have let that bloody spaldeen Weston blow us into purgatory. Return sir to the guard room," he added, addressing the officer, who was now as much the idol of their respect, as he was before the object of their hatred, "and you shall be protected until Captain Lafitte comes on shore."

The crowd acquiesced in the proposition of their herculean leader, with a shout, and turned their rage against Weston, who with his guard had retreated into the quarters of their commander, constructed both for strength and defence, and firmly secured the entrance.

The English officer was once more shut up in the guard-room with his fellow prisoners, while Cosgrove after posting a guard of men by the door and window, attempted to restore order among his undisciplined associates, who, now finding a worthy object upon which to vent the rage which the gallant act of the Englishman had turned from himself and his fellow prisoner, had brought the gun, so recently directed against their own bosoms, to bear upon the door of the building containing the guard, and with cries of revenge, were only waiting for a torch, for which one of the number had been sent, to drive the whole charge of grape through the door and force a passage to their victims.

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Suddenly there was a movement among the privateers at the gate, and "Lafitte! the captain!" passed hurriedly from mouth to mouth.

"Holy devil! what means all this?" cried the chief, pressing through the crowd, who shrunk back before his lightning eye and upraised sabre. "Take that, sir," and the hand which was about to apply the burning brand to the priming of the cannon, fell, still grasping the blazing wood, severed from the arm, by a single blow from the sabre of the outlaw.

The next moment he stood upon the gun, with a drawn pistol in each hand; his eye flashing, and his tall athletic figure expanded with rage, while a broad circle was made around him, as the men involuntarily drew back from the summary justice of his ready hand.

"How is it!" he continued, vehemently, "that I cannot leave the camp half an hour but there is mutiny among ye knaves! By the holy St. Peter, you shall remember this morning's work! Who are the ringleaders of this fray? Who, I say?" and his voice rung in their ears. "Come forward!" and his eyes passed quickly over the silent and moody multitude, each man, as he dropped his own, felt that they were fixed individually upon himself.

"What Cosgrove! my trusty Miles Cosgrove!" exclaimed the pirate, as the tall Irishman stepped forth from among his fellows, "and yet I might have thought it," he added; "it were a miracle to find one of you a stranger to treachery. What could have led you," he continued, raising his voice, "thus boldly to despise the authority of your Captain, and throw off the discipline of our community?" Speak, sir! what was your object in this mad assault upon the garrison of the fortress a small one indeed, for we thought friends and not traitors, were around us? What have you to answer, sir?"

"Captain Lafitte! I have this defence," said Cosgrove, coming forward and speaking with a firm countenance and a clear eye, which shrunk not beneath the stern gaze of his superior. And in a few words he detailed the circumstances as they had happened.

"Cosgrove, I believe you. You are impulsive and headstrong, but I think, in the main, faithful," said, as he concluded, Lafitte, who had calmly listened to the recapitulative defence of the ringleader, which from the mutterings and pleasurable exclamations that proceeded from various quarters of the fort, differently affected his hearers.

"Well, my men," he said, raising his voice, "will you all return to your duty and your vessels, if no further notice is taken of this matter?"

"Aye, aye! all, all!" came unanimously from the multitude.

"Will you freely leave me to deal with these prisoners?"

"Freely, captain, freely," said a hundred voices.

"I thank you, one and all. I hope a scene like this witnessed to-day, will never be repeated. Return each man to his duty. To each officer under my command, I would suggest the expediency of preparing for the threatened attack from the squadron, said to be fitting out against us at New-Orleans; and laying aside private animosities and prejudices, party feelings, or unjust suspicions, let us adopt for our own the wary motto of the States.

His address was received with acclamations by his men, who, in a few moments, each under his respective officer, departed for the fleet, leaving behind only the regular guard of the garrison.

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"Gentlemen," said Lafitte, stepping from his elevated station upon the gun, and approaching the window of the guard-room, from which his guests had been silent and deeply interested spectators of the scene passing before them, "Gentlemen, I congratulate you on your safety amidst this wild commotion of human passions. Such tempests are fiercer than the storms and waves of the ocean to contend with. You may thank your own daring, and not my authority, that this storm is allayed. It would have cost me the lives of many brave men to have quelled it. Gentlemen, you are no longer under restraint. I hailed, as I came under the stern of your brig, and your pinnace is now approaching the shore."

Here he whispered to Théodore, who hastened into his room.

"Allow me, Messieurs, to express my sincere regret at the unpleasant situation in which you have been placed. You have seen that I can scarcely control the wild spirits around me, except by what may be thought cruel and unnecessary severity. But should I abate for a moment, a feather's weight of my discipline or authority, I should lose my command or my head."

Théodore now approached, with the swords of the officers, which were courteously tendered them by Lafitte, with an apology for detaining them; and after doing ample justice to the sparkling stores of the Barratarian, presented on a richly chased salver, by his slave, accompanied by Lafitte, they left the garrison; and after crossing the green terrace, stretching before it quite to the beach, they were in a few moments at their boat.

"Messieurs," said the outlaw, with dignity and address, as the British officer, before stepping into his boat, desired to be told what conclusion he had formed in relation to the proposals of Admiral Percy, "Messieurs, in reference to this important subject, some delay is indispensable. The confusion which prevailed in my camp this morning, has prevented me from considering with that attention I should wish to, the offers made me by your government. If you will grant me a fortnight's delay, such a length of time is necessary to enable me to put my affairs in order, and attend to other things which peremptorily demand my present attention, at the termination of this period, I will be entirely at your disposal. You may communicate with me then by sending a boat to the eastern pass, an hour before sunset, where I shall be found. You have inspired me, Captain Lockyer, with more confidence," he said, sincerely, "than the admiral, your superior officer, himself could have done. With you alone I wish to deal, and from you also I will reclaim in due time, the reward of the services which I may render you."

The decided tone and manner of Lafitte gave Capt. Lockyer no hope of being able to draw from him a present decisive reply; he therefore merely said:

"I must, I find, though reluctantly enough, comply with your request, Captain Lafitte. On the evening of the fourteenth day from the present, we will ask again, your determination, which, I trust, will be that, which will give you an opportunity of securing a high and honourable name among men, and that, which will add Louisiana to his majesty's crown. Good morning, sir."

"Good morning, Messieurs," replied Lafitte; and the pinnace moved swiftly away from the beach, and the outlaw stood alone the sea-breeze playing coolly upon his brow the broad gulf with a low murmur unrolling its waves at his feet the rich forest rising in majesty behind him, and the deep blue skies above him yet, all unseen, unheard, unfelt by him. After gazing thoughtfully a few moments after the receding boat, he folded his arms upon his breast, and walked slowly back to the camp.

The sun had just set on the evening of the day in which the events we have recorded, transpired, when Lafitte, his tall and commanding figure enveloped in a gray cloak, issued from the gate of the fortress, after giving several brief orders to Captain Getzendanner, who was stationed with his portly mien, and goodly corporeal dimensions, just within the gate as he passed. Cudjoe's low, deformed figure also wrapped in a cloak followed him with an awkward rolling gait, as he walked rapidly towards a point at the extremity of the anchorage on the north side of the island, closely engaged in conversation with Théodore, who moved by his side with a light step. After a rapid

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walk of about forty minutes the three stopped under a broad tree, casting a deep shadow over a narrow inlet, penetrating a little way into the island, in which a small, gracefully shaped boat could be indistinctly seen through the obscurity of the night.

Just as they entered the dark shadow of the tree, they were challenged by a seaman, who, with a drawn cutlass in his hand was pacing fore and aft under the tree, with that habitual tread learned by that class of men, in their lonely watch upon their vessels' decks.

"Our country!" replied the deep voice of Lafitte. "What ho! Corneille, is all still in the fleet?" he added.

"Aye, aye, sir; there is nothing moving within a mile of us."

"Are you all ready?"

"All, sir."

Théodore, see that the oars are muffled. I choose not that the fleet should mark our movements. They will be in chase of us for another God-send of English spies, and I prefer passing unnoticed. Cudjoe, place yourself in the bows," he said playfully, "and show your tusks generously; if they should spy us, they will take us for an in-shore fisherman, with his bow-lights hung out, and so let us pass."

In a few moments the little boat shoved noiselessly out from the creek in which it had been hitherto concealed, and after a few light but skilful strokes by the four oarsmen by whom it was manned, shot rapidly out into the open bay, or, as it has been more recently denominated, Lake, of Barritaria.

For an hour they steered by the lonely polar star, which, in that southern latitude, hung low in the northern skies, and leaving the anchored squadron far in shore to the left, they raised their dark brown sail so painted, to be less easily distinguished through the night haze and shipping their oars, glided swiftly towards the narrow mouth of a deep bayou, which, after many intricate windings terminated in the Mississippi river, nearly opposite to the city of New-Orleans.

As they approached, long after the hour of midnight, the secret and scarcely discernable outlet, nearly lost in the dark shadow of the shore, they lowered their sail; and, yielding once more to the impulse of the oars, the little boat shot into the mouth of the creek, and suddenly disappeared in the deep gloom which hung over it.

BOOK IV. SIEGE.

"Greece gathers up again her glorious band,
They strike the noblest, who shall strike the first."

The Emigrant.

"I pray you let the proofs
Be in the past acts, you were pleased to praise
This very night, and in my farther bearing,
Beside."

Byron.

"My chiefest glory
Shall be to make me worthier of your love."
Ibid.

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"Oh! what an agony of soul was his!
Baffled just in the moment of success."
The Conqueror.

CHAPTER I.

"At a crisis so important, and from a persuasion that the country in its menaced situation, could not be preserved by the exercise of any ordinary powers, the commanding general proclaimed martial law, suspending constitutional forms for the preservation of constitutional rights."

History of the war.

New-Orleans before the siege guard boats a scene on the river.

A FEW weeks before that memorable battle, the last and most decisive fought during the recent war between the United States and Great Britain, the citizens of New Orleans were thrown into consternation by the rumour of extensive naval and military preparations making by the British, who were assembled in great force along the northern coast of the Mexican Gulf; and this alarm was still increased, by the report, that they meditated a descent upon the capital of Louisiana.

This point, next to the city of Washington, had been always deemed in the eye of England, the most important conquest she could make upon the territory of her enemy.

And to this point all her forces were now concentrated for the purpose of striking a blow, which should at once terminate the war, and make the Americans of the west, to use her proud language, "prisoners in the heart of their own country."

As the rumours became more frequent, and were finally corroborated by official despatches, directed to the legislative assembly which hastily convened to deliberate upon measures for the safety of the country, the panic increased, until distress, confusion and forebodings filled the minds of all. Menaced by so formidable a foe, without any regular soldiering or means of defence in which to place confidence, they lost all decision and energy. Business was suspended, and the streets were filled with groups, anxiously conversing upon the fearful rumours, rife on every tongue, or with individuals hurrying to and fro in exaggerated alarm; while the roads leading to the interior of the state, were alive with individuals and families laden with their more portable wealth, seeking that safety beyond the probable invasions of the enemy, which their fears, and, among such a motley assemblage as constituted the citizens, want of combination, prevented them from securing by their swords.

Those, whose love for property, or disbelief of the reports so generally accredited, or patriotism, induced to remain, were united together by no common bond; and destitute of that confidence in each other which the crisis called for. Composed principally of Spaniards, Frenchmen and Englishmen, each national division viewed the coming events through a medium of its own peculiar colouring. Mutual jealousies arose and general disaffection usurped the place of good faith. The legislature itself was disserved and weakened by these party jealousies, and their deliberations were only scenes of warm and conflicting debate, from which none of the measures resulted, demanded by the exigencies of the time.

Some of the senators whose patriotism led them to propose such steps as would place the city in a state for receiving the enemy, were overruled by others, whose prejudices inclined them either to the side of the British, or to neutrality, in the character of French citizens, or as subjects of Spain, with which countries the English were then at peace.

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At this period of indecision and civil anarchy, and when every good citizen and reflecting man was looking about for some one who would lead in this emergency, the American chief of the southern forces arrived at New-Orleans. His presence produced a sudden and healthy change in the aspect of affairs, and before he had been in the city one hour, his name was upon every lip, either with hope, or pride, or hostility, and the eyes of all lovers of their country turned upon him, and marked him as their leader in the great struggle before them.

His presence and language roused them to a defence of their rights, and kindled patriotism and hatred for the enemy in their breasts. He excited them to vigilance, and called them to put forth all their energies for the approaching trial. He was seconded by the governor of Louisiana, a few distinguished senators, and numerous citizens. The confidence which filled his own bosom, was communicated to the desponding hearts of those around him, and intrepidity, decision, and energy succeeded the inaction and dismay which had before reigned in the bosoms and minds of men. A new spirit invigorated every breast, and men, strong in the righteousness of their cause, rallied around the standard of their country, prepared for the approaching contest.

He recommended to the legislature to change their temporizing policy for unwavering and dignified deliberations, burying and forgetting all minor considerations, in their labour for the public good. Those aliens who felt no attachment to the existing government, and were ready to sell or surrender it to the British, Spanish, or French, as either natural faction predominated, were allowed, or compelled, to quit the town.

Every resource that could contribute to the safety of the city, was in requisition, and operations on an extensive scale for its defence, were projected with military promptness and skill. General confidence became at once every where restored, and with the exception of some disaffected citizens, who were strictly watched, there was but one heart and hand enlisted in the mutual defence. Regiments were formed of the citizens, and, throwing off the habits of a life, each man became a soldier. Even women and children partook of the general enthusiasm; and when the enemy were at the gates, the day before the battle, the citizens appeared more like rejoicing for a victory than preparing to withstand a siege.

For the greater security of the country, martial law was at length proclaimed throughout New-Orleans and its environs, and the whole city became at once under the rigid discipline of a fortified camp. Patroles of veterans paraded the streets, and guard boats were stationed at various points on the river, before the city.

"All persons," says a historian of the period, "entering the city, were required immediately to report themselves to the adjutant-general, and on failing to do so, were to be arrested and detained in prison, for examination. None were allowed to depart, or pass beyond the chain of sentinels, but by permission from the commanding general, or one of the staff, nor was any vessel or craft permitted to sail on the river, but by the same authority, or by a passport signed by the commander of the naval forces. The lamps were to be extinguished at the hour of nine at night, after which time all persons found in the streets, or from their respective homes, without such passport, were to be arrested as spies, and thrown into prison to await an examination the ensuing morning."

It is at this period of the war, and under these peculiar features of it, at the expense of a slight anachronism, that our scenes once more open.

The morning after leaving the island of Barritaria, or Grand Terre, the party, consisting of the buccaneer chief, his young companion Théodore, and faithful slave Cudjoe, having rowed all the preceding night through the sluggish and sinuous bayous, reached a hamlet of fishermen's huts, nearly hid in a cypress wood, and amidst tall grass, which enclosed it on every side. Here they delayed, until once more, under the cover of the darkness, they should be enabled to enter the vigilantly-guarded city unperceived.

Night, hurrying away the scarcely visible twilight, had passed over city, river, and forest, obscuring every object in the gloomy shade cast by her sable wing. Silence reigned over all, that one short hour before was active and animate, save the occasional challenge of a sentinel, the ringing of fire-arms accidentally struck together, and

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now and then the dip of an oar to maintain their position against the current heard from the guard-boats, which, at regular intervals, formed lines across the Mississippi, against various points of the city. Here and there, a light gleamed in the mass of dwellings along the margin of the river, or from the stern window of some armed vessel at anchor in the stream.

At the mouth of a narrow canal, opening nearly opposite to the suburb Marigny, about a mile below the main body of the city, and communicating in the rear of the estate it intersected, with the bayou which the outlaw and his party ascended from the island, about half an hour after night had wholly assumed her empire, lay a boat concealed in the deep shade of a large oak overhanging the entrance, its tendril-like branches nearly touching the water. In it sat four boatmen resting upon their oars, in the attitude of men prepared to use them at the slightest word of command.

Against the tree, with his arms habitually folded upon his chest, thoughtfully leaned the pirate, divested of his cloak, and dressed in the ordinary garb of his men, from whom he was distinguished only by his superior height, erect figure, and the deference shown to him by his companions.

Upon a gnarled root of the tree, which the action of the water had laid bare, sat his companion engaged in watching the changing lights moving along the opposite shore, and listening to the challenges of the guard boats his pulse occasionally bounding with the wild spirit of adventure, as the danger attending their expedition occurred to his mind.

Cudjoe was hanging by his arms and feet, from one of the drooping branches, as motionless as the limb which bore him. The air was still. Not a leaf moved, and the deep silence that reigned at the moment, was made more striking, by the reedy-toned ripple of the flowing water curling among the tips of the slender branches, as, borne down by the weight of the slave, they dipped in the rolling flood.

"Cudjoe, down sir!" said Lafitte, suddenly addressing the slave.

The African dropped from the limb and stood by his master.

"You swim, Cudjoe!"

"Yes, Massa, Cudjoe swim like fis'."

"Do you see that first boat there, just under that brightest star in the range of those double lights?"

"Yes, Massa."

"It is one of the watch boats. There are but two men in it go up the leveé till you are about one hundred rods above the boat then strike off into the river and let the current drift you against her bows. If you are cautious you will approach unperceived. Then get over the bows into the boat and master the men the best way you can so you effect it without noise. But, slave, take no life. When you have captured the boat, scull it here!"

"Yes, Massa," he replied, displaying his tusks with delight.

"Go, then."

The slave, with a stealthy step left the shadow of the tree, and glided along the leveé until he was above the boat, when, from a projecting limb, he dropped himself noiselessly into the river; his head in the obscure starlight as he swum, resembling the end of a buoy, or a shapeless block floating upon the water.

CHAPTER II.

"Guard boats were stationed across the river; the lamps were to be extinguished at nine o'clock at night, after which all persons found in the streets without a passport, were to be arrested as spies." "Although a large reward was offered by the governor for the chief of the Barritarians, he frequently visited the city in disguise."

Sketches of the last war.

THE VOLUNTEERS COLLOQUY INTERRUPTED PRISONERS THE CITY.

The two men were sitting in the boat, engaged in social discourse, one with his face to the stern, the other fronting the bows, upon whose features the rays of the light shone brightly.

"But, Mr. Aughrim, in your opinion, what think these Englishers would do with't if they should, (which is a mighty bad chance for 'em) take the old yellow fever city?" said one of the oarsmen of the boat, gently rubbing with his palm the head of a carbine, whilst with the other hand he occasionally dipped his oar into the water, with just force enough to counteract the current.

"Why you see, Tim, dear," replied his companion, "the ould countrhy has her eye open, sure! and is not this the kay of Ameriky; it's a kingdom they'll make of it at wanst bad loock to the likes o' them. Faix, its for faar o' that same Dennis Aughrim is this blissed night a 'listed sojer."

"I reckon they'll feel a small touch of the alligator's tooth, and a kick from the old horse Kentuck, afore they turn narry acre o' land in the States into a kingdom, come."

"Troth, honey bad loock to the likes o' my mimory;" said the Irish volunteer rubbing that intellectual organ, "sure I've heard that same big bog-trotter of a hoorse, mintioned the omadhoun! An' has he devil of an alligator's tooth in his beautiful mouth, Tim, dear or is it ony a 'figur o' spache' as ould father Muldoodthrew, pace to his mimory, used to say."

"Look! what is that?" said his companion hastily, pointing out a dark object floating on the water, towards which they pulled for a moment, and then again rested on their oars.

"Nothin' my darlint," said Dennis, "but one of them same jewells that coom sailin' all the way from furrin parts, about the north pole. We'll kape our four eyes aboot us, sure, but devil a straw could dhrift by, widout Dennis Aughrim's seeing it wid his peepers shut."

"Perhaps," said his companion speaking slowly, giving utterance to the thoughts the inanimate object called up, "perhaps that old log has drifted by my door, and the old woman and little ones have looked at it, and thought how it was floating away down to Orleans, where daddy Tim is;" and till it faded in the distance from his eyes, he gazed after the floating tree, which, even in his rude breast conjured up emotions, for a moment, carrying his thoughts far back to the rude cabin and the little group he had left behind him, to go forth and fight the battles of his country.

"Is it far, the childer and the ould 'ooman live, Masther Tim?" inquired Dennis, chiming in with the feelings of his comrade.

"It is in old Kentuck Hark?" he said, as one guard boat challenged another which was rowing across her bows.

"An' thin is there the likes o' sich a hoorse in your countrhy?" inquired the Irishman after a moment's silence,

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"faix, it's exthraordinary."

"And you never saw old Kentuck?" said his companion, recovering at once, the low humour characteristic of his countrymen, "Well, he's a caution! He's about four hundred miles long from head to tail, and when he stands up, one foot is on the Mississippi and another on the Ohio, and his two fore legs rest on Tennessy and old Virginny.

"Thrue for you, indeed! Masther Tim; but sure it's joking you are, Tim, dear," said Dennis in credulous surprise.

"Never a joke in the matter, paddy he's a screamer I tell *you* . Why, his veins are bigger than any river in all Ireland, and he has swallowed whole flat boats and steamers; and stranger, let me tell *you*, the boys aboard, never minded but what they were sailing on a river only they said they thought the water looked a little reddish. Why it takes a brush as large as all Frankfort, and that's a matter of some miles long, to rub him down, and every brustle is a pine tree. When he drinks you can wade across the Mississippi for a day after, just about there. He snorts louder than July thunder, and when he winks, it lightens make him mad, and he'll blow like one of these here new fashioned steam boats. "

"Oh! Holy mother! The saints betune us and this omadhoun! But it must take the mate and the praitees to feed him. Och hone!"

"But this is not all, Dennis;" continued his companion with humour, amused at the credulity of his fellow soldier; "his tail is like a big snake and as long as the Irish channel."

"The Lord and the blessed St. Pathrick betwixt us and harm."

"His back is covered with a shell of a snapping turtle, that you could put your island under. "

"Oh murther! but may be it's no expinse the Prisident will be for a saddle. Lord! Lord!"

"Not a bit, paddy; nor a bridle either, for that matter," continued the Kentuckian with imperturbable gravity, while his companion, with incredulous and simple wonder, listened aghast; "his head is shaped like an alligator's, with a double row of teeth and a large white tusk sticking out each side of his mouth. "

"Oh! the Lord look down upon us! there he is!" suddenly shrieked the Irishman, and fell senseless on the bottom of the boat. Before the Kentuckian could turn to see the cause of the alarm, the slave, whose hideous features seen over the bows, combined with his excited imagination, had terrified the simple Irishman, already inflamed by the recital of his comrade, sprung forward; and he felt the iron clutch of Cudjoe's fingers around his throat, and his arms pressed immovably to his side. Until his captive grew black in the face, the slave kept his hold; and when he found him incapable of resistance, he seized the oars and pulled into the mouth of the canal, opposite which the boat had now drifted.

"Done like Cudjoe," said his master, who had watched with interest, the success of his plan, as the boat touched the bank.

"Ha, slave! did I not tell you to shed no blood?" he added angrily, as his eye rested upon the prostrate forms of the boatmen.

"Cudjoe no spill one drop," replied the slave; "one sojer tinky me alligator, curse him; he make one yell and den go to de debil, dead directly. Dis oder big sojer he only little bit choke."

"Take them out," he said to his crew, "and lay them on the bank."

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In a few moments, the Kentuckian revived, and looked around him in moody silence.

"You are a prisoner," said Lafitte.

"And to the devil, I suppose, stranger," he said, looking at Cudjoe's ungainly figure. The next moment a thought of his lonely family swelled his bosom, and a desire to escape suddenly inspired him. Leaping from the ground, while his captors thought him incapable of rising, he threw himself headlong into the river. In a few seconds, they heard the water agitated far below them by his athletic arms. He gained the shore on the lower side of the canal, beyond pursuit, and his receding footsteps were heard far down the levee.

"Better he were free," said Lafitte; "that man would lose his life before he would betray the watch-word. But this looks like baser metal," he added, placing his foot upon the body of the Irishman, who, after being deluged with a few caps full of the cold river water, revived.

"Oh! murther, murther!" he exclaimed, as a generous discharge nearly drowned him "Oh! the hoorse the hoorse! Och, murther me! It is kilt you are Dennis Aughrim! Och, hone "

"Up, sir, up, and stop that howling," said Lafitte, "taking him by the collar, and lifting him as a less muscular man would a child, and placing him upon his feet

"What is the pass-word of the night?"

"The woord is't yer honor?" said Dennis, his consciousness partially restoring "and devil a bit did I know, how ever I coome here. Oh, the hoorse, and the alligathur!" he suddenly exclaimed, looking about him, as if he expected again to see the object of his fears "and did yer honor pick me from the wather, where he dhragged me to devoor me. Oh! holy St. Patrick! but it was a divil of a craather."

"Back, Cudjoe," said Lafitte, as the slave was gradually creeping round to intercept his vision. "Give me the pass word of the night, soldier."

"By dad, an' wid a heart an' a will would I oblige yer honor; the mither in heaven send blessin' on blessin' on yer honor's head; for savin' me from droouin'; but Tim, Tim is it wid de bit paper."

"No trifling man, or you will be worse off than in an alligator's jaws," replied his captor sternly.

"Oh, thin, dear, yer honor! but I must spake it low," and standing on his toes, he whispered in the ear of Lafitte, the pass word of the night.

"'Tis as I thought," he exclaimed. "Now get into this boat and guide us up to the city; serve me faithfully, and you shall soon be free; betray or deceive me, and you die."

"Oh, blissed mither! that Dennis Aughrim should be prisoner to the Inglishers! and, poor craythur! that he should lit them into the city, to make it a kingdom. Och, Dennis! but you'll have to go back to ould Ireland! Amirky is no more to be the free countrhy o' the world. Och, murther me! that Dinnis's own mither's son should come to this!" he soliloquized, as he reluctantly stepped into the boat for the purpose of betraying his trust.

Leaving orders for his men to remain in their concealment until his return, and be on the alert against surprise, the buccaneer chief stepped into the guard-boat with Théodore and his slave.

Taking an oar himself, and giving the other to his guide and prisoner, he pushed boldly out from the bank, and confidently passed the line of boats, every challenge from them being answered by the familiar voice of the

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Irishman, as they passed within two or three oars' length of the line of guard-boats; all but the chief and the guide lying in the bottom of the barge.

In about half an hour after leaving the shore, he shot into the inlet of canal Mariguay, and nearly under the guns of fort St. Charles. At this point were collected many other boats and fishing craft; and having passed the chain of guard-boats with security, he pulled along side of the leveé, and into the midst of the boats, without attracting observation.

Leaving the Irishman in the barge under the charge of Cudjoe, of whom he stood in mortal fear the chief, accompanied by his companion, mounted the leveé, and with an indifferent pace passed under the walls of the fort. As he walked forward, the esplanade in front of the city, was crowded with citizens and soldiers, along which mounted officers were riding at speed, and detachments of soldiers moving swiftly and without music, down the road which wound along the banks of the river. At every corner he passed by guards posted there, and nearly every man he met was armed, and as the lamps shone upon their faces, he discovered that expectation of some important event dwelt thereon, giving a military sternness to their visages.

The parade was nearly deserted except by citizens and soldiers, too old to bear arms in the field. Without being questioned or challenged by any one, for the hour of nine, when vigilance more thoroughly reigned throughout the guarded city, had not yet arrived.

Turning from the leveé and leaving the parade on his left, he passed up Rue St. Anne to Charles-street, without lifting his eyes to the cathedral, its dark towers rising abruptly and gloomily against the sky, overtopping the government house and other massive public buildings around it.

A soldier in the uniform of Lateau's coloured regiment was pacing in front of the government-house with his musket to his shoulder. Against the wall of the church, leaned a group of citizens and soldiers, all of whom, though apparently off duty, wore arms, and had the air of men who momently expected to be called into action. A neighbouring guard-house was full of soldiers smoking segars, burnishing their arms and discussing the great subject of the expected attack upon their city. Occasionally, a private or an officer in uniform hurried past on the trottoir, neither turning to the right or left, nor replying to the questions occasionally put to them by the inquisitive passers-by.

"Soldier, is the governor in the city?" inquired Lafitte, stopping as he met the guard.

"You must be a stranger here, monsieur, to put such a question," said he, eyeing him suspiciously; "next to her noble general, is he not the guardian of our city?"

"You say well, monsieur he is then in the government-house?" inquired the buccaneer.

"Would you speak with the governor, señor;" said one of the soldiers stepping up.

"I have important papers for him," answered Lafitte, looking at the man fixedly.

"You will then find him at the quarters of the general in Faubourg Marigny he rode by with his staff not half an hour since," replied the man.

"Thank you, monsieur," said Lafitte.

As he spoke, the bell of the cathedral tolled nine, and the report of a heavy piece of artillery placed in front upon the parade, awoke the echoes of the city, warning every householder to extinguish his lights, and confining the inhabitants to their own dwellings. The foot of the loiterer hastened as the first note struck his ear, and a thousand

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lights at once disappeared from the windows of the dwellings; and before the sound of the last stroke of the bell died away, the city became silent and dark. After that hour, until sunrise, with the exception of here and there one bearing about him a passport from the American chief, every one abroad was on the severe duty of a soldier.

"You have the pass, monsieur?" inquired the soldier, whom he first addressed, extending his hand as the clock broke the stillness of the night.

Lafitte gave the word which had passed him through the chain of boats.

"It will not do, monsieur," replied the guard, "have you not a passport?"

The soldier who had directed him where to find the governor whispered in his ear "Pensacola."

Lafitte starting, repeated the word to the guard; adding, "I gave you before by mistake, the word for the river."

"It is well, monsieur," said the soldier, giving back, "pass with the youth."

Lafitte and his companion turned and retraced their steps to the suburb, occupied by the commander-in-chief.

As they were crossing Rue St. Phillippe, some one called the chief's name in a distinct whisper. He turned and distinguished the figure of the soldier who had given him the pass-word.

"Ha! is it you, Pedro? I knew you then! but how is this? Have you turned soldier?"

"For a time, señor captain I must not starve."

"Nor will you if you can find other man's meat," said Lafitte, laughingly. "I thought you had taken your prize money and gone to Havana."

"No, señor; a pair of large black eyes and one small bag of five-frank pieces tempted me out of that."

"That is, you are married!"

"It is a sad truth, señor. I am now captain of a carbaret on Rue Royal, and my dame is first officer. And master Théodore, how fare you, señor," he said, abruptly changing the subject and addressing the youth. "It is many a month since I have seen your bright eye. Well, you are coming up to the tall man," continued the quondam pirate, curling his mustachio and drawing up to the full attitude of his five feet one inch, until his eyes reached to the chin of the young buccaneer. "You will yet walk a deck bravely."

"How did you recognize me so soon?" inquired Lafitte.

"When you folded your arms, and threw your head up, in the way you have, while you spoke to the guard, I said to myself `that's Captain Lafitte, or I'm no Benedict."

"Well, your penetration has done me good service, Pedro."

"Yes, señor; I wish you may always profit as well by having your disguise penetrated. Your tall figure, and way of fixing your head, will betray you more than once to-night, if you are on secret business, as I conjecture. A little stoop, and a lower gait, like a padre, if such be the case, would be wisdom in you, as you walk the streets. You know the reward offered for your head, by the Governor."

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"I know it, Pedro; and you have no doubt seen my proclamation for the governor's, wherein I have done him much honour, valuing his head five times at what he fixes mine," said he, laughingly.

"And you are seeking him," exclaimed Pedro. "This is strange; but it is like you, Captain Lafitte," he added, impressively. "There were six out of the seven standing with me, when you came up, who would have taken your life for a sous, if they could. Be careful señor! but if you are in danger, you will find many brave hearts and ready hands even in this city, to aid you. If you would like a taste of Bordeaux or old claret of the true brand, I should be honoured to have you seek it in my humble carbaret. The wine, the carbaret all I have, is at your service, señor."

"All? good Benedictine," said his former Captain, playfully, and with a stress upon the first word. "But I'll come, if thirst drive me; so, adieu, and thanks for your timely service to-night."

"Adios, señor; the saints prosper you!" said Pedro, taking leave of his chief, and returning to his comrades; while Lafitte, with a firm and steady pace, proceeded to the quarters of the commanding general.

CHAPTER II.

"That a sentiment, having for its object the surrender of the city, should be entertained by this body, was scarcely credible; yet a few days brought the certainty of it more fully to view, and showed that they were already devising plans to insure the safety of themselves and property. "In reference to these plans, a special committee of the legislature called to know of the commanding general what course he should pursue in relation to the city, should he be driven from his entrenchments."

Memoirs of the War.

HEAD-QUARTERS CAPITULATION OF THE SENATE THE GOVERNOR AND HIS VISITOR.

In the Faubourg Marigny, and not far from the canal of the same name, at the period of the war, stood a large dwelling, constructed after that combination of the Spanish, or Moresque and French orders, peculiar to the edifices of this suburb of the Louisianian capital.

It was two stories in height; massive, with thick walls, stuccoed, originally white, but now browned by the dust and smoke of many years. Heavy pilasters adorned the front, extending from the pavement to the cornice; the roof was covered with red tiles, and nearly flat, surrounded by a brick battlement. The street in which this edifice was situated, fronted the river, and was principally composed of similar structures, many of which approached close to the trottoir, while others were separated from the street by a paved parterre, filled with evergreens and numerous flowers, leaving a walk a few yards in length, to the dwelling. Two or three, including the one we are describing, were situated still farther from the street, in the midst of a garden, with umbageous groves of orange, lemon, fig, and olive trees.

To the house in question, led an avenue, bordered by these trees, terminating upon the street, in a heavy gate-way. The gate was of solid oak, and placed between square pillars of brick, each surmounted by an eagle, his wings extended, in the act of rising from the column. The house, situated about twenty yards from the gate, and fronting the leveé and noble river beyond, upon whose bosom rode many armed vessels, was square and very large, surrounded by ancient trees, which even at noon day defended it from the southern sun.

The spacious entrance of the mansion, with its lofty folding leaves, or more properly gates, thrown open, would freely admit the passage of a carriage. It gave admittance from the front into a lofty hall, paved, and without furniture, with doors leading into large rooms on either side, and terminating in a court in the rear, also paved, in the centre of which spouted a fountain. The court was surrounded with a colonnade or a sort of cloister, and was

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filled with plots of flowers and huge vases of plants, arranged with much taste by the proprietor in many picturesque and fantastic forms.

About the hour of nine, on the evening with which our story is connected, this dwelling presented a scene of warlike animation. Sentinels were posted in front; officers arm in arm, were promenading in grave or lively discourse before the door horses richly caparisoned for war were held by slaves in military livery on the street in front of the mansion, where also a guard was posted in honor of the present distinguished occupant. Citizens were occasionally passing in and out with busy faces, and hasty steps.

Horsemen, with brows laden with care or weighty tidings, rode frequently up, and dismounting, threw the bridles of their foaming horses to those in waiting, and rapidly traversed the avenue to the house, while others, hurriedly coming out, mounted and spurred away at full speed.

A door leading into one of the large rooms from the paved hall of the mansion, through which persons were constantly passing, displayed within, rich drapery, curtains, deep window recesses, alcoves for ottomans and various articles of furniture indicating the opulence of the citizen proprietor of the dwelling. Swords, richly-mounted pistols, plumes, belts, military gloves and caps were lying as they were hastily thrown down, about the room, upon ottomans, tables and chairs.

Near the centre of the apartment drawn a little towards the fire place in which blazed a cheerful fire, necessary even in this southern clime to dissipate the damp and chill of the night, stood a large square table, surmounted by a shade lamp and covered with papers, charts, open letters, plans of fortifications, mathematical instruments, a beaver military hat without a plume, and an elegant small sword with its belt attached, which a tall, gentlemanly man, in the full dress of a military chief, seated at the table, examining very intensely a large map of Louisiana, had just unbuckled and placed there.

The rays of the lamp falling obliquely upon his high forehead, over which the hair slightly sprinkled with gray, was arranged after the military fashion of the period, cast into deep shadow his eyes and the lower portion of his face.

Raising his head from the chart for an instant to address an officer standing on the opposite side of the table, his features in the bright glare of the lamp which shone full upon them, then became plainly visible.

The contour of his face, now pale and thin, apparently from recent illness, was nearly oval. His age might be about fifty. His forehead was high and bold, with arched, and slightly projecting brows, bent, where they met, into a slight habitual frown, indicating a nervousness and irritability of temperament, qualified however by the benevolent expression about his mouth.

His eyes were dark blue, sparkling when their possessor was animated, with a piercing lustre, and when highly excited, they became almost fiercely penetrating. His countenance was marked with resolution, firmness and intelligence. His smile was bland, his manners easy, and his address pleasing if not winning, as he spoke to the officer opposite to him. When erect, his height might be above six feet, commanding and military. His frame was rather slight, yet apparently muscular. Although his physical conformation seemed to disqualify him for the fatigues and arduous duties of the camp, yet, the bronzed cheek, the deep angular lines in his face, and the field-worn, and military appearance of the officer, showed, that with the hard details of a soldier's life he had long been familiar.

A gentleman in the dress of an American naval captain, much younger than the soldier, with a brown cheek, a frank air and manly features, leaned over his shoulder with his eyes fixed upon the chart, and occasionally making a remark, or replying to some question put in a quick, searching tone by the military chieftain.

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In the opposite or back part of the room, walked two gentlemen, both of much dignity of person and manner; one of whom, by his dress, was an officer in high command; the other was only distinguished from a citizen by the military insignia of a small sword, buff gloves, which he held in his hand, and a military hat carried under his left arm. They were engaged in low but animated conversation, one of them often gesticulating with the energy of a Frenchman, which his aquiline features, lofty retreating forehead, foreign air and accent, betrayed him to be. The citizen was graver, yet equally interested in the subject of conversation. The tones of his voice were firm, and there was a calm and quiet dignity in his language and manner, more impressive to an observer, than the gesticulative energy of his companion.

In a recess of one of the windows, a group of young officers stood engaged in low-toned, but animated conversation; while two or three of a graver age, promenaded the back part of the apartment conversing closely in suppressed voices upon subjects, which, from their manner, were of the deepest import.

Suddenly, a heavy, ringing tread was heard in the hall, and an officer of dragoons hastily entered, and without noticing the addresses,

"Ha! colonel! good evening."

"What news, colonel?"

"Hot haste, ha! you Mississippians do nothing by halves!" from several of the young officers who crowded round him, he approached the table where the general officer was seated and communicated some information to him, which, from its instantaneous effect, must have been of the most surprising nature.

Starting from his chair, with his brow contracted, his eye flashing, and his cheek reddened with emotion, he exclaimed in a stern voice which rung through the apartment,

"Capitulate! capitulate! the legislature capitulate! By the G d of Heaven we will see to that! Where learned you this damning treachery of our disaffected senate, colonel?" he inquired, addressing the officer, while his eye burned with rage.

"But now, Sir; as I passed the Capitol, I heard it whispered among the crowd assembled before the doors. Dismounting, I ascended to the outer gallery and found the house closed yet "

"A secret conspiracy!" said the general, pacing the room in excitement " go on!"

"As I was about to descend, a member, M. Bufort, came out and told me they were at the moment agitating the subject of capitulation to the enemy, and making at once a proffer to surrender the city into their hands "

"The false, cowardly traitors!" exclaimed the commanding general incensed, and in a loud angry voice "By heaven, they shall be blown up with their crazy old capitol to the skies. Governor," he said with readily assumed courtesy, turning to the gentleman in the blue dress of a citizen, "my immediate pressing duties will not allow me to go in person and wait on these traitors. To your excellency I entrust the office. Take a sufficient force with you closely watch their motions, and the moment a project of offering a capitulation to the enemy shall be fully disclosed place a guard at the door and confine them to their chamber. If they will not take the field, they had better be blown up to the third heavens, than remain there to plot treason against the state."

The governor accompanied by two or three of the young officers, immediately left the apartment to execute the command.

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"My object in taking this step commodore," said the general, quietly resuming his examination of the chart as the governor left the room, addressing the naval officer, "is, that they may be able to proceed to their business without injury to the state; now, whatever schemes they entertain will remain within themselves without the power of circulating to the prejudice of any other interest than their own. Like the serpent in the fable if they will bite, they must fix their fangs in their own coils."

The gentlemen who remained in the room, were gathered in a group near the door, conversing upon the conduct of the senate and the general, having laid aside the chart, was engaged in affixing his signature to some papers lying before him, when a special committee from the legislative body was announced.

"Admit them!" said the chief somewhat sternly.

Three gentlemen in the plain habiliments of citizens entered with some embarrassment; originated perhaps, by the nature of their business.

"Well, gentlemen! "said the general officer quickly, his brow clouding as he rose to receive them.

One of the legislative committee advanced a step before the other gentlemen of the deputation and said with some degree of hesitation,

"We are sent, sir, officially from the legislative assembly of this state, being ourselves members of that body, to ask of you as commander in chief of the army, and to whom is entrusted the defence of our city what course you have decided to pursue, should necessity drive you from your position."

"If," replied the general, his eye kindling and his lip writhing with contempt, looking fixedly upon each individual of the deputation, as if he sought to make him feel his look "if I thought the hair of my head could divine what I should do, I would cut it off. Go back with this answer! Say to your honourable body, that if disaster does overtake me and the fate of war drives, me from my line to the city, they may expect to have a very warm session! You have my answer," he added, resuming his occupation at the table, as he observed the committee made no movement to take leave.

"Let me suggest to your honorable body, however," he resumed ironically, raising his eyes as the deputation were leaving the room "that it would better comport with the spirit of these stirring times, while the roar of artillery is pealing in their ears, if they should abandon their civil duties for the sterner and more useful labours of the field."

"And what," inquired the naval officer in a low voice, as the deputation left the department, "and what do you design to do general, provided you are forced to retreat?"

"Fall back on the city fire it and fight the enemy amidst the surrounding flame! There are with me gentlemen of wealth, owners of property, who in such an event, will be amongst the foremost to apply the torch to their own dwellings. The senate fears this and it is to save their personal property from the flames, that the members are willing to surrender the city to the enemy," he added indignantly. "And what they leave undone," he continued with animation, rising from his chair and vehemently gesticulating with his hands, "I shall complete. Nothing for the maintenance of the enemy, shall be left in the rear. If necessary, I will destroy New Orleans to her foundations, occupy a position above on the river, cut off all supplies, and in this way compel the enemy to depart from the country."

As he spoke, a messenger entered and handed him a sealed paper. Hastily breaking it open, he glanced over it with a quick eye.

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"To horse, young gentlemen," he said in a sharp tone, addressing the group of officers, rising and buckling on his sword; and taking his cloak which lay on a chair beside him, he wrapped it closely about his tall form.

"Well, commodore," he said addressing the naval officer as he took up his cocked hat and gloves, "you will co-operate, as we have determined, with the land forces. Urgent business now calls me away; I will communicate with you on my return."

"General," he said, addressing the French-looking military officer, whom we have already introduced to the notice of the reader, "I shall be honoured with your attendance for an hour. The night dew will not hurt veterans like you and I, although it may derange, perhaps," he said pleasantly, "the mustachoes of the younger members of our staff."

At this moment the governor returned, and after briefly stating to him the situation of affairs in relation to the legislature, the general said,

"I will return before eleven, your excellency. If you will do the honors of my household until then, we will take our leisure to look over this business the traitorous senators have thrust upon our hands as if they were not already filled."

Taking the arm of the Louisianian general, he then left the room; and in a few seconds the sound of his horses feet, moving rapidly down the street from the gate, fell upon the ears of the governor, who was now left alone in the apartment.

Approaching the table, as the last sound of the receding horsemen faded from his ear, he cast his eyes over the map recently occupying the attention of the general; and after tracing thoughtfully with a pencil, a line from the mouth of the bayou Mezant on lake Borgne to the Mississippi, speaking audibly, he said,

"Here is the avenue Packenham seizes upon. It will conduct him close to the city. Well, let him come he will be caught in the nets his own policy spreads. But these papers from the secretary of war! I must look to them. This lynx-eyed general must be ably seconded. What noble Romans are our senators!" he added, his thoughts reverting to the commands of the general he had just seen executed. "They would fain capitulate before the enemy is in sight."

He then, taking up a bundle of papers, seated himself by the table, the light falling upon his clear, intellectual forehead, and unfolding them, commenced reading with great attention, occasionally adding or striking out passages, and making brief notes in the margin. At length, having been several times interrupted by individuals desirous of seeing the chief, he closed the door, and gave orders to the sentinel to admit no one, unless on business with himself, and again became absorbed in the occupation from which his attention had been so frequently called off.

While thus engaged, and about half an hour after the departure of the general and his staff, the challenge of the sentinel stationed before the front door, was followed by a low reply, and the heavy tread of a man in the hall.

The door opened, and the governor lifting his eyes, beheld enter, a tall man in the dress of a seaman, who deliberately turned the key in the door and approached him.

The act, the manner and the appearance of the bold intruder, surprised him, and starting from his chair, he demanded who he was, and the nature of his business.

The stranger stood for a moment surveying him in silence, his full dark eye fixed penetratively upon his features.

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"Sir," repeated the governor, after recovering from his surprise, "to what circumstance am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

The stranger, without replying, drew from his breast a folded paper, and approaching, whilst the governor placed his hand upon his sword, laid it, without speaking, upon the table.

He hastily opened and run his eye over it, and then glancing from the paper to the stranger, alternately several times, before he spoke, he at last said while his brow changed:

"What means this, sir? It is but the printed proclamation for the head of that daring outlaw, Lafitte. Know you ought of him?"

The intruder advanced a step, and calmly folding his arms upon his breast and fixing his piercing eye upon him, said quietly and firmly

"He stands before you!"

"Ha!" exclaimed the governor, starting back; and seizing a pistol which lay near him, had just elevated his voice to alarm the guard, as he levelled the weapon, when Lafitte springing forward, grasped it.

"Hold, sir! I mean you no harm! It is for your good I am here. If I desire revenge, I would not seek it beneath this roof, and thus place myself in your power. Put up that weapon, your excellency, and listen to me," he added respectfully.

"nay, if you have business with me communicate it, and let there be this distance between us."

"As you desire, sir," replied the Barritarian. "Be seated, your excellency. I have received communications," continued the outlaw, as the governor somewhat assured, took a chair and motioned him to another, "from the British commander, that I would confide to you. I feel they are of importance to our common country, which, although outlawed, I love."

"You are a strange man, captain Lafitte to enter a city where thousands know you, with a reward hanging over your head; and then voluntarily place yourself in the power of the executor of the laws you have violated; and on the pretence too, that you can serve the state, which you have passed your life in injuring! How am I to understand you, sir? Shall I admire your intrepidity, or pity your duplicity?"

"Different language becomes our interview, monsieur governor. At no small risk and trouble have I undertaken this expedition. Fearlessly have I placed myself in your excellency's power, trusting that your sense of justice, would appreciate my confidence."

"I do appreciate it, sir," replied the governor, after a moment's deliberative silence; "and whatever, so that you do not forget yourself, may be the issue of this interview, which I warn you must be brief, for the general and his staff will soon return, I pledge you my word as a gentleman and governor of this state, that you shall go as free and as secret as you came. I respect your confidence, and will listen to what you have to communicate in reference to the public welfare."

Lafitte then briefly related his interview with the British officer, stated and enlarged upon the overtures so tempting to a band of proscribed men, who, weary of their precarious existence, might be desirous of embracing so favourable an opportunity of recovering an honourable attitude among men, by ranging themselves under the banners of a nation so powerful as the English. After stating his reception of the officers, and his expedient to obtain delay to communicate with his excellency, he continued,

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Although a reward is suspended over my head although I have been hunted down like a wild beast by my fellow citizens although proscribed by the country of my adoption I will never let pass an opportunity of serving her cause to the shedding of my blood. I am willing to make some atonement for the violence done to your laws through my instrumentality. I desire to show you how much I love my country how dear she is to me! Of this my presence here, and these papers which I bear, are convincing proofs. A British officer of high rank, whose name you will find appended to the papers I lay before you, has made me propositions to which few men would turn a deaf ear. Two of them are directed to me. One is a proclamation to the citizens of this state, and the fourth, admiral Percy's instructions to that officer in relation to his overtures to myself."

CHAPTER IV.

"Whilst preparations were making by Commodore Patterson for an expedition against Barritaria, Governor Claiborne, received communications from that point, which were deemed of importance to the safety of the state. He therefore invited on the occasion the opinions of the officers of the navy, army, and militia, to whom he communicated the letters of the British officers, which he had received from the Barritarian."

Latour.

"Lafitte and his band rejected the overtures of the English with indignation. These men saw no dishonour in enriching themselves by plunder, but they had a horror of treason."

Marboi's Louisiana.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN LAFITTE AND THE GOVERNOR AN ADVENTURE IN THE STREETS.

After having placed the papers in the governor's hands, Lafitte turned away and walked to the window.

"Indeed," exclaimed the governor, glancing over the papers, preparatory to a more thorough examination, as he read audibly the several signatures. Then taking the letter of the British officer addressed to Lafitte; he read it aloud, commenting upon every few lines.

"I call upon you with your brave followers to enter into the service of Great Britain in which you shall have the rank of captain."

"Indeed," said the governor, looking up at Lafitte with interest and surveying as his eye lingered over it for a moment, his commanding figure. "Lands," he continued, "will be given to you, all in proportion to your respective ranks in his majesty's colonies in America." (Ha, this is indeed counting the birds rather prematurely) he soliloquized. "Your property shall be guaranteed your persons protected." "I herewith enclose you a copy of my proclamation to the Louisianians, which will, I trust, point out to you the honourable intentions of my government."

"Humph! honourable! It is nevertheless a fine round period."

"You may be a useful assistant to me in forwarding them: therefore, if you determine, lose no time. We have a powerful reinforcement on its way here. And I hope to cut out some other work for the Americans than oppressing the inhabitants of Louisiana."

"Humph! it is to be hoped so. Well, this is a most praiseworthy document," said he, laying it aside, and again glancing at the pirate, who stood silently at the window, apparently gazing out upon the stars; but his eye watched every expression of the governor's features.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Now, what says this scion of nobility, commander of his majesty's fleet," continued his excellency, opening a second paper. "This is to Captain Lockyer, and seems to be a letter of instructions:"

"Sir You are hereby required and directed, after having received on board an officer belonging to the first battalion of royal colonial marines, to proceed in his majesty's sloop under your command, without a moment's loss of time, for Barritaria. On your arrival at that place, you will communicate with its chief, and urge him to throw himself upon the protection of Great Britain; and should you find the Barritarians inclined to pursue such a step, you will hold out to them that their property shall be secured to them and that they shall be considered British subjects; and at the conclusion of the war, lands within his majesty's colonies in America" ("yet to be won, worthy admiral," said the governor, in parenthesis,) "will be allotted to them. Should you succeed completely in the object for which you are sent, you will concert measures for the annoyance of the enemy as you judge best, having an eye to the junction of their small armed vessels with me, for a descent upon the coast."

"So much for the son of Lord Beverly," said the governor, in a tone of irony. "These papers are growing in importance. What is this?"

"Proclamation, by Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Nicholls, commanding his Britannic majesty's forces in the Floridas."

"This sounds well."

NATIVES OF LOUISIANA!

"On you the first call is made to assist in liberating from a faithless, imbecile government." ("Humph!") "your paternal soil! Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, and British! whether settled, or residing for a time in Louisiana, on you, also, I call to aid me in this just cause. The American usurpation in this country must be abolished, and the lawful owners of the soil put in possession.

"I am at the head of a large body of Indians!" ("Humph! British valour! British chivalry!") "well armed, disciplined and commanded by British officers. Be not alarmed, inhabitants of the country, at our approach" ("Jupiter tonens!") "rest assured that these red men only burn with an ardent desire of satisfaction for the wrongs they have suffered from the Americans, to join you in liberating these southern provinces from their yoke, and drive them into those limits formerly prescribed by my sovereign."

"Bah! this has a tinge of the Eton fledgling!"

"The Indians have pledged themselves" ("blessed pledge! assuredly") "in the most solemn manner not to injure in the slightest degree, the persons or properties of any but enemies to their Spanish or English fathers. A flag over any door, whether Spanish, French, or British, will be a certain protection, nor dare any Indian put his foot on the threshold thereof, under penalty of death from his own countrymen. Not even an enemy will an Indian put to death, except resisting in arms."

"Well, verily, the rhodomantine Captain must have tamed his painted allies by some mode unknown to us. He thinks to conquer by proclamation. The gallant Lawrence should have taught him better. So he concludes" "accept of my offers; every thing I have promised in this paper, I guarantee you on the sacred honour of a British officer."

"Given under my hand, at head-quarters."

"These papers, Captain Lafitte, united with your verbal communications, are indeed important," said the governor, rising and approaching the outlaw, with dignity and respect in his manner.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"I do not wish to offend your feelings, sir; but in the relation in which we stand to each other, I must have authority for acting upon the knowledge of their contents I possess. What other authority than your own word, have I that they are genuine?"

"My person, your excellency!" he replied, with firmness and unchanged features; "I am your prisoner till you can ascertain from a more credible source, the genuineness of these letters, and the truth of my statements."

"Captain Lafitte," said the Governor, struck with his manner, "I cannot do otherwise than place confidence in you. I believe you sincere. The letters themselves bear upon their face, also, the stamp of genuineness. I will call a council in the morning of some of the principal officers of the navy, army, and militia, and, informing them how I obtained them, submit these letters to their opinions.

"Captain Lafitte," he continued, in a more friendly tone, "I know not the motives which induced you all at once to adopt this honourable course. I am willing to attribute it to the best a desire to regain your standing in society, to atone for your past violence to the offended laws of your country, and, to the patriotism of a good citizen. As the last I am willing to consider you. There is my hand, sir, in token of amity between us! The proscription against you shall be revoked, and I shall feel proud to rank you hereafter among the defenders of our common country."

Lafitte, moved by the language of the governor, replied, with emotion:

"Again, your excellency, I feel my bosom glow with virtuous emotions. You do justice to my motives, and I am grateful to you. This reception I had not anticipated when I determined to make you the repository of a secret, on which, perhaps, the tranquillity of the country depended; but I knew that it was in the bosom of a just man, of a true American, endowed with all other qualities which give dignity to society, that I was placing this confidence, and depositing the interests of my country.

"The point I occupy, is doubtless considered important by the enemy. I have hitherto kept on the defensive, on my own responsibility. Now, sir, I offer my services to defend it for the state. If the enemy attach that importance to the possession of the place, they give me room to suspect they do, they may employ means above my strength. In that case, if you accept of my services, your intelligence and the degree of your confidence in me, will suggest to you the propriety of strengthening the position by your own troops. If your excellency should decline my services, at least I beg you will assist me with your judicious council in this weighty affair."

"I know not how to express the pleasure I experience in recognising this extraordinary change in you, captain Lafitte," replied the governor; his noble features beaming with benevolence and gratification. "So far as my influence extends I accept your services; but there must be a preliminary and indispensable step! A pardon for all offences is first necessary, and this can be granted only by the president. Your disinterested and honourable conduct shall be made known to the council in the morning, and if I can aid you in setting out in your new and high minded career, my services and counsels are cheerfully at your command."

"You can do so, your excellency!" replied the outlaw.

"In what?"

"In procuring my pardon from the President, and also that of my followers."

"Cheerfully! I will at once, by the next post, recommend you to the favour of the executive."

"I thank you, sir!" said Lafitte, and turned away with a full heart to conceal his emotion.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The reception he had met with by the governor, whom he esteemed his ready wish to forget his offences the prospect of returning to the world, and of regaining his attitude in society, came over him all at once with powerful effect. Then, prominent, and superior to all, the image of Constanza floated before his mind, and his bosom swelled with renewed being. The wishes the hopes the prayers, of many days of penitence and remorse, were now about to be realized! A career in the American army was open before him fame, honour, and perhaps love, to reward him; for, notwithstanding all the barriers surrounding the young Castillian, he still cherished a half-formed hope, that she might one day reward him with her heart. He could not think that a being, who had exerted such an influence over an important period of his life, who had thus turned the current of his destinies, and by her gentle virtues led him to love virtue for her sake should come and depart again, as angels visit earth, and never more lighten or influence his pilgrimage through the world.

The governor remarked his emotion, and with ready delicacy divining the cause, turned once more his attention to the papers which he still held in his hand.

"Before I leave your excellency," said Lafitte, after a few moments silence the silence of a heart too full for utterance "I desire to learn something definite as to the course to be pursued with reference to these disclosures."

"I have offered to defend for you that part of Louisiana I now hold. But not as an outlaw, would I be its defender! In that confidence, with which you have inspired me, I offer to restore to the state many citizens, now under my command, who, in the eyes of your excellency, have perhaps forfeited that sacred title. I offer you them, however, such as you could wish to find them, ready to exert their utmost efforts in defence of their country. As I have remarked before, the point I occupy is of great importance in the present crisis. I tender not only my own services to defend it, but those of all I command, and the only reward I ask, is, that a stop be put to the proscription against me and my adherents, by an act of oblivion for all that has been done hitherto. I am, your excellency," and his voice betrayed emotion as he continued, "the stray sheep, wishing to return to the sheep-fold! If you were thoroughly acquainted with the nature of my offences, I should appear much less guilty, and still worthy to discharge the duties of a good citizen and an honest patriot. I might expiate on the proofs of patriotism I have shown this evening, but I let the fact speak for itself. I beg you to submit to your council and to the executive what I have advanced. The answer of your council I will await until to-morrow noon, when I will send for it, by one who will not be molested. Should it be unfavourable to my sincere prayers, I shall turn my back upon the dazzling offers of the British government, and for ever leave a soil, which, dearly as I love, I am thought unworthy to defend! Thus will I avoid the imputation of having co-operated with the enemy, towards an invasion on this point I hold which cannot fail to take place and rest secure in the acquittal of my own conscience."

"My dear sir," said the governor with undisguised admiration of his sentiments; "your praiseworthy wishes shall be laid before the gentlemen whose opinions and councils I shall invite early to-morrow, to aid me in this important affair. Your messenger shall receive an answer by noon. I will also confer upon the subject, with the commanding general on his return. Perhaps your pardon," he added hesitatingly, "may rest upon a condition. I have thought of proposing to the council, that your own, and the services of your adherents be accepted to join the standard of the United States; and, if your conduct, meet the approbation of the general commanding, I will assure you of his co-operation with me, in a request to the President, to extend to all engaged, a free and full pardon."

"With these conditions, I most willingly comply!" said Lafitte. "I must now leave you sir, but," he added, laying his hand upon his heart, "with sentiments of permanent gratitude!"

"Have you the pass-word of the night, Captain Lafitte?" inquired the governor, turning to the table.

"I have, your excellency."

"Farewell then, sir! I am your friend. When we meet again, I trust it will be in the ranks of the American army;" said the governor smiling, and extending his hand to the chief.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

Lafitte seized, and grasping it warmly, pressed it to his lips, and precipitately left the room.

Passing through the hall, he was re-joined by Théodore, with whom he left the mansion, and after replying to the challenge of the sentinel at the gate, the two passed at a rapid pace down the street.

The moon was just rising, and they had been walking but a few minutes, when a clattering of horses' hoofs and the ringing of arms were heard at the extremity of one of the long streets, intersecting that, they were traversing, and in a few moments, with nodding plumes, ringing swords, and jingling spurs, the general in chief with his staff, and followed by two or three mounted citizens, turned the angle of the street, and dashed past them down the road to his head quarters.

The outlaw and his companion had nearly gained their boat, and were walking in the shadow of fort St. Charles, along the canal, where it was secured, having met no one but the horsemen, and occasionally, a guard who challenged and allowed them to pass, since they had left the house, when their attention was attracted by a figure gliding along the side of the canal Marigny, and evidently seeking to escape observation.

They drew back within the shadow of a building on the banks, when the figure passed them, almost crawling upon the ground. Avoiding the street, immediately afterward, he dropped without noise into the water, swum to the side where they stood, and cautiously ascending the leveé or bank, paused a moment and peered over the top.

Apparently satisfied that he was unobserved, he then crept along to the side of the fort and lingering a moment, disappeared around the angle, leaving a paper affixed to the wall.

"Here is mischief brewing." said Lafitte "Did you observe that fellow closely Théodore?"

"Yes, I thought at first it was Cudjoe."

"No no he is too tall for him" "we will see what he has been at."

Followed by Théodore, he left the canal and advanced, until he stood under the walls of the fort.

"It is too dark to read in this pale moon; we will take the paper to the light," he said passing round the fort, to a lamp burning in the gate-way, and over the head of a sentinel posted there.

"Ho, who goes there?" he challenged as they approached. Answering the challenge, Lafitte added;

"Here, guard, is a paper, but now stuck upon the wall of your fort by a skulking slave, who just disappeared among yonder china trees I fear it hodes mischief in these perilous times!" and as he spoke, he held up the placard to the light. On it was printed in large letters both in French and Spanish,

"Louisianians! remain quiet in your houses; your slaves shall be preserved to you, and your property respected. We make war only against Americans."

"Well, this is most politic 'said Lafitte,' our enemy fights with printed proclamations, signed too by admiral Cochrane and major general Keane! Preserve slaves! These Englishmen have shone me what reliance is to be placed on their promise to preserve slaves to their masters. Did they not by their insurrection, expect to conquer Louisiana?"

The soldier who heard him read the placard, was about to call for two or three comrades within the guard room, to pursue and arrest the black, when Lafitte interrupted him.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Hold, my good man! I know his figure, and the way he has taken. I will pursue him!" and adding to Théodore "now we will show our attachment to the cause we have embraced," followed the slave. In a few moments, after passing two other placards, which Théodore tore down, they saw him his form hardly distinguishable among the trunks of the trees apparently engaged in affixing another of the proclamations to a limb. They cautiously approached, when the negro discovering them, and supposing himself unseen, drew himself up into the tree to escape detection as they passed by. But this action was detected; and Lafitte walking rapidly forward, before he could conceal himself, caught him by one of his feet."

"The negro drew a long knife and would have plunged it into the arm of his captor, over whose head it gleamed as he raised it for the blow, had he not caught his hand, and hurled him with violence to the ground.

"Oh mossee beg a mercy mossee, pauvre nègre nigger gibbee all up," he cried rolling upon the ground in pain. Lafitte grasped him by the arm and drew from his breast a large bundle of placards. "Who gave these to you slave?"

"Mossee de English ossifer."

"Where is he?"

"Down by mossee Laronde's plantation; he tellee me stick um up in de city; dey stick um up all 'long on de fence down de Leveé mossee. Now mossee, good, sweet, kind mossee, lettee poor nègre go, he hab tell mossee all de libbing trufh."

"You must go with me," replied his captor, heedless of the chattering and the prayers of the slave; and leading him by the arm, he returned and delivered him to the guard at the fort.

"Take him to the governor in the morning," he said to him as he called some of his comrades to receive him.

"Thank you Monsieur," said the guard, as Lafitte turned away. "You are a good patriot. I would all the citizens were like you. Will you take wine?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Who, shall I tell the governor, has taken this prisoner?"

He wrote the word "*Lafitte*," with a pencil upon one of the bills, and folding it up, handed it to him; and before the guard could decipher it, he had disappeared below the leveé. Springing into his boat, he waked the Irishman, who had fallen asleep, and sought once more, through the chain of guard-boats, the barge he had left secreted at the mouth of the artificial inlet to the bayou. Then releasing his Irish prisoner, with a warning to be less afraid of alligators, and to keep better watch when on post, he entered his own boat; and before the break of day, was again concealed among the huts of the fishermen, which he had left early on the preceding evening.

CHAPTER V.

"The genuineness of the letters was questioned by the council convened by the governor; and they advised him to hold no communication with the Barritarians. Major General Villeré alone dissented from the general decision. This officer, as well as the governor, who, presiding in council, could not give his opinion, was well satisfied as to the authenticity of the letters and the sincerity of the Barritarian outlaw. The expedition against the island was hastened, and soon sailed under the command of Commandore Patterson.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

Latour.

DECISION OF THE COUNCIL ITS RECEPTION BY LAFITTE HIS DESTINATION A STORM.

The decision of the council, convened by the Governor of Louisiana, in the executive department of the government house the following morning, for the purpose of laying before it the letters of the British officers, and consulting with them respecting the offers of the outlaw, is recorded in the history of that period.

After communicating the information contained in the letters, and stating the manner in which they had fallen into his hands, and his reasons for believing them genuine, the governor submitted for their consideration, two questions.

"Is it your opinion, gentlemen, that these letters are genuine? and is it proper, as governor of this state, that I should hold intercourse, or enter into any official correspondence with the Barritarian outlaw and his associates?"

After a warm discussion, an answer was returned in the negative, and with but one exception, unanimously.

Major General Villeré stood alone in the affirmative.

This gentleman, as well as Governor Claiborne, who, president of the council, was disqualified from giving his opinion, was not only convinced of the authenticity of the papers brought by Lafitte, but believed he and his adherents might be so employed at the present crisis, as greatly to contribute to the safety of the state, and the annoyance of the enemy.

With this impolitic decision, which time showed to be unjust and premature, the council broke up. So far indeed, were they from placing confidence in Lafitte, that they suggested to a naval officer forming one of the council, whom we have before introduced to the reader, who had been for several days fitting out a flotilla destined for the island of Barritaria a descent upon which, having been some months in contemplation the propriety of hastening his preparations for the expedition.

Proceeding from the council chamber to his vessel, the commodore found he could immediately get under weigh. The same evening, therefore, taking with him a detachment of infantry, he gave the signal for sailing, and moved down the river towards the destined point of attack.

About noon, the Barritarian chief, ignorant of the proceedings in which he was so deeply interested, sent Théodore to the city, for the purpose of receiving the reply of the governor.

"Well, Théodore, what news?" inquired he, standing in the door of one of the rude fishermen's huts, as the boat, which had conveyed the youth, appeared in sight from the concealment of the narrow banks of the creek, lined with tall grass and cypresses which, stretching across from either side nearly met over the water; "Saw you the governor?"

"I did, monsieur, and a gentleman of noble presence he is," replied Théodore with animation; "he spoke of you in such terms, that I could not but like him."

"But what said he?" interrogated the chief anxiously, springing into the barge by the side of the youth, "Heard you the decision of the council?"

"Here is a note for you, which he gave me."

He seized it and read hurriedly

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"M. Lafitte must regret equally with myself, the decision of the council. It is against your sincerity and the genuineness of the letters. General Villeré alone, was of my opinion, of which you are already informed. Be patient, dear sir take no rash steps. I have unlimited confidence in you. I will consult with the commanding general at the earliest convenience remain firm, and your wishes may yet be achieved. You could not have shown your sincerity better, than in apprehending the slave last night. This seal of good faith shall be remembered, and will materially advance your suit."

"Is this the way my proffers are received?" said Lafitte fiercely, with a deep execration, crushing the note in his clenched hand, while his face grew livid with passion and disappointment; "Is it thus I am treated my feelings trifled with my word doubted myself scorned despised! If they will not have my aid, their invaders shall," he shouted. "To your oars, men to your oars!" he said, turning to his boat's crew. "We must see Barritaria to-night I have work for all of you."

"And for me too, ugh?" said inquiringly, a tall, gray-headed and dark-visaged Indian, arrayed in loose fisherman's trowsers, his head and neck passed through the aperture of a gaily-dyed Spanish ponto, coming forth from the hut, and standing as he spoke, supported by a boat-hook, on the verge of the bank.

"Yes, Chitalusa, but not with me. You are better here. I will soon find you other fish to catch. Mark me Chitalusa," said the pirate, hoarsely, in the ear of the Indian "before New-Year's eve, you will find a red snake, with scales of steel, and more dangerous than the green serpent of your tribe, with ten thousand human feet beneath his belly, winding up this bayou, past your hut."

"Ugh! me un'stan'," said the Indian, his eyes sparkling with pleasure, but whether malignant, or a mere expression of delight, it was difficult to determine.

"Then wait here, under cover, till you see it, and I will then find work for you, chief," said Lafitte, springing into the boat and seating himself in silence.

As the men plied their oars, and moved swiftly down the bayou, the Indian, who was the last of his name and race with whom would expire the proud appellation, centuries before recognised among other tribes, as the synonyme for intelligence, civilization, and courage The Natchez! The injured, persecuted, slaughtered, and unavenged Natchez the Grecians of the aboriginal nations of North America! The eloquent language of a native poet, with truth and feeling, might have flowed from the lips of the old exile exile, on the very lands over which his fathers reigned kings now doomed to seek a precarious existence, among the Spanish fishermen of the lakes, wilder, ruder even than himself:

"They waste us: aye like April snows, In the warm noon we melt away; And fast they follow as we go, Towards the setting day Till they shall fill the land, and we Be driven into the western sea."

As the boat receded, he muttered, "Ugh! de snake! Chitalusa know! me know to much. Him tink Indian bad as him. Me let he see me no bad. Me let no red snake Inglish snake, ugh! come here! Me no will."

At once a new thought flashed upon his mind, and entering his hut, he armed himself with a rifle, took his paddle from its beackets over the door, launched his canoe, and jumping into it, paddled rapidly in the direction opposite to that taken by Lafitte, and towards the artificial outlet of the bayou, into the Mississippi.

For several hours, the oarsmen rowed with that heavy, regular movement of the sweeps, which is almost mechanical to the thorough bred seamen. No sound but the regular dipping of the four oars and the low rattling as they played in the rowlocks, the occasional splash of an alligator, as he sought concealment beneath the surface of the water, or the heavy flapping of the wings, and shrill cry, of some disturbed heron or other water bird, broke the silence of the wild region through which they moved. The barge all at once emerged from the narrow and

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

gloomy pass which it had been threading during the afternoon, into a broader sheet of water, and at the same moment, the setting sun shone bright upon the summit of "The Temple," which stood on an angle at the intersection of three bayous, two of which led by various routes into the bay of Barritaria; the third, was that which they had just descended.

Lafitte sat in the stern of the boat, with his arms folded and his head dropped despondingly upon his breast, an attitude he insensibly fell into after the first burst of passion, elicited by the result of his application, had passed away.

His better resolves held again their influence over him; his anger and resentment, by degrees subsided, and he had come to the determination to exile himself, disband his followers, and depart for ever from that country he was thought too base to serve.

"I have won the confidence, and I believe the respect, of one honourable man. This, at least, will I endeavour to retain," he said, abruptly addressing Théodore. "He has said he will counsel with the general in chief. I place my cause, then, in the hands of a brave man. Suppose I see him myself? Ha! that will do I will! England," he cried, with energy, "thou hast not made me a renegade yet! nor," he added mentally, "will you, Constanza, find me recreant to my pledged faith. I will not let the prejudiced decisions of a few men, thus turn me from the straight-forward path I have chosen. Impulsive they call me. Well, impulse shall be bridled, and I will henceforward lead her not she, me."

"Ship your oars, men!" he added aloud, as they came to a little inlet, at the foot of a mound, just large enough to contain the boat.

"The dripping oars rose simultaneously into the air, and were then laid lengthways upon the thwarts. Cudjoe sprang out, as the bows touched the bank, and secured the boat to a tree. Lafitte, warning his men not to go far away, accompanied by Théodore, stepped on shore, and ascended one of those mounds of shells thrown up by the Indians, long before the earliest era of American history, filled with human bones, and evidently designed, either as religious, or funereal monuments. From the prevalence of the former opinion, this congregation of mounds where our party stopped, has been denominated "The Temple." On the highest of them, according to the tradition of the country, the idolatrous worshippers preserved burning, a perpetual fire. Some attempts at one period, had been made to fortify it, traces of which still existed.

"If I was superstitious," said Théodore, as, emerging from the trees near the margin of the bayou, they came in full view of the largest mound, "I should believe that the sun which it is said the Indians worshipped in reproof of our unbelief of his divinity, and detestation to the truth of their religion, has kindled a flame upon the summit of the Temple."

Lafitte looked up, and saw that an appearance like fire rested upon its top the reflection of a lingering, light red sunbeam shot from the lurid sun, then angrily disappearing in the west.

"There is poetry, if not truth, in your language, Théodore!" replied the chief, his spirit soothed by the mild influence of the hour. "How beautiful the theory of their religion! Worshippers of that element, which is the purifier of all things! Next to the invisible God whom they knew not in their child-like ignorance, and with the touching poetry, which seems to have been the soul of the simple Indian's nature, they sought out that, alone, of all His works, which most gloriously manifested Himself to his created intelligences. They bowed their faces to the earth, at his rising and setting, and worshipped the bright sun, as their Creator, Preserver, and God! Author of light and heat, of time and seasons visible, yet unapproachable! What more appropriate object could they have chosen as the corner stone upon which to raise a superstructure of natural religion? For it is our nature, Théodore, to be religious! All men, and all races of men, have always been worshippers, either of truth or falsehood! Does not this choice alone prove, that, if heathens, they approached nearer to true religion, in their worship, than all

other nations ignorant of divine revelation? Does it not show the dignity and refinement of the Indian's mind the poetry of his heart the purity of his imagination? On their altars burned a perpetual fire! What a beautiful representation of their divinity! How infinitely is this pure emblem above the stocks and stones of the civilized idolaters of old Greece and Rome! How ethereal and elevated the conceptions of such a people! Yet we call them barbarians savages brutes! If they are brutes, we have made them so. The vices of the Europeans, like a moral leprosy, have diseased their minds, and blackened their hearts! If they are degraded, we have debased them! If they are polluted, we have laid our hand upon them! Ha!" he said quickly, "yonder sun-beam glows on that bush like fire. It is a flame, indeed! Your idea, my Théodore, was very beautiful! But were it not better and more in unison with our fortunes, my boy! to regard it as a beacon, lighting us to fame; a bright omen of good! Go up the mound, and see if you can discover any thing moving in either bayou. I shall give the men an hour's rest, and then start again."

He stopped on a small mound they had just ascended, and leaning against a cypress tree, crowning its summit, he soon became wrapped in reflections upon the presented crisis of his life and the probable issue of his plans.

Presently, his eye was arrested by a white object, dimly seen in the twilight, rolling along on the ground near his feet. It was round, and at every turn displayed the eyeless sockets and hideous grin of a skull. He gazed upon it with surprise, but did not move; and a fascination seemed to chain him to the spot, and fasten his eyes upon the loathsome object.

It came nearer and nearer, and now struck with a hollow sound against his foot. He was about to spring from the fearful contact, when the head and claws of a crab were protruded from the cavities, as if to ascertain and remove the obstacle to its advancement.

With a smile of derision at this humiliation of his species, as he discovered the cause of this strange locomotion, he raised the skull with its inmate, and gazed on it for a moment, with a lip, in which bitterness was mingled with contempt.

"And this is MAN! the image of God! the tenement of immortal mind! Poor crab, thou knowest not what kingly throne thou hast usurped! Well, why not a crab as well as brain! The skull can walk the earth full as well, and to as good a purpose! And is this our end!" he added, "to become *thus* at last! a habitation for reptiles! And shall *I* too come to this? Shall this head, which now throbs with life," and he raised his hand to his temples, "which can think plan originate at last be no more than this? so helpless as to be borne about by such a creeping thing! Where is that conscious something, which once supplied this crab's place? Who has displaced it? Death! Death? and what is death? Methinks it were better to be like this glaring ball, than to be as I am! Here," he continued placing his hand upon it, "here is no sense of passing events; of joy or suffering; of treachery or friendship; of despair or ambition; of praise or insult. See I can place my foot upon it, and it rises not against me to avenge the insult! Happy, happy nothingness! But is it nothingness? Although the mind lives not in this glaring shell, which, without tongue, discourses most eloquently to the living may it not exist somewhere? Here I see it not! It is perceptible to no sense! Yet reason hope fear, tell me it is not extinct. Heaven never made man for such an end as *this!* There must be deeper purpose than we can fathom a cause remoter than we can reach, why we were made! Eternity! eternity! thou art no bug-bear to frighten children with. I feel would to God I felt it not! that thou art a stern and fearful reality.

"Well, my boy, saw you aught?" he inquired hastily, resuming his usual tone and manner as the youth appeared.

"No, Monsieur the night thickens so fast, that it is impossible to see far down the bayous I think we shall have a storm."

"There is no doubt of it, if the heavens speak truly," said Lafitte, gazing upon masses of black clouds drifting low above their heads, increasing in density and blackness every moment, and gathering to a head with that rapidity,

characteristic of storms in that climate.

"Théodore, tell the men to spread the tarpaulin over the boat for a shelter from the rain."

The youth communicated the order, and was returning, when a flash of lightning, accompanied by a peal of thunder, loud and abrupt, like the near explosion of artillery, gleamed like flame through the woods, and rove to the roots the cypress against which the chief leaned, with the skull still extended in his hand, upon which resuming his reflections as the youth left him to execute his order, he still mused and laid him prostrate and as senseless as the shell he held, upon the ground. With an exclamation of surprise and terror, Théodore sprung forward, and kneeling by his side, called loudly upon the crew to aid in resuscitating him. They bore him to the boat, and the youth, at the moment recollecting the hut of a fisherman, situated about a mile below the Temple, ordered the men to resume their oars and pull to that place.

CHAPTER VI.

"The government of the State, informed of the proceedings of the British at Barritaria, and doubtful of the good faith of the outlaws, fitted out a flotilla, with great despatch. The pirates prepared for resistance; but finally abandoned their vessels, and dispersed. Their store-houses, fortress, vessels, and a considerable booty, fell into the power of the Americans. Lafitte, who escaped, proposed to surrender himself to Governor Claiborne, and his confidence appeared to require that indulgence should be shown to him and his party."

Marboi's History of Louisiana.

FISHERMAN ILLNESS CANNONADING APPROACH THE ISLAND THE OUTLAW'S REPLY TO THE ENGLISH OFFICER.

With the head of his friend and benefactor upon his lap, and in great agitation of mind, the youth guided the boat through the bayou, his course lighted by the lightning, which now became incessant.

"Ho, the boat!" shouted a voice from the bank, as a flash of lightning showed them the fisherman's cot, in a bend of the bayou.

"Grand Terre!" replied Théodore.

"Grand Terre it is," answered the man; who now came from behind the tree, with an English musket in his hand, an old canvass cap on his head, covered with signs of the cross, done in red and black paint a blue woollen shirt, and a pair of duck trowsers, cut off at the knee, leaving the portion of his legs below it bare. His head was gray and bushy, and an opulence of grisly beard and whis- kers encircled his tawny face, which was marked with arched brows and lambent dark eyes a sharp aquiline nose, small mouth, and thin lips, displaying when parted, a row of even and very white teeth, which seemed to bid defiance to the ravages of time!

"Where is the Captain?" he inquired.

"Senseless, from a stroke of lightning!" replied the youth; "we must claim your hospitality, Manuelillo."

"Pobre capitán! with all my heart. Bring him into the cot, hombres," he said to the men. "Pobre capitán es mateo no? Señor Théodore?"

"No! there is life, but he is insensible."

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

In a short time, the chief was laid upon the rude bed of dried grass and rushes, constituting the couch of the fisherman, who, in addition to his pascal profession, was also a privateersman or smuggler, as interest prompted, or taste allured.

Slowly yielding to their exertions and skill, the stagnant life once more received action, and he returned to consciousness. In the morning, a fever succeeded, which increased in violence during the day. That night he became delirious, and wildly raved like a maniac calling on "Constanza," "D'Oyley," "Henri," "Gertrude," names often on his burning lips, during his illness. For five days, his fever and delirium continued, without abatement. His disorder, then assumed a more favourable character, and he began rapidly to convalesce.

On the seventh day, just before noon, he was seated at the door of the hut, under the shade of a tree, which grew in front, giving orders to his boatmen, who were preparing the barge for departure that evening, when a heavy cannonading reached his ears, borne upon the south wind over the level country, from the quarter of Barritaria, which was about twenty miles distant.

"Do you hear that, sir?" said Théodore, from within the hut who, during his illness, had watched over him with untiring assiduity and tenderness.

"What means it, Manuel?" demanded the chief, starting.

"I don't know, señor; there must be some fighting between your vessels and the cruisers."

"I suspect as much. Quick, with that boat, men!" he added, with animation. "We must away from this."

With a strength unlooked for, he stepped into the boat, after grasping warmly the hand of the old fisherman, and thanking him for his attention and kindness, and was soon swiftly moving on his way to the island.

As he approached, the firing increased, and became more distinct. Night set in before they reached the mouth of the bayou, from which, as they emerged into the bay, they could see far over the water, a flame apparently rising from a burning vessel. The cannonading had ceased several hours, and it was now too dark to see across the bay, or distinguish the outline of the island.

"There has been warm work, Théodore," said Lafitte. "I am afraid we have been attacked by a superior force."

"It may be Massa Cap'um Pattyson," said Cudjoe; "he tinky catch Cudjoe, and make sailor ob him, when in de boat, when you gone to see de gobernor."

"What is that?" said Lafitte, quickly. "Press you?"

"I now recollect," answered Théodore, "as I went for the governor's reply, it was rumoured in the streets, that Commodore Patterson was completing his crew by every exertion, and that he was to sail the same evening, on some expedition. It may have been Barritaria."

"You are right Théodore, he has attacked our camp. Set the sail and spring to your oars, men; we must know at once if our fears are true."

Having set their sail, their speed increased, and shooting rapidly away from the mouth of the bayou, they steered across the bay. They were within a league of the island, when a barge full of men, was discovered a short distance ahead.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"Ship your oars; see to your arms, men!" said Lafitte, shifting the helm so as to weather the boat. We are now more likely to meet foes than friends in these waters."

As he spoke, the strange boat hailed, while the click of several pistols was heard from her by the pirate and his party, who answered that hostile preparation with similar sounds of defiance.

"Ho! the boat ahoy!" hailed a voice in Spanish.

"It is Sebastiano," said Théodore hastily, as he recognized the voice of the person hailing.

"Camaradas!" replied Lafitte.

"Ah captain, is that you," exclaimed a rough voice with a strong French accent. "We thought you had gone to pay off old scores in the other world."

"I have been on business, Belluche, connected with our safety, and have been detained by illness. But the news, the news! Lieutenant Belluche," he added with impatience as the boats came in contact.

"Bad enough, my good captain," said Sebastiano, interposing in reply, "bad enough for one day's work, in proof of which, señor, I refer you to this handful of men, who are all that remain of the pretty Julié, who by the same token, is burned to the water's edge. May the grande diable have the burning of those who compelled me with my own hand to set her on fire. But it was necessity, captain. I can prove to you it was necessity."

"Be brief, Sebastiano! What has happened? Who are the aggressors, Belluche? What means the firing I have heard to-day? Be brief and tell me!"

"This morning," said the whilom captain of the Lady of the Gulf, "between eight and nine, we saw a fleet of small vessels and gun-boats standing in for the island. Our squadron lay at anchor within the pass, and on seeing the fleet I ordered the Carthaginian flag to be hoisted on all the vessels. As the strangers approached, I got under weigh with the whole fleet, including prizes, which made ten in number, and formed in order of battle, in case the intentions of the fleet should be hostile. As the evidences of their hostile character thickened, I sent boats in various directions to the main land to give the alarm, and ordered my men to light fires along the coast, as signals to our friends ashore that we were about to be attacked. The enemy stood in, and formed into a line of battle near the entrance of the harbour. Their force consisted of six gun-vessels, a tender, mounting one six pounder and full of men, and a launch, mounting one twelve pound carronade, and a large schooner, called the Carolina.

"On discovering these demonstrations of battle on their part, and not being in the best condition to withstand them, I hoisted a white flag at the fore on board the Lady of the Gulf, an American flag at the mainmast, and the Carthaginian flag, at the topping lift. The enemy replied, with a white flag at his main. I now took my boat, and went from vessel to vessel to ascertain the disposition of the crews for fighting, and none but Captain Getzendanner, and Sebastiano and their men were for awaiting the attack. I in vain tried to convince them of the expediency of fighting to save our vessels.

"I then determined that the Lady of the Gulf should not fall into the enemy's hands, and telling Captain Getzendanner what I intended to do, I returned on board, and fixing a train in the hole, and setting the rigging on fire, I took to the boats with my crew. Getzendanner and Sebastiano did the same, while the other cowardly paltroons deserted their vessels and took to their oars, and pulled for the main land. The enemy no sooner saw the flame rising from the schooner, than he hauled down the flag of truce, and made the signal for battle; hoisting with it a broad white flag bearing the words, 'PARDON TO DESERTERS,' knowing that we had not a few from the army and navy, among our villainous, cowardly, runaway gang.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"The enemy run in and took possession of the vessels, while a detachment landed upon the island, and destroyed our buildings and fortifications. All this I witnessed from the main land, where we had retired. The enemy's fleet is now outside, including our own, numbering in all seventeen sail. They will probably get under weigh in the morning for the Balize."

"We," concluded Sebastiano, who had waited with much impatience for an opportunity to speak, "have just returned from the island, where I have been since they left, to have ocular demonstration of the true state of things, and an old woman might as well hold good her pantry against a party of half-starved recruits, as we could have held the old island; and this admits of the clearest demonstration, captain."

Lafitte listened to this recital in silence; nor did he speak for some moments after the commander of the Lady of the Gulf had completed his account of the attack upon the piratical hold, by the American flotilla. This expedition was under the command of that naval officer, whom we first introduced to the reader, looking over a map with the commanding general at his head quarters, a young and gallant man, whose ambition to signalize his command and benefit his country by the destruction of the buccaneering horde, who had so long infested the south-western shores of Louisiana, had rendered him, with the majority of the council called by the governor, incredulous to the extraordinary proffers of the pirate.

If blame in reference to this decision could be attached to either party, Lafitte felt that it was justly fastened upon himself.

"It is right," he said, after reflecting for a few moments upon the communication of his officer. "It is but just not them not him do I censure, but myself my past career of crime and contempt of those healthy laws which govern society. I blame them not. It would be stranger if they should have believed me." After a few moments pause he added earnestly, "this shall not change me; they shall yet know and believe, that I acted from motives they must honour. They shall learn that they have injured me by their decisions. Injured! But let it pass my country shall have my arm and single cutlass, if no more! and your's too, my boy?" he said to Théodore.

"Wherever you are, my benefactor, you will find me by your side," exclaimed the youth warmly.

"I knew it Théodore, I knew it," replied Lafitte, returning the enthusiastic grasp of his hand.

"Where, away now Belluche?"

"To the city, captain! We hear of fighting about to go on there; we may perhaps find something to do."

"Sebastiano, Belluche, my worthy comrades and friends, and you my brave men all! the Americans have destroyed our fleet; but they have done only justice. If I know all of you who are in that boat, like myself, you are Americans by birth or adoption. Fight not against your country, draw every cutlass in her defence; forgive her injuries, and fight for her. The tyrant of England seeks to enslave her; meet him foot to foot, blade to blade. Endeavour to atone for your wrongs to your country by devotion to her cause. Fighting is your trade but fight now on the right side. What say you my men? Sebastiano, stand you for or against your country, in this struggle?"

"Viva Louisiana viva la patria viva Lafitte!" shouted the men.

"That is as it should be my brave fellows, if you are faithful in the cause you espouse you may yet get government to wink at the past, and if any of you choose to follow honest livelihoods, the way will then be open before you. To the city, I will soon follow, gather all our scattered force and persuade them to adopt the same course. You will hear of me on the third evening from this at the cabaret of Pedro Torrio, on Rue Royale. I must now visit the island. Where is Getzendanner?"

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

"He has taken the western bayou to the city, I suspect," replied Belluche,

"Tell him our plans if you meet with him, and hold out to him pardon. He will acquiesce, I think," he said laughing, "for there is a fair frow in New York, he would fain supply his lost rib with; but she wont take him without a license from the President. I depend on you both," he added more seriously "to collect our followers and unite them to the American party."

With a shout from the crews of each, the boats separated, and in an hour afterward, Lafitte reached the island and secured his boat in the narrow cove or inlet from which he had unmoored it, under very different circumstances, ten days before, on embarking to lay before the governor the letters of the British officers.

The next morning the chief who had remained all night in the boat, was awakened by a gun, which on rising, and gaining a slight elevation on the island, he discovered to be the signal for the enemy's fleet, with his prizes, to get under weigh.

With calm and unchanging features, he watched their departure, and as the last sail disappeared on the horizon, he said turning to Théodore,

"I have only to wait to give the Englishman his answer," he said with a bitter smile, "and then return to New Orleans, and there welcome my captured fleet."

"There is a sail south of us," exclaimed Theodore.

"I see it," replied the chief, "it may be the English brig coming in for my reply, although I did not expect her before evening." The vessel which attracted their observation, in the course of an hour showed the square rig and armament of a brig of war. Approaching within half a mile of the island, she put off a boat, which pulled directly for the island.

"What answer shall you give them now, monsieur?" inquired Théodore doubtfully, watching the face of the outlaw, and anxious to know if he would accept the proposals of the British, now that he had received such treatment from the American government.

Lafitte made no reply but hastened to meet the boat, which grounded, as Théodore spoke, upon the beach.

"You are welcome to my fortress, gentlemen! you have no doubt come for my answer," he said addressing the midshipman who commanded the boat. "So your captain did not like to trust himself on shore again. Well," he added in a melancholy voice, "he might have come now in all safety he would have little to fear. What says captain Lockyer?"

"He desired me to give you this sealed paper, and await your answer respecting his proposed alliance with you," replied the youth, giving him a pacquet addressed to him.

"You have not long to wait," replied Lafitte, receiving the pacquet; and taking a pencil from the officer, he wrote upon the back,

"No terms with tyrants!"

And giving it back to him he sternly said, "There is my answer!" Then turning and taking the arm of Théodore, he walked away to his boat, which lay on the opposite side of the island.

CHAPTER VII.

"After the invasion of the state became inevitable, the expediency of inviting the Barritarians to our standard was generally admitted. The governor conferred with the major general, and with his approbation, issued general orders inviting them to join the army. These orders tended to bring to our standard many brave men and excellent artillerists, whose services contributed greatly to the safety of Louisiana, and received the highest approbation of the commanding general. Subsequently, the President, by proclamation, granted them a full and entire pardon."

Latour's Memoirs of the war.

THE BARRITARIANS BATTLE OF THE SIEGE LAFITTE AND THE STRANGER.

The subsequent events, immediately preceding the decisive battle of the eighth of January, having no material connexion with our tale, we shall briefly pass by. Lafitte returned to the city, and again offered his services to his country, with those of as many of his former adherents as he could assemble.

After the disastrous capture of the American gun-boats by the British, the invasion of the state was deemed inevitable, and in the perilous condition of the country, it was thought good policy by those entrusted with the public safety, to avail themselves of the services of men accustomed to war, and whose perfect knowledge of the coasts and the various bayous leading from the sea to the capital, might render their aid of great importance to the enemy, who it was now generally known, had in vain and with great offers, entreated them to repair to their standard. Although the expediency of uniting them to the American standard, was generally admitted, it was indispensably necessary that they should receive pardon for all real or supposed offences against the laws. This could only be granted by the President of the United States. Governor Claiborne, whose faith in the outlaw remained unshaken, and who regretted the attack on Barritaria, so far as it rendered, by breaking them up, the forces of the outlaws less available to the country, conferred on the subject with the major general in command.

The result of this conference was very different from that of the council convened by the governor, and with the approbation of the commanding general, he issued the following general order.

"The Governor of Louisiana, informed that many individuals implicated in the offences heretofore committed against the United States at Barritaria, express a willingness at the present crisis to enrol themselves and march against the enemy

"He does hereby invite them to join the standard of the United States, and is authorized to say, should their conduct in the field meet the approbation of the major general, that, that officer will unite with the governor in a request to the President of the United States, to extend to each and every individual, so marching and acting, a free and full pardon."

These general orders were placed in the hands of Lafitte, who circulated them among his dispersed followers, most of whom readily embraced the conditions of pardon they held out. In a few days many brave men and skilful artillerists, whose services contributed greatly to the safety of the invaded state, flocked to the standard of the United States, and by their conduct, received the highest approbation of the commanding general.

In anticipation of our narrative, we will here mention, that previous to their adjournment, the legislature of the state, recommended the Barritarians as proper objects for the clemency of the President, who issued a proclamation upon the subject, bearing date the sixth of February, eighteen hundred and fifteen, and transmitted it, officially, to the governor of Louisiana, by the secretary of state, granting to them a full and entire pardon.

We will now return from this digression to Lafitte, the individual whose personal acts are the subject of our tale.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The morning of the eighth of January was ushered in with the discharge of rockets, the sound of cannon, and the cheers of the British soldiers advancing to the attack. The Americans, behind the breast-work, awaited, with calm intrepidity, their approach. The enemy advanced in close column of sixty men in front, shouldering their muskets and carrying fascines and ladders. A storm of rockets preceded them, and an incessant fire opened from the battery, which commanded the advanced column. The musketry and rifles from the Kentuckians and Tennesseans, joined the fire of the artillery, and in a few moments was heard along the line a ceaseless, rolling fire, whose tremendous noise resembled the continued reverberation of thunder. One of these guns, a twenty-four pounder, placed upon the breastwork, in the third embrasure from the river, drew from the fatal skill and activity with which it was managed, even in the heat of battle the admiration of both Americans and British; and became one of the points most dreaded by the advancing foe.

Here was stationed Lafitte, and three of his lieutenants, Belluche, Sebastiano, and Getzendanner, already introduced to the reader, and a large band of his men, who, during the continuance of the battle, fought with unparalleled bravery. The British already, had been twice driven back in the utmost confusion, with the loss of their commander in chief, and two general officers.

In the first attack of the enemy, a column pushed forward, between the leveé and river; and so precipitate was their charge that the outposts were forced to retire, closely pressed by the enemy. Before the batteries could meet the charge, clearing the ditch, they gained the redoubt through the embrasures, leaping over the parapet, and overwhelming, by their superior force, the small party stationed there.

Lafitte, who was commanding, in conjunction with his officers, at one of the guns, no sooner saw the bold movement of the enemy, than, calling a few of his best men by name, with Théodore by his side, he sprung forward to the point of danger, and clearing the breastwork of the entrenchment, leaped, cutlass in hand, into the midst of the enemy, followed by a score of his men, who in many a hard-fought battle upon his own deck, had been well tried.

Astonished at the intrepidity which could lead men to leave their entrenchments and meet them hand to hand, and pressed by the suddenness of the charge, which was made with the recklessness, skill, and rapidity of practised boarders bounding upon the deck of an enemy's vessel, they began to give way, while, one after another, two British officers fell before the cutlass of the pirate, as they were bravely encouraging their men by their inspiring shouts, and fearless example. All the energies of the British were now concentrated to scale the breast-work, which one daring officer had already mounted. While Lafitte and his followers, seconding a gallant band of volunteer riflemen, formed a phalanx which they in vain assayed to penetrate.

As the British column advanced to this attack, a small boat, propelled by two seamen, and containing a handsome man, in the dress of a British naval officer, after ascending the river, unnoticed in the confusion and uproar of battle, touched the bank nearly opposite to the centre of the advancing column. The officer sprung out amidst a shower of balls, which fell harmlessly around him; then drawing his sword, and loosening his pistols in his belt, he hastened forward to the head of the column, and side by side with a gallant Scotchman, leaped into the redoubt.

Twice he mounted the breast-work, and was hurled back to rise and again mount; his blue eye emitting fire, and his sword flashing like a meteor as he hewed his way through the opposing breasts of the Americans.

At this moment, Lafitte bounded into the redoubt, and turned the tide of battle. The stranger, whose reckless daring and perseverance had, even in the midst of battle, attracted the attention of those on whose side he fought, was also pressed back with the retreating column. Yet, with an obstinacy which drew upon him the fire of the riflemen, and the cutlasses of the pirates, he stood his ground and fought with cool and determined courage. Every blow of his weapon laid a buccaneer dead at his feet.

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The British, leaving their numerous dead, had retreated; yet he stood alone, pressed on every side, and heedless of danger. His object seemed to be to press forward to the spot where stood the pirate chief, who was separated from him by half a dozen of his men. In vain they called upon him to surrender. His brow was rigid, with desperate resolution; his eye burning with a fierce expression, while his arm seemed endowed with the strength of a Hercules.

"Take him prisoner, but harm him not!" said Lafitte, struck with the daring of the man.

"Give back," cried the stranger, speaking for the first time. "Give way to my revenge! Pirate, Lafitte! ravisher! murderer! I dare you to single combat! coward!" and his voice rung clear, amid the din of war.

"Ha, is it so! stand back, men. Hold, Sebastiano! leave him to me, if I am the game he seeks so rashly!"

The men who had involuntarily given back at the sound of the stranger's voice, now left a path between him and their chief, and, before Lafitte, surprised at his conduct but in his chequered life, not unused to adventure and danger in every shape could bring his weapon to the guard, he received that of the stranger through his sword arm.

"Not that vile stream; but your heart's blood," shouted the officer. "Revenge! revenge! I seek!" and with a headlong impetuosity that swallowed up every emotion but the present passion, he played with fatal skill, his weapon about the breast of his antagonist, who required all his coolness and swordsmanship to save his life, for which it became evident to his men he now only fought. By a dexterous manoeuvre, the stranger caught the guard of the pirate's cutlass on his own sword, and at the risk of his life, held it entangled for an instant, till he drew and cocked a pistol, which he levelled at his heart.

At that moment, Chitalusa, who, on leaving the hut, sought in vain to obtain an interview with the governor, to inform him of Lafitte's intentions, and had now joined the army, sprung forward to seize the weapon, crying, "Chitalusa, tinkee you bad, brother Lafitte! Chitalusa save your life now for dat."

His heroic atonement, for what he deemed his unworthy suspicions, seeing that Lafitte was fighting on the side of the Americans, was fatal. The officer fired, and the ball passed through the tawny breast of the simple minded Indian.

"Me tinkee de red snake de Inglish. Me tinkee bad," he murmured; and died, the victim of the outlaw's change of purpose, on receiving the governor's note, and of the figurative language in which he had expressed it to the Indian.

The outlaw felt as if his own hand had slain him, for his own ambiguous words had caused his death.

The combat now grew fiercer, and the pirates began to murmur, and fear for the life of their leader, handling their weapons, and looking upon the stranger with eyes of malignity; anxious, notwithstanding his prohibition, to save the life of their captain by sacrificing that of his antagonist.

Théodore, had stood by the side of Lafitte, with his sword drawn, often involuntarily crossing the blade of the stranger, simultaneously with him, as some more skilful pass threatened his life. His eye, which all the time was fixed with an inquiring gaze, upon his features, suddenly lighted up with peculiar intelligence.

"Hold señor! there is some error!" he said rapidly to Lafitte, and whispered in his ear.

The point of Lafitte's sword dropped, as he exclaimed, "Thank God! I hurt him not!"

Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf

The stranger, without knowing the cause which produced it, and in his eagerness, heedless of the defenceless state in which Lafitte had exposed his person by the action, plunged his sword into his side, and would have run him quite through the body, had not Théodore dexterously caught the weapon upon the guard of his own.

Lafitte, murmuring "this for Constanza's sake!" fell backward into the arms of Théodore and his men.

His adherents, absorbed by the danger of their chief, gave all their attention for the moment to him. When, the next instant, they turned to revenge him, they saw the mysterious stranger, who had retired the moment he saw his object the death of Lafitte apparently accomplished, mingling with the retreating column of the British.

Lafitte was borne within the entrenchment by his men, who found it useless to pursue his late antagonist. But as they reascended the breastwork, Théodore looked back with a searching eye, while foreboding apprehensions filled his anxious mind, and saw the late mysterious antagonist of his chief, distinguished by his naval attire, step into the boat which had conveyed him to the scene of action, and amidst the hurricane of iron hail storming around him, harmlessly, as if he bore a charmed life, and with great speed, move rapidly down the river.

With the true spirit of Christianity, the doors of the churches and convents of the invaded city were thrown open to the wounded soldiers, not only of the defending army, but of the invading foe. To the convent des Ursulines, one of these temporary hospitals in the heart of the city, Lafitte was borne by the attentive Théodore and some of his followers.

"Who have you there, my children?" inquired an aged priest with silvery hair flowing over the collar of his black robe, as the faithful buccaneers bore the litter on which lay their leader, into the paved hall of the convent, and placed it against the wall. "He is a man of noble presence. I trust not one in high command."

"It is of no importance father," said another of the priests coming forward, in whom Théodore recognized the padre Arnaud whom he had seen at Barritaria, the odour of whose sanctity had not availed to save Sebastiano's schooner, whose passenger he once had been, from being finally blown into the air. "It is enough that he is wounded and that his situation demands our charity."

"You say well, my son; call the physician, and we will have his wounds forthwith examined. Heaven grant he is not in danger!" he said, looking upward devotionally: "It were sad to die without confession and absolution but Heaven is merciful."

The father Arnaud, immediately on his entrance, recognized Lafitte, who had once sent for him from Havana, to confess and give general absolution to such of his men, who were Roman Catholics. The father thought if he was recognized as the outlaw whose name had struck terror throughout the Mexican seas, he might not, among the simple-minded sisterhood and fraternity, receive the attention due to every human being, in such a situation. He therefore, with true benevolence of heart, sought to conceal the real character of the invalid, and hastened to bring to him medical aid.

His wound was probed, and dressed by the surgeon, who declared his case by no means dangerous, and said that the loss of blood, had rendered it only apparently so; adding, that sleep, quiet and attention, would in a few days restore him to health. Recommending him to the care of Théodore and one or two aged nuns, who were bending over him with commiseration expressed in their calm faces, he left him with professional abruptness, to attend to a wounded soldier, just brought in from the field.

CHAPTER VIII.

"The evils of this world, drive more to the cloister, than the happiness held out to them in the next, invites." "To

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say that men never love truly but once, is well enough in poetry; but every day's realities convince us of its untruth. If you have observed much, you have found that men seldom marry the first object of their youthful affections."

Chesterfield.

A SURPRISE AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN A NUN AND THE CHIEF.

On the third evening, the wound of the chief closed, and he was rapidly convalescing; having received permission from the surgeon to leave the convent the succeeding day.

The eve of that day, the halls and corridors of the convent were deserted. Silence reigned undisturbed, save by the light step of a nun in her vigils around the couch of an invalid, the deep breathing of some sufferer, and the sighing of the winds among the foliage of the evergreens, waving their branches without. At the extremity of the hall, stood the couch of the chief, above which a narrow window opened upon the court yard adjoining the edifice. The cool night wind blew in, refreshingly, upon his temples, and the rich melody of a distant mocking-bird, which loves to wake the echoes of night, fell soothingly, as he listened to its varied notes, upon his attentive ear.

Théodore had just deserted his couch, and stepped forth to enjoy the cool air of the night. Under these soothing influences, the wounded chief insensibly slept; but his slumbers were soon disturbed by a scarcely heard foot-fall at the extremity of the passage. He opened his eyes, and by the dim light of a lamp suspended in the centre of the ceiling of the corridor, he discovered near him, the tall and graceful form of one of the nuns, who had often bent above him in his feverish moments, and whose presence exerted a strange power over his thoughts, and even the very throbings of his heart, which became irregular and wild when she was near.

He felt there was a mystery around her, in some way connected with himself; but how, or why, after long hours given to thought and imagination, he could not conjecture. Her voice he had never yet heard, but her slight fingers placed upon his pulse or throbbing temples, would strangely thrill the blood in his veins. But all his speculations respecting her were futile and at last, wearied with pursuing the vague associations, her presence, air and manner called up, he would close his eyes, articulating "Strange! strange! very strange!" and fall into disturbed sleep, in which visions of his boyhood and its scenes of love and strife, passed with wonderful distinctness before him; yet still, in all his dreams, the form of the nun was mysteriously mingled with other characters, which memory, with her dreamy wand called up from the abyss of the past.

Giving no evidence of being conscious of her presence, with his eyes closed, he waited with palpitating heart, the approach of his midnight visitant. She came within a few feet of him and stopped; while shading her brow with her hand, from the light of the lamp above her, she gazed fixedly at the apparent sleeper, as though to be assured that he slept.

Her figure, as she bent forward in an attitude of natural grace, displayed faultless proportions. She was a little above the middle height of women, and her brow, as she drew aside her black veil, which, with a long robe of the same funereal hue encircled her person, was calm and pale paler, perhaps, from the strong contrast of her transparent skin, with the black mantilla she wore about her head. Her marble-like features rivalled in Grecian accuracy of outline, the most perfect models that ever passed from the chisel of Praxitiles: the colour of her eye was of a deep blue not the cold blue of northern skies, but the warm azure of sunny Italy. There was in them, a shade of melancholy, cast also over her whole face. Piety and devotion were written upon her seraphic countenance, from which care and sorrow, not illness, had faded the roses and richness of youth.

Yet she was not a youthful maiden! Perhaps seven and twenty summers and winters, had passed, with their changes and vicissitudes, over her head. Her general manner and air was that of humble resignation to some great

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and deep-settled sorrow. No one could gaze upon her without interest; no one without respect. Among her sister nuns she was regarded as but a little lower than a saint in Heaven; by the devotees of her church, her blessing and prayers were sought next to that of their tutelar divinities. Among the sisterhood, she was called the holy St. Marie. Her real name, for which she had assumed this religious one, had been concealed from all but the superior, during the twelve or thirteen years she had been an inmate of the convent.

Apparently satisfied that her patient slept, she approached him, and uttering a short ejaculation, while she raised her fine eyes heavenward, she laid a finger lightly upon his temple.

"He is better! thank thee Heaven, and sweet Mary, mother! His sleep is calm, and he is much much better!" and as she spoke low, her voice, although saddened in its tones, was silvery.

Its effect upon the chief, was extraordinary; and although he raised not his eyes, nor moved, his heart beat wildly, and the veins upon his temple leaped to her touch. Yet, with a strong effort, anxious to know more of his mysterious visiter, and wondering at the strange effect of her voice upon him, he remained apparently asleep. Still retaining her hand upon his temple, she continued: "His sleep is yet unquiet. Our blessed Saviour grant him life for repentance!" she said fervently.

"She knows me!" thought he. "Strange that she should take such interest in me, then. Those silvery accents! where have I heard them before? Why do they move me so? I must solve this mystery."

"I thank thee, sweet Mother of Heaven, for this favour!" she continued; "I may yet be the instrument in thy hands for good to this wanderer! Forgive me, Holy Mary I thought I had bid adieu to all worldly emotion and yet I should have betrayed my feelings to all around me in the hall, when I recognized his features, so like his father's, had I not hastened to my cell to give vent to my feelings in tears. Sinful! sinful, I have been! Resentment and pity have been s'uggling the past hour within this bosom, that should be dead to all earthly excitement. Pity me, Heaven! I will err no more! But, oh! what a history of buried recollections has the sight of him revived! I thought I had shut out the world for ever; but no, no! with him before me, I live again in it! Its scenes are present with me; and when I gaze on this working brow these features, which many years have changed, but whose familiar expression still lives how can I be all at once the calm, impassioned nun! I sin whilst I speak! I know I am sinning! but pity my weakness, Mary! Thou hast been human, and a *woman!* and thou canst sympathize but oh! censure not! Indulge me in this moment of human failing, and I will then give back my whole heart and soul to thee!"

And as she spoke, she lifted her angelic countenance upward, clasped the cross she wore, and pressed it to her lips. At this moment, Lafitte opened his eyes, and, while every word she uttered, glowed in his bosom like a pleasant memory of half-forgotten things of mingled bliss and woe for the first time he had a glimpse at her features

"Great God! Gertrude!" he exclaimed, springing from the couch and clasping her uplifted hands in his own "Gertrude! speak Is it you? my cousin?"

"It is, Achille! Gertrude and none other!" she said, while the rich blood mounted to her pale cheeks, at the sudden movement and ardent manner of her cousin.

"Can I believe?" he said, gazing fondly, while he still held her hands. "Yet, still it must be and why here in this garb? were you not the bride of ?"

"Of Heaven alone, cousin!" she said, interrupting his impetuous interrogations.

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"Where then is but how came you here? I know alas I know it all all!" he added bitterly, striking his forehead with his clenched hand, and falling back upon the pillow, as she covered her pale face with her hands in tearful silence: "I know all! This hand has made you thus!" and burying his face in the curtain of his couch, his chest heaved, and he sobbed audibly and with great agitation.

Gertrude was deeply affected by his emotion.

The discovery of her cousin among the wounded, had broken up a life of repose, which she had chosen after the crime and flight of her cousin. Even when giving preference to his brother, who had won her by those gentle means, which, rather than passionate appeals when the female heart is the prize assures victory, there existed in her bosom, a partiality for, or rather friendly feeling towards Achille, his own impetuosity of character rendered him incapable of profiting by. He desired to be loved at once, and for himself, scorning to seek, by assiduous attention, smiles and favours which could not become his own at the mere expression of his wish to possess them.

In love, as well as in other pursuits which engage men, it is labour which must ever conquer. To the contempt by the one, and the adoption by the other, of this maxim, in relation to a young heart as yet neutral in its partialities, is to be, perhaps, attributed the success of Henri, and the failure of his brother.

"Calm your emotion, cousin; I forgive you all that through heaven you have caused me to suffer!" she said, taking his unresisting hand.

Lafitte spoke not, and for a few moments, he seemed to be suffering under the acutest mental torments.

"You have indeed you have my forgiveness!" she repeated with earnestness; "but it is not to me you must look for forgiveness, Achille. It is not me you have injured or sinned against!"

"My brother! my poor poor brother!" he groaned.

"Not Henri alone. Heaven," she said with fervour, "awaits your contrition and repentance, Achille!"

"Heaven!" he repeated, as though he knew not that he spoke aloud. "I know it. I do repent and sue its mercy! But my brother! my innocent murdered brother?" he interrogated, rising and grasping her arm.

"Nay, Achille, you are not so guilty in act as you imagine! Henri survived the wound."

"Survives! Henri lives! Lives! did you say speak, tell me quickly! oh heavenly tidings! Angel of mercy! Speak, tell me, oh tell me my brother lives!" he reiterated, with almost insane animation; while a strange fire filled his eyes, as, sitting upright, with both hands grasping her shoulders, he fixed them upon her face.

"Say that he lives! that he *lives!* LIVES!"

"He does, Achille; calm yourself, he lives, and you may yet meet him."

"Oh! God lives meet again!" he faintly articulated, "Oh! I could die, with those sweet words dwelling upon my ear!"

"He recovered and went to France," she said, after a few moments mutual silence, "the day after my arrival in this city to seclude myself, the ill-fated cause of all your quarrel, for ever from the world."

"Heaven is good too kind!" "You say he died not! Oh, speak it again! once more let me hear the sweet assurance."

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"He died not by your hand!"

"It is enough, *enough!*" he said, and sunk back like a child, overpowered by the strong excitement, weakened as he still was, he had passed through.

In a few moments he resumed his self-possession, and addressed Gertrude more calmly.

"Where went he, cousin?"

"To France. Since then, shut out from the world, I have sought to forget it, and have not heard from him."

"Why married you him not?"

"As an atonement the only atonement I could make, for the mischief of which I was the unintentional cause I renounced all worldly hopes and became the bride of the church."

"And I have made you thus!" he said sadly; "but I thank you, thank you for your tidings. This is too much happiness! I will seek my brother out, and at his feet atone for the wrongs I did him. Poor, gentle boy! I loved him, Gertrude, and would not have slain him. No, no!" he added, quickly, and laughed wildly "ha! ha! ha! You tell me he did not die *he lives!* God of heaven! I thank thee! I am not my brother's murderer!"

With his spirit subdued, and his heart full of gratitude, he hid his face in the folds of his cousin's mantilla, and wept aloud.

She would not interrupt him, by addressing him; but silently kneeled beside his couch, and with all the devotions of a woman's piety, put up a prayer to heaven, for the spiritual welfare of the softened being before her. With holy fervor, like a seraph supplicating, she sought pardon for his errors, and prayed that the spirit of penitence would embrace that moment to act upon his heart and renew him with a right spirit. Every word of the lovely and devout petitioner fell soothingly, like the pleading of an angel, upon his heart, and before she concluded her holy petition, his heart was melted, and with the quiet humility of a child, he joined his voice with hers, in responding "Amen!"

The nun rose from her kneeling posture, and taking the hand of her cousin, said with as calm a voice and manner as she could assume

"Cousin, I must leave you now. I have too long held stolen intercourse with you; but Heaven I hope will forgive me if I have erred. We must now part. You leave our convent to-morrow, and from this time we meet no more till we meet I hope in heaven!" and her soft blue eyes beamed with celestial intelligence, as she raised them to her future home.

"God forbid we should part thus! Gertrude! cousin! bid not adieu! leave me not. Oh, God! how lonely and utterly lost I shall be without you!"

"Nay, cousin. I cannot stay; I must go!" she added firmly "I must go now!" May God, who is ever ready to meet the returning penitent, forgive your past life, and guide you in the new path you have chosen, and for which you have already shed your blood!"

"You know me and my life, then?" he inquired eagerly.

"I know you now, as my cousin Achille, a reclaimed, penitent son of the church. You have borne a name I wish not to utter!"

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"Lafitte?"

"The same," she replied, mournfully.

"Why, then, cared you for me?"

"That I might do you good."

"No one in the convent has recognized or identified me as Lafitte; how did you?"

"The youth"

"Théodore?"

"That is his name, I believe. He has told me all."

"And yet, you can come and see, and talk with me! Ah! kind, good Gertrude! how much I have injured you! and yet you can forget it and forgive it all. Sweet woman! thou art indeed earth's angel!"

"Now, farewell, Achille. Christianity teaches us both to forget and forgive," she said, with humility. "It is our religion, not me, you should admire. We will meet in heaven."

"Oh! go not yet stay but for a moment!" he said, rising, and following her. "May I not see you again?"

"Not on Earth, Achille. I am betrothed to Heaven!" she said, with dignity united with humility, in her voice and manner.

Lafitte held her hand for a moment in silence, while his features were agitated by many conflicting emotions.

Suddenly, he spoke and said, with energy

"Gertrude! listen to me! this interview has decided my fate. I have wronged you; I would cheerfully lay down my life to atone for it; but with the will of heaven, I will work out a more befitting atonement. My brother thank God, that he lives I have injured deeply, deeply! I will seek him out, if he is yet a living man, and obtain his forgiveness for my crime. Then, having made restitution to those I have wronged, as far as lies in my power, I will devote the remainder of my life to penance and prayer. Oh! I have sinned grievously sinned!"

"Yet there is pardon for the guiltiest, cousin!" she replied, with timid firmness.

"I know it it is in that I trust," he answered with animation.

"May the Blessed Virgin, grant you life to accomplish your holy purposes," she said, while her face glowed with devotion. "Achille cousin! I must now bid you farewell."

"But, the old man, my father?" inquired he, with sudden eagerness, as memory, though slowly, faithful to her task, brought up the past scenes of his early life

"Lives he?"

The heavy gate in front of the convent, at that moment opened, with a startling sound, and she replied hastily "I know not, Achille. Your father my beloved uncle, and Henri, after accompanying me to this city, departed the

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next day for France. From neither have I heard since. He did speak of leaving Henri in France, and visiting his estate near Martinique. He may now reside there. O! what a tide of feeling of sorrow!" she said, while her voice trembled with emotion, "sorrow long sealed up in my heart, have you called forth! Oh! I must be more than human, not to feel Farewell! God and heaven bless you!"

Once more pressing his hand, while tears told that nature would hold her empire even within the strong walls and gloomy cloisters of a convent, she hastily glided to the farthest extremity of the hall, and swiftly ascending the broad winding staircase dimly lighted by a lamp, suspended in the hall beneath, she disappeared from his eager gaze.

His first impulse was to pursue her, though his purpose, he himself could not have defined. This determination he however abandoned, as he heard the tramp of men bearing a litter up the avenue; when they entered the hall, he had resumed his original recumbent position on the couch, where wakeful, and his brain teeming with busy thoughts, in deep melancholly, he passed the remaining hours of the night.

In those hours of reflection, he lived over again, his whole life. With how much sorrow for crime how much remorse, was that retrospection filled! He sunk to sleep as the morning broke, after having resolved, and fortified his resolutions by an appeal to Heaven, that he would restore, so far as lay in his power, the wealth he had taken from others; although to collect it, he knew he must sail to his different places of rendezvous. This accomplished, he determined that he would seek out his brother, obtain forgiveness for the injuries he had done him, and then, in the seclusion of a monastery, bury himself from the world, and devote the remainder of his life to acts of beneficence and piety.

BOOK V. DENOUEMENT.

"He left a corsair's name to other times."
"How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared,
Their plundered wealth, and robber's rock to guard?
Dreamed they of this, our preparation, ?"
"And Lara sleeps not where his fathers slept."

Byron.

CHAPTER I.

"Formerly, the influence of Obeah priestesses was very great over the negroes. Hundreds have died from the mere terror of being under the ban of Obeah. This is evidently a practise of oriental origin. Its influence over the negroes some twenty or thirty years ago, was almost incredible. The fetish, is the African divinity, invoked by the negroes in the practice of Obeah."

Madden's West Indies.

BRIDAL PREPARATION AN OBEAH SORCERESS SCENE AT THE HUT.

The events connected with our romance, naturally divide themselves into several distinct parts, which we have denominated books. Pursuing this division, we now open our fifth and last book, which, like the last act of a drama, contains the key to unlock all the mysteries of the preceding the sagacious reader has not already anticipated, dissipating the darkness, and shedding the sunshine of an unveiled denouement over the whole.

The evening of the day on which Count D'Oyley and the fair Castillian, with whom he had escaped from the rendezvous of the buccaneer after a warm pursuit on the part of Lafitte, were taken up by his own frigate, Le

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Sultan, in the channel of St. Marc's a stately ship arrayed in the apparel of war, sailed, with majestic motion, into the bay of Gonzaves.

The flag of France waved over her quarter deck, and a long tier of guns bristled from each side. Her course was directly for the narrow pass between the two parallel ridges of rocks, which formed a communication from the sea, with the pirate's grotto. An hour after she hove in sight at the southward, she had breasted the pass, and anchored in deep water, within a few fathoms of the outermost rock terminating the passage.

On gaining the deck of his frigate, the count, after attending to the comfort of the wearied Constanza, had hastily replied to the questions of his astonished officer; and informing them of his separation from the tender, which had not been heard of, he briefly recounted his adventures, and then issued orders for proceeding directly to the cavern, and demolishing the rendezvous of the pirates, by spiking their guns and otherwise rendering it untenable as a fortified place. It was the frigate, Le Sultan, we have seen drop her anchor the same evening, abreast of the cavern.

The setting sun flung his red beams across the level waters of the bay, and the winds were dying away with the fading of the sun-light, as Constanza the crimson rays of the sun tinging her brow with a rich glow leaned from the cabin window, and with a calm and thoughtful countenance, gazed upon the evening sky, its purple palaces of clouds its winged creatures, and its mountains of gold and emerald. Her dreams for although her eyes were fixed upon the gorgeous west, she was wrapped in a dreamy reverie of the past were of her happy childhood her paternal home near the imperial city of Montezuma her aged father his death, and the various scenes through which she had passed. The character of Lafitte his crimes and his virtues, and the kindness and noble nature of Theodore; her capture and escape, all floated through her mind, invested with their peculiar associations.

"And am I at last happy?" she said, half inquiringly. "Oh! that my poor father were here to share my happiness! Can it be true that this is not a dream? Am I indeed free, and is D'Oyley indeed here?"

"Here! my sweet Constanza, and folding you in his arms;" said the count, who had entered the state room unperceived, "here! to make you happy, and terminate your sufferings." Constanza leaned her cheek upon his shoulder, and with one arm encircling his neck, looked up into his face with the artless confidence of a child, while her features became radiant with joy. But she spoke not her happiness was too great for utterance. For a few moments he lingered in this pure embrace, and then breathed into her ear:

"When, dearest one, shall D'Oyley become your protector? Tell me now, while I hold you thus!" and he clasped her closer to his heart.

She replied not, and the rich blood mantled her brow, rivaling the crimson sun-glow which delicately suffused it. Her lips moved inaudibly, and her lover felt the small hand he held, tremble like an imprisoned dove within his own.

"Say, Constanza, my love! this evening shall it be? shall the chaplain of the frigate unite us this very hour? Refuse me not this request!" he continued ardently.

She pressed his hand, and looked up into his face with her large black eyes full of confidence and love, whose eloquent expression spoke a deeper and more befitting language than words could convey.

"Bless you, my sweet angel!" he exclaimed, reading with a lover's skill the language of her speaking eyes; and their lips were united in that pure, first kiss of love, whose raptures to mortals wedded or betrothed if minstrels tell us truly is never known but once.

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The count ascended to the deck to complete the preparations for his expedition against the rock. From his knowledge of the pass and mode of access to the cave, he determined to conduct the expedition himself.

It was his intention merely to proceed to the cavern, and leaving his men under the command of one of his lieutenants, return to the frigate and be united to the fair maiden, whom from her childhood, when he first saw her, the pride of her father's eye, and the idol of his household, while on a diplomatic mission to Mexico, he had admired, whilst her image lived, fondly cherished, in his memory. In after years, when the old Castilian became an exile, he sought him out in his retired villa in Jamaica. But a few weeks before it was attacked by the pirates, he had renewed that admiration, which a few days beneath the same roof with the fair girl, ripened into love. For a few short weeks he left her for the purpose of cruising in the neighborhood of Cartagena, to return, and find the villa a scene of desolation, the venerable parent lying a corpse in his own house, which was filled with armed soldiery, and the daughter, his beloved Constanza, carried off, no one could tell whither, by the daring buccaneer.

In one hour more, their scenes of danger and trial passed, they hoped for ever, he was to fold her to his heart, his wedded bride! This hope filled his bosom with ecstasy, as with an elastic step and joyous eye he ascended to the deck.

The boats were already along side and manned; and delaying a moment, to repeat his instructions to the chaplain in relation to the approaching ceremony, and commanding Constanza to the watchful attention of young Montville, he entered the cabin once more, to embrace her and assure her of his speedy return.

"Why must you go, dearest D'Oyley?" she inquired pleadingly, "I cannot trust you in that fearful cave again."

"I shall not stay, my love; I alone can conduct the expedition, which the safety of these seas renders it necessary should be undertaken."

"But you will quickly return?" she inquired, detaining him.

"Before Venus hovering in the rosy west," he said, pointing to that lowly planet, shining low in the western sky like a lesser moon, "shall wet her silver slipper in the sea, will I return to you."

The next moment, he was standing in the stern of the boat, which, propelled by twelve oars, moved steadily and swiftly up the rocky passage to the cave.

About a quarter of a mile to the south of the grotto occupied by the buccaneers, extended from the cliff a narrow tongue of land, strewn with loose gigantic rocks. This tongue, connected by rocks and sand bars, with one of the parallel ridges confining the passage from the sea to the cave, formed the southern and eastern boundary of the basin, or lagoon, often before alluded to. Near its junction with the rocks of the pass, it spread out into a level flat, covered with long grass. It was half buried at noon day in shadow, cast by the rocks which overhung it on every side, but that opening to the water. In this direction the sea was visible through a narrow gap, a few yards in width.

In the back part of this area, whose surface was rather less than an acre and a half, hid by a projecting rock, which formed its roof, stood a rude hut made of cane branches and bamboo leaves interlaid. A single door facing the sea, was the only aperture in the rude habitation, which, a wreath of blue smoke curling up its face indicated it to be. The sun just setting, reddened with his fiery beams the hideous features of an old decrepid hag, with a sunken eye full of malignity, toothless jaws, grizzly wool, long and tangled, and squallid figure bent nearly double with age and infirmity. It was Oula, and the rude hut, her habitation.

She was an aged African sybil, a degenerate priestess of the terrible deity, fetish or the Obeah. Through her incantations, charms, amulets and prophecies, besides her skill in foretelling evil tidings, and her accuracy in

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giving the fortunes of her deluded votaries, which were usually of her own hue, her name was widely extended.

Occasionally there would be some of a paler complexion from among the buccaneers, from time to time resorting to the grotto, who sometimes honoured her art by seeking of her knowledge of their future destinies.

As she squatted in the door of her hut, her eye was fixed upon the advancing frigate, though she watched its approach with apparent indifference. As the ship lessening her sail, finally dropped her anchor within half a mile of her wild abode, her features gave indication of interest.

"Quacha!" she called in a low harsh voice, as the ship swung to her anchor.

At the sound of her voice, a little deformed negro, whose size indicated extreme youth, but whose large features, and the lines of sagacity and cunning drawn in his face, showed that he had seen many years, perhaps one-third of the number his mother, for in this relation she stood to him, herself counted, stood before her. His head was large, and covered with long, strait, shaggy hair, which fell in thick masses over his eyes. It was the head of an adult, placed upon the shrivelled body of a sickly child.

"Hoh, mummy!" he replied, as he emerged from the hut where he had been lying, with his head among the ashes, with which he was cooking their evening meal.

"Did you sa' dat Spanis' Martinez, come down in boat' day, Hugh?" she inquired, without turning her head.

"Es ol' mum."

"Wat I tell'er 'bout nebber call me ol', you debbles' brat," she said, in a loud angry voice, and aiming a blow at his head, with a long staff she held in her hand, which he from much practice, dexterously evaded, and improving his phraseology, replied

"Es, mummy."

"Wat he come for, Quacha?"

"Quacha don't know, mummy. He sa' he come see de ol' Obi."

"Ol' Obi! he say dat?" she said, muttering; "I'll ol' Obi him, wit his black Spannis fas."

"Hoh! here he come hesef, mummy," exclaimed the hope and promise of the old beldame; and the athletic, finely moulded figure of the young Spaniard emerged from a path, which, winding among the rocks, led to the main land, and stood before them.

"Good even to you, Oula," he said, with an air in which superstitious reverence struggled with incredulity and an inclination to jest with the mysterious being, whose supernatural aid he sought.

"Oula is't, an' god een," she growled. "Well, that's better nor ol' Obi," she said, without turning her eyes from the frigate. "You needn't 'spose any thing's hid from Oula. Wat for is she Obi, if not to know ebery ting."

"Now be at peace, Oula, and harm me not with Obeah," he said, soothingly. "I meant not to anger you. Listen! do you know the music of this gold?" he asked, shaking several gold pieces in his hand "I have brought it to give you, Oula."

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The eyes of the negress sparkled as she stretched forth her bony arm, to grasp the coin, which he resigned to her greedy clutch.

"Wat want for dese, Martinez? Sall Oula Obi you en'my, show you de prize-ship, or find de white breast buckra missy for you," she said, as slowly and carefully she told the money from one hand into the other.

The Spaniard approached her, and said, with emphasis "The last, Oula! Serve me, and you shall have five times the coin you clasp so tightly there."

"Come in, come in, Martinez," said she, rising upon her staff, and hobbling into the hut. Obi can do nothin' wid de fire-stars, looking down so bright."

With a paler brow and flatering step, he entered the gloomy hut, half filled with smoke, and hot and filthy, from the fumes of tobacco, and nauseous herbs, drying in the chimney, which was built of loose stones.

Closing the door, after commanding Quacha to stay without and watch against intrusion, she pointed Martinez to a seat upon a fragment of rock, and bidding him turn his back and preserve the strictest silence till she spoke, she commenced her mysterious preparations.

Baring her shrivelled arms and scraggy neck, she passed her long fingers through her tangled hair till it stood out from her head like the quills of a porcupine. Then taking from a box by the fire-place, a tiara, or head-dress, formed of innumerable stuffed water-snakes, curiously interwoven, so that their heads were all turned outward, forming in the eye of her credulous devotee, a formidable and terrific coronet for the sorceress, she placed it upon her shrivelled locks a second Medusa.

From the same repository which used to contain her materials for practising Obeah, she drew forth a necklace, strung with the claws and teeth of cats, the fangs of serpents and the teeth of hanged men, which, with great solemnity of manner, she passed three times around her neck. To this, she suspended a little red bag, filled with grave dirt, and tied up with the hair of a murdered woman. Bracelets, of similar materials of the necklace, with the addition of the beak of a parrot, which had been taught to speak the three magic names of Fetish, ornamented her arms. Encircling her waist with an enormous green and black serpent, she tied it by the head and tail, leaving them to dangle before her.

Then oiling her face, arms, neck, and breast, she dipped her finger into a basin of water which stood upon the box, muttering mean while, words unintelligible to the Spaniard. Taking an iron pot, she placed it, with great solemnity, in the back part of the hut, leaving room to pass between it and the wall.

These preparations completed with great show of ceremony, she took from a branch upon which it lay, a long slender human bone, and stirred the fire with its charred end. Laying this aside, she took from the same place, a skeleton hand, the joints retained in their places by wires, with which she took up a live coal, and placed it under the pot. After several coals were transferred from the fire place, in this manner, she got down upon her knees, before the fire, she had thus kindled under the pot, and began to blow it until it blazed.

Then rising and hobbling to the fire-place, she slipped a slide which had once belonged to a binnacle case, and reaching her hand into the cavity, drew forth from its roost a snow white cock, fat, and unwieldy, from long, and careful keeping.

This bird, held sacred in all Obeah rites, the old sorceress placed over the coals, upon a roost which she had constructed of three human bones, two placed upright, and one laid on them horizontally.

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These mysterious preparations completed, she walked three times round the cauldron, working, as she moved, her features into the most passionate contortions, so that when she stopped on completing her round, her face was more demoniac than human in its aspect and expression. In a shrill, startling voice she then addressed her votary.

"Rise, buckra, look; no speak!"

The Spaniard had witnessed with feelings of dismay which he could not subdue, all the ominous preparations we have described, reflected in a small broken mirror which he was made purposely by her to face, that by its imperfect representation the reality might be exaggerated by her visitors, and their fears acted upon, better to prepare them for her purpose.

As she spoke, he stood up and turned with a wild look, while his hand voluntarily grasped the hilt of his cutlass. The distorted features of the beldam, and her strange ornaments and appalling preparations met his superstitious eye. She allowed him to survey the scene before him for a moment, and then commenced chanting in rude improvisatore: "Now tell buckra, wat dat you Ax of Fetish for you do? If you b'lieve dat Fetish know Ebery ting abub, below Den you hab all dat you seek, Walk dree times roun', den buckra speak." Seizing his passive hand as she addressed him, she leaped with almost supernatural activity three times around the pot, drawing him after her with reluctant steps, yet fearing to hold back. The third time she paused, and taking an earthen vessel from the box, she commenced dancing round the fire, commanding him to follow, dropping as she whirled, something she took from it into the iron vessel, the while chanting in a rude measure; "Here de unborn baby heart, Fetish lub dis much! Here de hair from off de cat Dat knew de nails, Eat out de eyes, Dat drink de blood Ob dead man. Here de poison for de friend! Fetish lub dis too! Here de trouble for de foe! Here de egg ob poison snake Here de head ob speckle cock Here de blood, and here de dirt From de coffin, from de grave Of murdered 'ooman an' her babe." Then followed some unintelligible incantation, in a language unknown to the Spaniard, and still grasping both of his hands, she whirled with him around the cauldron. Suddenly stopping, after many rapid revolutions during which her body writhed in convulsions, while the astonished and paralyzed victim of his own superstition, yielded passively to the strange rites in which he was now an unwilling actor, she again commenced her monotonous chant, in the same wild and shrill tone of voice: "Now de blood from near de heart, Perfect make de Obeah art; Buckra's wish will den be grant, An' Fetish gib him dat he want."

"What mean you, Oula?" he inquired, as the Obeah priestess drew a long knife from her girdle and held the earthen vessel in the other hand. She replied, while her eyes darkened with malignity and her features grew more haggard and hideous: "After buckra tell his wish, Den his blood mus' fill dis dish; Middle finger middle vein, Blood from dat will gib no pain In de kettle it shall mix, Wid hangman's bones for stirring sticks! Now buckra Spaniard, wat's dy will? Speak! dy wis' to Oula, tell." And she fixed her eyes, before whose strange expression his own quailed, full upon her votary.

The Spaniard, who had sought her in the full belief of her supernatural powers, to solicit her aid in the accomplishment of his object, was wholly unprepared for the scenes of magnitude, to one of his tone of mind which he had passed through. It was several moments before he recovered his self-possession, and then an impulse to withdraw his application, rather than pursue his object, influenced him. But after a moment's reflection, and recollection of the object he sought in this visit to her, he summoned resolution, and replied with a hoarse voice, while he looked about him suspiciously, as if fearful of being overheard,

"Oula, there is a maiden beautiful as the moon! I love her but she would scorn me if I wooed her, and she is also betrothed to another. He was my prisoner I brought him to this island and imprisoned him to await our captain's arrival. The next day, before my vessel sailed again, she was brought in a prisoner. I bribed my captain, and lingered behind in disguise, that I might see her, of whom I had heard so much. I at length had a glimpse of her from the opening in the top of the cave, and when I saw her I loved her.

"Loved her to marry, Martinez?" she said, with an ironical grin.

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"I said not so," replied the Spaniard, quickly. "I loved her with a burning passion. I sought to gain the part of the grotto she occupied, and arranged my plan; but Lafitte returned, and the next day I would have effected it, but they the last night escaped, she and her lover, and I have all the day been planning some way to obtain her. This evening as I was sitting by the cave, cursing my fate and thinking perhaps I should never see her more yonder frigate hove in sight. I took a glass and watched her until she dropped her anchor and whom think you I saw upon her deck?"

"The buckra lady?"

"The same I knew her by her form and air. She leaned upon the arm of my late prisoner, who is, no doubt, commander of the ship."

"What you want done?" she inquired, as he abruptly paused.

"I would possess her," he replied warmly; "now good Oula, fulfil your boasted promise," he added eagerly, as his dark eye flashed with hope and passion.

"It hard business but Fetish he do ebery ting you 'bleive dat, buckra Martinez," she added, fixing her blood-shot and suspicious eye upon him.

"All, every thing, only give me power to accomplish my desires," he exclaimed, impatiently.

"Dat you sall hab," she replied, seizing his arm; "hol you lef arm dat next de heart's blood," she cried, chanting, "Blood from heart, Firs' mus' part, 'Fore Fetish Grant you wish."

With revolting gestures, and brandishing her glistening knife, she danced around him, then fastening her long fingers upon his hand, she continued, "From middle finger middle vein, Blood must flow, you' end to gain."

When the Spaniard, after a struggle between apprehension and fear of failing in his object, and of danger to himself, made up his mind to go through the ordeal, though resolved to watch her so that she should inflict no severe wound upon his hand, the voice of the old beldam's son was heard at the door in altercation with some one in the possession of a voice no less discordant than his own.

The Obeah surprised in the middle of her orgies in a shrill angry voice, demanded the cause of this interruption.

"It is Cudjoe, mummy he want see ol' Obi, he sa'."

"Maldicho!" exclaimed the Spaniard, "it were as much as my head is worth for Lafitte's slave to find me here, when I should be at sea. "Is there no outlet?" he inquired, hastily.

"No but here be de deep hole," she said, removing some branches and old clothing this will hide you. He mus come in, or he brak in," she added, as Cudjoe's anxiety to enter grew more obvious by his loud demand for admittance, and his repeated heavy blows against the door.

The Spaniard, not in a situation to choose his place of concealment, let himself down into the hole, which formed her larder and store-room, and seating himself upon a cask, was immediately covered over with branches and blankets.

"What for such rackett, you Coromantee nigger break in lone 'oomans house af'er dark," she grumbled with much apparent displeasure, as taking a lighted brand in her hand, she unbarred the frail door.

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At the sight of her strange attire and wild appearance, increased by the flame of the burning brand she held, alternately flashing redly upon her person, and leaving it in obscurity, the slave drew back with an exclamation of terror. The old sorceress, who with a strange but common delusion, believed that she possessed the power for which the credulous gave her credit having deceived others so long, that she ultimately deceived herself enjoyed his surprise, feeling it a compliment to her art, and received character, as one of the terrible priestesses of Fetish.

"Hugh! Coromantee," she said, "if you start dat away, at Oula, wat tinky you do, you see Fetish? What you want dis time?" she inquired, abruptly. "What for you no wid you massa Lafitte?"

"Him sail way af'er de prisoners dat get way las night, and leave Cudjoe sleep in de cave like a col' dead nigger, and know noffin."

"Gi me! well what for you come 'sturb Oula you no 'fraid she obi you?"

"Oh Gar Armighty! good Oula, nigger! dont put de finger on me. Cudjoe come for Obi," exclaimed the slave in alarm.

"Obi can do nothin without music ob de gold," she said, mechanically extending her hand.

"Cudjoe know dat true well 'nuff," he replied, taking several coins of copper, silver, and gold, from the profound depth of his pocket, in which almost every article of small size missing in the vessel in which he sailed, always found a snug berth.

Giving her the money, which she counted with an air somewhat less satisfied than that she wore when telling the weightier coin of the Spaniard, she invited him into her hut.

Casting his eyes around the gloomy apartment with awe, he at last rested his gaze upon the white cock which still reposed upon his roost of human bones. Gradually, as he looked, and became more familiar with the gloom of the interior, his eye dilated with superstitious fear, and without removing it from the sacred bird, he sunk first on one knee, then on the other, the while rapidly repeating some heathenish form of adjuration, and then fell prostrate, with his face to the damp earth.

For a moment, he remained in this attitude of worship, in which fear predominated over devotion, when the voice of Oula aroused him.

"Dat good Obeah like dat. Now what you want Cudjoe? be quick wid your word, coz I hab much bus'ness to do jus dis time."

"Cudjoe want revenge ob hell!" replied the slave rising to his knees, his features at once changing to a fiendish expression, in faithful keeping with his wish.

"Bon Gui! Who harm you now, Coromantee?" she inquired in a tone of sympathy, gratified at meeting a spirit and feelings kindred with her own.

"Debble! Who?" he said fiercely, "more dan de fingers on dese two han'!"

"What dare name?" she inquired. "Obeah mus' know de name."

Here the slave, who never forgave an insult elicited by his personal deformities, recapitulated the injuries he imagined he had suffered from this cause, while the old beldam gave a willing ear, forgetting in her participation

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of his feelings, her first visiter, who impatiently awaited the termination of this interview. And as he heard his own name in the catalogue of vengeance repeated by the slave, he muttered within his teeth, that the slave should rue the hour he sought the Obeah's skill.

"Gi me!" she exclaimed, as he ended. "All dese you want hab me gib obi! Hugh! what nice picking for de jolly crows dey make. But dare mus' be more gold. Hough! hoh! hoh!" she laughed, or rather croaked. "Gah me! what plenty dead men! Well, you be de good cus'omer, if you be de Coromantee nigger!"

"Will de obi be set for dem all?" he impatiently inquired.

"Dare mus' be two tree tings done fus; you mus' take de fetish in de fus place," she said, going to her box and taking from it an ebony idol carved into many grotesque variations of the human form. "Here is de great Fetish," she continued; "now put you right han' on de head ob dis white bird, while I hol' dis fetish to you lips. Dare," she continued, as he tremblingly assumed the required position and manner, "dare, now swear you b'leve wat I speak

Fetish he be black debil he be white, Sun he make for nigger, for buckra is mak de night.

Now kiss de fetish," she said, as he repeated after her the form of an Obeah oath, administered only to those of her own race and religion. One or two other similar ceremonies were performed, when she suddenly exclaimed, "Dare I hab it how de debble, no tink sooner?"

"Coromantee," she said abruptly "dare is one ting more mus' be done, or Fetish do noffin' and Obeah no be good."

The slave looked at her inquiringly, and she continued: "Dare mus' be de blood from de heart ob a white breas' lady, to dip de wing ob de white bird in. You mus' get de lady; she mus' be young, hab black eye, an' nebber hab de husban'. Do dis, an' you sall hab you wish."

The slave's countenance fell, as he heard the announcement suggested by her practised subtlety.

"Dare was a white lady," he replied, "in de schooner, but she gone oh gar! it take debble time to do dis;" he said with an air of disappointment. "Mus' de great Fetish hab one?" he inquired anxiously.

"He mus', he do noffin widout;" she replied determinedly.

The slave stood lamenting the loss of his anticipated revenge, when she inquired if he saw the frigate that dropped her anchor half an hour before, off the pass. On his replying in the affirmative, she said, "dare is a lady board dat ship, may serve de purpose. As de ship was swung roun', I see her in de window on de stern."

The eyes of the slave lighted up at this intelligence.

"Wat frigate is dat Oula?"

"I don' know," she replied; fearing if the slave knew the lady to be the Castillian his master had protected, he would decline the enterprise upon which she was about sending him.

"No matter 'bout de ship," she replied, "de lady dare. De stern lie close to de rocks; you can go out to de end ob de passage, and den swim under de stern climb up de rudder, or some way into de window an' take her off before dey can catch you in de dark. You hear dis now wat you say?"

The slave, without replying, darted through the door, and before the old woman could gain the outside, to warn him to be cautious, his retreating form, as he ran rapidly along the rocky ridge in the direction of the frigate, was lost to her eye.

CHAPTER II.

"The dissimulation and cunning of those practising Obeah, is incredible. The Africans have an opinion that insanity and supernatural inspiration are combined, and commonly, knaves and lunatics are the persons who play the parts of sorcerors or sorceresses. Instances are on record where they have fallen victims to the revenge of votaries, when their Obeah failed in its effects, or did injury."

The West Indies.

THE SLAVE AND HIS CAPTIVE HIS REVENGE PURSUIT OF THE STRANGE SAIL.

After the count left the frigate on his expedition against the rendezvous of the pirates, the fair girl, whose star of happiness seemed now in the ascendant, and about to shine propitiously upon her future life, re-assumed her reclining attitude by the cabin window, which overlooked the sea in the direction of her native land. For a few moments, her thoughts were engaged upon her approaching bridal; but gradually, they assumed the garb of memory, and winging, like a wearied bird, over the evening sea, reposed in the home of her childhood. As she still gazed vacantly upon the fading horizon, she was conscious that a dark object broke its even line. It grew larger, and approached the frigate rapidly before she was called from her half-conscious abstraction by a change in its appearance; when, fixing her look more keenly in the direction, she saw it was a schooner just rounding to about a mile beyond the frigate. Apparently, it had not as yet, been observed from the deck, as all eyes were turned to the shore, following the boats which had just gained the foot of the cliff.

At the sight of the vessel, so nearly resembling the one whose prisoner she had been, her capture and its trying scenes came vividly before her mind, and she turned her face from an object, connected with such disagreeable associations. The approaching ceremony again agitated her bosom; and as her eye rested upon a mirror in the opposite pannel, she parted with care her dark hair from her forehead, arranged in more graceful folds her mantilla, and all the woman beamed in her fine eyes as they met the reflection of her lovely countenance and symmetrically moulded figure.

"How long he stays! he must have been gone full an hour," she said, unconsciously aloud. "The virgin protect him from harm?"

"The count will soon return, ma'moiselle," said a small mulatto boy, who acted as steward of the state rooms, now that they were occupied by their fair inmate. She turned as he spoke,

"Is there danger, boy?"

"None, please you ma'moiselle the men on deck, say the rovers have left their rock, and that there will be no fighting."

"Sacra diable!" he suddenly shrieked, pointing to the state-room window, at which appeared the head of the slave. Constanza also turned, but only to be grasped in his frightful arms. At first surprised, and too much paralyzed with fear to scream, Cudjoe prevented her from giving the alarm by winding her mantilla about her mouth, and hastily conveyed her through the window or port hole, from which the gun, usually stationed there, had been removed. Rapidly letting himself, with his burden, down by the projections of the rudder, he dropped with her into the sea, and raising her head above water with one muscular arm, a few vigorous strokes with the other bore him within

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the black shadow of the rocks behind a projecting point of which, he disappeared.

Re-entering the hut after the abrupt departure of the slave, Oula released the Spaniard from his place of concealment, and informed him of her plan to place the lady in his power.

"You are a very devil for happy thoughts," he said, with animation; but if the revengeful slave gets her, I may thank you, and not Fetish, for the prize. Have her this night I must, for I expect my schooner."

"Ha! there is the Julié now, by the holy twelve!" he exclaimed, as his quick eye rested upon the object which had attracted the attention of Constanza. "Getzendanner will be putting a boat in for me, and yet he must see the frigate unless she lays too dark in the cliff's shadow. St. Peter, send fortune with the slave! Will he bring her to the hut if he succeeds, think you, Oula?" he suddenly and sharply inquired, as a suspicion of change in the negro's purpose flashed across his mind.

"Bring de lady?" she exclaimed in surprize, "he know he finger rot off he eye fall out and he hair turn to de live snake wid de fang, if he no bring her He no dare keep her way."

Solaced by this assurance, he paced the little green plat before the cabin, often casting his eyes in the direction of the frigate. Nearly half an hour elapsed after the departure of Cudjoe, when the robes of the maiden borne in the arms of the slave caught his eye.

"Back, back, you spoil de whole," exclaimed Oula, as the impatient Spaniard darted forward to seize his prize.

Instead of the maiden's lovely form, he met the herculean shoulders of the slave, whose long knife passed directly through his heart. Without a word or a groan, Martinez fell dead at his feet.

Resigning the maiden to the faithful Juana, who followed immediately behind, Cudjoe sprung forward with a cry of vindictive rage, and before Oula could comprehend his motives, the reeking blade passed through her withered bosom.

"Take dis hag ob hell!" he shouted, as he drew forth the knife from her breast. "You make no more fool ob Cudjoe, for de curs' Spaniard."

"Grande diable! what debble dis?" he suddenly yelled and groaned, as the son of the slain Obeah leaped upon his neck, when he saw his mother fall, and grappled his throat tightly with his fingers, while he fixed his teeth deep into his flesh. The struggle between them was but for a moment. Finding it impossible to disengage his fingers, the slave bent his arm backward, and passed his long knife up through his body. The thrust was a skilful one, and fatal to the boy, who released his grasp, and fell back in the death struggle to the ground.

In the meanwhile, Juana had borne Constanza to the fire, in the hut, and was using every means to restore circulation to the chilled limbs of the unconscious girl.

The interview between the Spaniard and Oula, had been overheard by Juana, from the rock above the hut. After the escape of her mistress and the count, and the departure of Lafitte and his men, in pursuit with the exception of Cudjoe, who, in the hurry and confusion of getting underway, was left behind, and with whom she was accustomed occasionally to indulge in social African gossip on ship-board she had been left quite alone. This solitude and anxiety on account of her mistress, led her, at the approach of evening, to pay a visit to the old sybil, for the purpose of consulting her respecting her safety.

After the hasty departure of the slave, to obey the commands of Oula, she descended the rock overhanging the hut, and rapidly following him, she awaited his return, and then communicated to him the information relative to

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the Spaniard and the lady. Indignant at this treachery towards one whom he regarded as his master's lady, and enraged that the old woman should thus use him as the tool for the Spaniard, he drew his knife, bounded forward, and met Martinez with the fatal result we have just mentioned.

When the slave entered the hut, after his bloody revenge was completed, Juana informed him of the expedition against the cave which she had seen moving from its destination towards the rock above the hut.

Constanza soon recovering, Juana led her forth into the air, and told her that she would go round with her to the cave, where the boats of her lover then were, at the same time warning Cudjoe to endeavour to get on board the schooner, and escape from the French seamen. The slave looked seaward, where she could just be discovered lying to, and in a few seconds afterward, he saw a boat pulling close to the shore. Supposing, from the language of the Spaniard, that it was sent for him, and that the schooner was the Julié, he bid Juana conduct Constanza to the barges of the frigate, and hastily leaving them, he approached the boat, which now touched the beach.

"Boat ahoy!" he hailed, as he came near.

"Ha, Cudjoe! that's your sweet voice, in a thousand!" replied one, in answer to his hail "how came you here?"

"The captain sail and leab me sleep in de cabe," he replied; "I must go to Barrita in de Julié."

"You are right welcome, my beauty; but where's Martinez?"

"He was jus' killed by de Frenchman, in shore. I jus' 'scape wid my neck."

"Frenchman? how?" exclaimed the man, in surprise. "What do you mean?"

"No see dat frigate, dar? I tought you bol' nuff to com' in right under her guns. See her! dere she lay. You can hardly tell her masts from de trees."

The man looked for a moment steadily, and then exclaimed "By the joly St. Peter, you say truly. Spring into the boat, Cudjoe. Shove off, men shove off, and give way like devils to your oars. We must be out of this, or we shall have hard quarters between Monsieur's decks."

In a few moments, they stood on the deck of the schooner, which immediately filled and stood seaward. Her subsequent career is already known to the reader.

Before Juana gained the cave, with her charge, to effect which she had first to ascend the cliff, and then descend by a perilous foot-way, to the platform before it, the object of the count had been effected. The gun had been pitched over into the basin, and the arms and stores either destroyed or carried off. When he gained the deck of his frigate, he was met by the first lieutenant, who reported a sail in the offing. "She has been lying to some time, sir," he added.

"Ha, I see her! she is now standing out," said the count, as he took his glass from his eye.

"Shall we get under way, sir?" inquired the lieutenant.

"Not yet, Monsieur," replied he smiling. "We have a festival below, which will require the presence of my officers; and the men must make merry to-night;" and winged with love, he hastened to meet Constanza. Entering the state-room, he encountered the prostrate form of the mulatto boy, who was lying insensible by the door.

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Glancing his eyes hastily around the apartment, whilst his heart palpitated with a sudden foreboding of evil, the loved form he sought, no where met this eager gaze. Alarmed, he called her name, and searched every recess of that and the adjoining state rooms.

"My God! where can she be?" he exclaimed, now highly excited; "Can she have fallen into the water from this port? yet, it cannot be Constanza! my betrothed, my beloved! speak to me, if you are near!" he cried, hoping, yet with trembling, that she might still be concealed playfully hiding from him to try, as maidens will do, her lover's tenderness. "Yet if here, what means this?" he added raising the boy; "There is life here he has fainted speak Antoine, open your eyes and look at me!"

The boy still remained insensible; but the count by applying restoratives hastily taken from the toilet of the maiden, soon restored his suspended faculties. To his eager questions the boy told in reply of the hideous visage that appeared at the port-hole, enlarging upon his black face and white tusks.

Was it a man or a wild beast?" he interrogated.

"Oh! Monsieur, one man-devil with such long arms, and long white tusks like a boar!" he replied, clinging to the person of the officer, and looking fearfully around, as if expecting the appalling apparition to start momentarily upon his sight.

The brow of the lover changed to the hue of death; the blood left his lips, and faintly articulating "Lafitte's slave!" he reeled, and would have fallen to the floor, had not the boy caught him. Recovering himself by a vigorous intellectual and physical effort, he stood for an instant in thought, as if resolving upon some mode of action.

All at once he spoke, in a voice hollow and deep with emotion, and awful with gathering passion.

"Lafitte thou seared and branded outlaw cursed of God and loathed of men fit compeer of hell's dark spirits blaster of human happiness destroyer of innocence! Guilty thyself, thou wouldst make all like thee! Scorer of purity, thou wouldst unmake, and make it guilt. Like Satan, thou sowest tares of sorrow among the seeds of peace thou seekest good to make it evil! Renegade of mankind! Thou art a blot among thy race, the living presence of that moral pestilence which men and Holy Writ term *sin!* Oh, that my words were daggers, and each one pierced thy heart! then would I talk on, till the last trumpet called thee from thy restless shroud to face me. But, Lafitte! Lafitte!" he added, in a voice that rung like a battle cry, "I will first face thee on earth! As true as there is one living God, I will be revenged on thee for this foul and grievous wrong!"

"Ha! why do I stand here, idly wasting words? he is not far off. I may pursue and take him within the hour and" he added, bounding to the deck, "perhaps Constanza, ere it be too late."

His voice, as he issued his orders to get at once under weigh, rung with an energy and sternness the startled officers and seamen never knew before. Having rapidly communicated the disappearance of Constanza, he learned from the officer of the watch that some of the men who had joined the shore expedition, on returning, said they had seen a sail in the offing. "But after having swept the whole horizon with my glass," he continued, "and discerning nothing, I concluded they must have been deceived, and therefore, did not report it. Now, I think they were right."

"That vessel was Lafitte's and Constanza is on board of her," exclaimed the count. "We must pursue, and if there is strength in wind or speed in ships, overtake and capture her this night. Call the men who saw her."

The seamen being interrogated, indicated by the compass the direction the sail bore from the frigate, when they discovered it. Towards this point, leaving her anchor behind, the ship, in less than three minutes after the count had ascended to the deck, began to move with great velocity, her tall masts bending gracefully to one side, as if

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they would kiss the leaping waves, the water surging before her swelling bows, and gurgling with hoarse but lively music around her rudder.

All that night, a night of intense agony to the count, a bright watch was kept on every quarter; yet the morning broke without discovering the object of their pursuit. The horizon was unbroken even by a cloud; a calm had fallen upon the sea, and not a wave curled to the zephyrs, which from time to time danced over its polished surface, scarcely dimpling it.

For several days, within sight of the distant island, the frigate lay becalmed, during which period, the lover, unable to contend with the fever of his burning thoughts, became delirious. The winds rose and again died away! Storms ploughed the face of the deep, and calms reigned upon the sea! Yet he was unconscious of any change; day and night he raved, and called on the name of his betrothed. During this period the frigate cruised along the coast, the officer in command not wishing to take any step until he knew the mind of the count.

On the twelfth day after the disappearance of Constanza, he was so far recovered as to ascend to the deck. His brow was pale, and his eye piercing with an unwonted expression.

"Twelve days Montville so long? There is no hope but there is revenge!" and his eyes flashed as his voice swelled with emotion and passion. "Put about for Barritaria!" he added quickly, rising and walking the deck with much agitation. "My only passion, my only purpose now shall be to meet that man the bane of my happiness! Destiny has bid him cross my path, and destiny shall bid him die by my hand."

On the third morning, they arrived at the island of Barritaria prepared to destroy that strong hold of the pirates, when, instead of a formidable fleet a strong fortress and extensive camp they found desolation. The day before, the buccaneers had been dispersed, their vessels captured, and their fort dismantled. Here and there wandered a straggler, ragged and wounded no boats were visible, and the smoke of two or three vessels, and the ruined camp of the pirates, told how recently and completely the revenge of the count had been anticipated.

From a wounded pirate, whom they took prisoner, he learned that Lafitte had been recently at Barritaria, and had gone to New Orleans to join the American forces in the defence of that city.

Piloted by one of his men who was acquainted with the inlets and bayous, communicating with the Mississippi, he gave orders to his first lieutenant to await his return, and proceeded at once up to the city. On his approach the next morning, the thunder of artillery filled his ears, and burning with revenge, he urged his oarsmen to their strength.

Entering the Mississippi about two leagues below the city, on the morning of the eighth of January, by a different route from that taken on a former occasion by Lafitte, he crossed to the opposite shore, from which came the roar of cannon, the crash of musketry, and shouts of combatants, while a dense cloud of smoke enveloped the plain to the extent of half a mile along the river.

"There, face to face, steel to steel, will I meet him I seek, or death," he exclaimed.

Learning from a fisherman the disposition of the two armies, and the point defended by the outlaw, he crossed the river, and after pulling up against the current for a third of a mile, he landed amidst a shower of balls and joined in the battle.

After he had, as he thought, achieved his revenge, in the fall of Lafitte, whose personal combat with him has already been detailed, the count, himself severely wounded, returned to his boat. In a few minutes he grew faint from loss of blood, and was landed by his crew at a negro's hut on the banks of the river. Here he remained several days, confined to a wretched couch, until his wound enabled him to proceed.

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As he was about to order his boatmen to prepare for their departure, he heard the name of Lafitte mentioned by the hospitable slave who was his host, in conversation with some one outside of the hut.

"What of him?" he exclaimed.

"Dere him schooner, massa gwine down de ribber!"

"What, that light-rigged vessel?" he said, pointing to a small, but beautiful armed schooner. "No no he is slain."

"He was wounded in the battle of the eighth, with two of his lieutenants, Sebastiano and a Dutchman, Getzendanner, I believe they call him," said a fisherman, coming forward; "but Lafitte is now well, and has purchased that vessel, formerly his own, and is going they say, now he has received his pardon to spend his days in the West Indies, or in France."

"Ha say you, Monsieur! Was it not him then I met on the field? Yet it must have been know you certainly that he sails away in that schooner?" he inquired, eagerly of the man, turning to look as he spoke, at the vessel which, with swift and graceful motion, with all sail set, moved down the river, rapidly disappearing in the distance.

"I saw him standing upon the deck as she passed," replied the fisherman, decidedly.

"Then shall he not escape me," cried the count; and calling to his crew, he hastened to his boat, and in a few minutes was on the way to his frigate, resolved, if possible, to intercept the schooner at the Balize.

The following day he reached his ship, and immediately, with his heart steeled to the consummation of his revenge, got under-weigh for the mouth of the Mississippi.

CHAPTER III.

"The consequences of crime are not confined to the guilty individual. Besides the public wrong, they are felt in a greater or less degree by his friends. Parents suffer more from the crimes of men than others. It ought to be the severest mental punishment, for a guilty man, if not wholly depraved, to witness a wife's or a parent's wretchedness, produced by his own acts."

Letters on Political Economy.

A RAMBLE SURPRISE AT SEA CONVERSATION LAFON.

We will leave the count in pursuit of Lafitte, now no longer "*the outlaw*." He had recovered his favourite vessel, "The Gertrude," which had been captured with the rest of the fleet; and with a select crew, drawn from his former adherents, set sail a few days after we left him in the convent, for his rendezvous in the Gulf of Gonsaves, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions he there made. To Constanza whom we left at this rendezvous, with the faithful Juana on her way to the boats of her lover's frigate we will now turn the attention of our readers.

When the desolate and unhappy girl found the frigate's boats had left the rock, her heart sunk within her, and when the ship, shortly after, stood seaward, under full sail, she at once surrendered herself to hopeless wretchedness. Three weeks she remained in the grotto, with a kind slave, her only companion, from whom she received every attention that circumstances permitted.

Her mind was daily tortured with fears of the approach of some of the pirate's squadron, or of Lafitte himself, whom, if again thrown into his power, she feared above all. As yet she was ignorant of the scenes he had passed

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through the great change in his destiny the honourable career he had commenced, and his pardon by the administrator of the laws he had so long violated. If she had known all this, and known that love for her, united with a noble patriotism, influenced him to take these steps, how different would have been her feelings? With what other emotions than of fear, would she have anticipated his approach?

The moon had shone tremblingly in the west, like the fragment of a broken ring, had displayed a broad and shining shield, and had nearly faded again into the pale eastern skies, and yet Constanza remained an inmate of the grotto.

Late in the afternoon, three days after we took leave of the count, on his way to intercept the Gertrude at the Balize, Constanza ascended the cliff, above the terrace, to survey, as she had done each long day of her imprisonment, the extensive horizon spread out before her to the south and west, hoping to discover the white sails of the frigate, which contained all that bound her to existence.

As night gathered over the sea, she descended the cliff, and walked towards the point where stood the hut of the deceased Obeah. The waves kissed her feet as she walked along the sandy shore. The stars, heralded by the evening planet, one by one began to appear, sprinkling a faint light upon her brow; the night wind played wantonly with her hair; but unmindful of every surrounding object, she walked thoughtfully forward, unheeding her footsteps, which carried her unconsciously to the extreme point of the rocky cape. Here seating herself upon a rock, she leaned her head upon her hand, and, gazing upon the sea, while thoughts of her lover and her desolate and unprotected situation, filled her mind, insensibly fell asleep.

About midnight, a hand laid upon her forehead, awoke her. Instinctively comprehending her situation, she recollected where she was. A tall figure stood by her side. With a scream of terror she sprung to her feet, and would have fled; but he detained her by her robes.

"Stay, Constanza, señora! stay tell me why you are here?"

"Is it Lafitte the outlaw?" she exclaimed, breathless with alarm.

"It is lady; but no more Lafitte the *outlaw*."

"Oh señor, have pity, and do not use the power you have," she cried with nervous emotion. "I am wretched, miserable indeed."

"Lady," he replied, moved by her pathetic appeal, "Lady, there shall no danger come nigh you while I can protect you. How you came once more in my power, or here, is to me a mystery. I thought you happy as the bride of "

"No oh! no. He returned here after we gained his frigate, and your slave stole on board into the port, and siezing me, prevented me from giving the alarm, and brought me on shore to the hut of an old negress. The frigate, on my being missed, stood out to sea, probably after a schooner, which they thought was yours, and on board of which they no doubt thought I was, or they would have searched the shore and cavern. Three weeks have I been here with none but Juana. Even your presence señor, is a relief to me."

The chief listened with surprise to this rapid account of her capture.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, the conduct of the count on the field of battle, flashing upon his mind. "I see it all. 'Revenge,' was his war-cry revenge for his betrothed. He must have suspected my agency in this, and pursued me to avenge his wrongs. Thank God! I am herein guiltless. But my slave! know you whose tool he was, or what his purpose, señora?" he inquired quickly.

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"I do, señor," she replied, "and then related to him the deception practised upon Cudjoe, of which Juana had informed her, and his instant revenge.

"I knew that Martinez to be a second Heberto Velanquez in villainy;" he said. "Lady, I congratulate you Heaven surely watches over you for good! My slave's vengeance was like himself. Strange, when he arrived in the Julié at Barritaria, a day or two after, he told me not of all this. But perhaps he feared for his head."

At this moment a voice startled the maiden, and timid as the hunted fawn from the excitement she had gone through, she raised a foot to fly.

"Stay lady, it is but my boatmen on the other side of this rock. Passing up the channel to the grotto in the schooner," continued Lafitte, "I saw your white robes even in this faint star-light, as you were sleeping on the rocks. I immediately let down my boat, and ordering the schooner to keep on into the basin, I landed to ascertain who it was, not dreaming although my heart should have told me" he added tenderly, "that it was you."

"Now señora," he said, addressing her earnestly, "will you so far place confidence in me as voluntarily to put yourself under my protection? I need not assure you it shall be a most honourable one. Let me take you, and this very hour I will sail to your friends nay, to the Count D'Oyley himself. If you desire it, I will seek him in every port in the Mexican seas. Confide in me lady, and allow me to show you the strength of my love for you, while I manifest its disinterestedness."

In less than half an hour, Constanza and Juana, whom she had left in the cave during her absence, were once more occupants of the gorgeously furnished state-room on board the Gertrude. Before morning, Lafitte having also completed the business for which he visited his rendezvous, was many leagues from the grotto, his swift winged vessel almost flying over the waves before a brisk wind, in the direction of Havana, where he expected to hear of, or fall in with, the French frigate Le Sultan.

From the moment his lovely passenger had entered the cabin he had not seen or spoken with her. Again her young protector Théodore became her page, and Juana her faithful attendant.

From Théodore she learned, with surprise and pleasure the scenes through which his benefactor had passed since she last met him. With prayerful gratitude she listened to the strange history of the last few weeks he had passed at Barritaria and in the besieged city, of his exploits upon the battlefield, his pardon by the executive, and his resolution to devote his life for the good of his fellow men, by retiring to the monastery of heroic and benevolent monks, on the summit of Mont St. Bernard.

"May the virgin and her son bless and prosper him in his purposes!" she said, raising her eyes with devotional gratitude to heaven, while all the woman beamed in them, as she reflected how far she had contributed to this change. And she sighed, that she could not requite love so noble and pure as his.

With perfect confidence in the sincerity of her captor, she now became more composed, and a ray of joy illumined her heart, when she looked forward to the meeting with her betrothed lover.

"And where will you go my Théodore when your friend becomes a recluse?"

"Lady, I shall never leave him, where he goes, I go! He is my only friend on earth. There is none besides to care for the buccaneer boy," he added, with a melancholy air.

"Nay nay Théodore. The count D'Oyly, and myself esteem, and feel a deep interest in you. Will you not be my brother, Théodore? Our home shall be yours, we will supply your present benefactor. The gloom and solitude of a monastery's walls will not suit your young spirit."

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"Lady urge me not I will never leave him," he said firmly, while his heart overflowed with thankfulness for the kind and affectionate interest she manifested in his welfare.

At that moment an aged man, bent with the weight of years, with a majestic face, although deeply lined with the furrows of time, came to the state-room door, and in a feeble voice, called to the youth.

"Who is that old man, Théodore?" she inquired with interest, while her eyes filled with tears as she thought of her own venerable father. "It is old Lafon, Señora. He was taken prisoner a few weeks since by one of our cruisers, and having been at times insane, he was compelled by the officer Martinez, I think who captured him, to perform such menial duties as were suitable to his age."

"Was not this unfeeling, Théodore? Where was your chief?"

"It was, lady. On account of his numerous duties, captain Lafitte, who permitted no cruelties of that kind, was ignorant of this degradation for, miserable as he now is, he appears to have seen happier and brighter days but when he heard of it, he released him from his duties." We stopped at Barritaria after we left the Belize to take on board some treasure concealed there, and found the old man on the shore, nearly famished and torpid with exposure to the cold and rain.

"We took him on board, intending to leave him in Havana, where he has friends."

"Is he insane, did you say, Théodore?" she inquired.

"He has been but I think is not now."

"Poor man; he is, no doubt, the victim of some great affliction," she said, with feeling. "Do you know any thing of his past history?"

"I do not, Señora. He is studiously silent upon that subject."

"Is he now a menial?" she said, looking with sympathy upon the aged man, who still stood with one hand upon the lock of the door, and his body half-protruded into the room; in which position he had remained during their low-toned conversation, waiting for Théodore.

"No, Señora. He is now passenger in the schooner, and by kindness and attention to him, the captain seeks to atone for the rigorous treatment he has heretofore received. He also feels a strange and unaccountable interest in him."

"Go, Théodore; keep him not in waiting he speaks again!"

The youth left the apartment, to ascertain his wishes, which were, to communicate, through him, to Lafitte some instructions relating to his landing at Havana; and then ascended to the deck, to ascertain the rate of sailing and position of the vessel, which, bowing before a favourable breeze, was within less than two day's sail of their port of destination.

CHAPTER IV.

St. Julien. "If sincere penitence be atonement for an ill-spent life, then has my guilty sire gone up to heaven." Martin. "The Holy Fathers preach another doctrine." St. Julien. "But which is which they can no two agree." Martin. "Twere better then methinks, sir, to live healthy and honest lives, and so through the blood of the Holy

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Cross, we'll have the best assurance."

AN AMERICAN SLOOP OF WAR A CHASE FIGHT OFF THE MORO CASTLE CLOSING SCENE CONCLUSION.

"My eye, Bill, but that's a rare tit-bit in the offing," exclaimed a sailor straddled athwart the mainyard of an American sloop of war, anchored near the entrance of the harbour, ostensibly securing a gasket, but in reality roving his one eye over the harbour of Havana its lofty castellated Moro its walls, towers, and cathedral domes its fleet of shipping and its verdant scenery, luxuriant and green even in the second month of winter.

"That she is!" returned his shipmate, further in on the same yard, at the same time cocking his larboard eye to windward, hitching up his loose trowsers, and thrusting into his cheek a generous quid tobacco, dropped from the top-gallant-yard by a brother tar. "That she is, Sam; and she moves in stays, like a Spanish girl in a jig, and that's as fine as a fairy, to my fancy."

"Lay to, there, my hearty. Blast my eyes, if I have'nt seen the broadside of that craft before now. If it's not a clipper we chased when I was in the schooner last month, cruising off St. Domingo, you may say, 'stop grog'."

"What! one o' your bloody pirates?" inquired Sam, with an oath.

"Aye! and she run in shore, and lay along side of a high rock, up which they mounted like so many wild monkeys. We followed as fast but they beat us off, and sent to the bottom of the sea, twenty as brave fellows as ever handled cutlass."

"What is this," observed languidly one of the lieutenants on deck, interrupting a most luxurious yawn; "that those fellows can feel an interest in, this infernal hot weather? Take that glass, will you Mr. Edwards, and make us wise in the matter."

The young midshipman rose indolently from an ensign on which he had ensconced himself to leeward of the mizen mast, to avoid the extreme heat, even on that winter day; for winter holds no empire through all that lovely clime, and after two or three unsuccessful attempts, at last brought the instrument handed him by the officer, into conjunction with his visual organ. He then gazed a moment seaward, and his face, before expressionless, now beamed with pleasure.

"By all that's lovely, that craft carries a pretty foot. She glides over the water like a swan; and yet there's hardly breeze enough to fan a lady's cheek. Look at her, sir."

The officer took the glass, and slightly raising himself, so that he could see over the quarter, the next moment convinced those around him, that his features had not lost all their flexibility, and that his muscles were not really dissolved by the heat, by exclaiming still more eagerly than the midshipman,

"Beautiful! admirable!"

"Can you make out her colours?" inquired one lying upon the deck, under the awning, without raising his head, or moving from his indolent attitude.

"She carries the stars and stripes; yet she cannot be an American. There is not a boat in the navy to be compared to this craft for beauty and velocity."

"She is not an armed vessel?"

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"Evidently; although she shows gun nor port. She looks too saucy for a quakeress; her whole bearing is warlike; and there is a frigate half a mile to windward of her, I believe, in chase."

By this time, the officers, yielding to curiosity, abandoned, though reluctantly, their various comfortable positions, and gathered themselves up, to take a view of a vessel, that had induced even their ease-loving first lieutenant to throw off his lethargy.

The object of general interest a beautiful tauntrigged rakish schooner now advanced, steadily towards the entrance of the harbour. The air was scarcely in motion, yet the little vessel glided over the water with the ease and rapidity of a bird on the wing.

"By Heaven! that craft has been in mischief!" exclaimed an officer, "or that frigate would not spread such a cloud of sudden-sails in chase."

"He is no doubt a pirate," said Edwards. "Shall we give him a gun for running under our flag."

"No, no! we will remain neutral. As true as that schooner has lighter heels than any craft that ever sailed the sea, she will escape her pursuer!" exclaimed the lieutenant with animation.

"Unless taken between wind and water;" added another officer. "See that!"

As he spoke a flame flashed from the bows of the frigate, and a shot, followed by the report of a heavy gun, recocheted over the waves, and carried away the bowsprit of the schooner, which was about half a mile from the frigate.

"My God! we shall be blown out of the water by that hasty count!" exclaimed Lafitte, as the shot struck his vessel for on board the Gertrude we now take our readers "Hoist that white flag at the peak," he shouted.

The order was obeyed; and still the frigate bore down upon them, and a second shot shivered her foremast, killed several of the crew including his mate Ricardo, and mortally wounding his favorite slave Cudjoe.

The schooner was now wholly unmanageable, and defeated in his exertions to get into the harbor, Lafitte put her before the wind, which was now increasing, and run her ashore, about a mile to the eastward of the Moro.

The frigate continued in chase until the water became too shallow for her draught, when she lay to and put off two of her boats filled with men, the smallest of which was commanded by the count in person.

Lafitte, although determined not to fight unless compelled to do so in self-defence, ordered his men to their guns. Every officer was at his post. The carronades were double shotted, and hand grenades, boarding-pikes and cutlasses, strewed the deck. He himself, was armed with a cutlass and brace of pistols, and a shade of melancholly was cast over his features, which, or the thoughts occasioning it, he sought to dispel by giving a succession of rapid and energetic orders to his men.

The count, who learned from the prisoner he had taken at Barritaria, that this was Lafitte's vessel, which he had fallen in with the day before, after missing him at the Belize stood in the stern of his boat which swiftly approached the grounded schooner. His face was pale and rigid with settled passion. He grasped the hilt of his cutlass nervously, and his eye glanced impatiently over the rapidly lessening distance between him and his revenge. He saw his rival standing calmly upon the quarter-deck, surveying his approach with seeming indifference. This added fuel to his rage, and he cheered his oars-men on with almost frenzied energy.

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"Count D'Oyley" said Lafitte aloud as the boat came near the schooner; "she whom you seek is safe, and in honor."

"Thou liest! slave! villain!" shouted the count, and at that moment, as the boat struck the side of the schooner, he leaped, sword in hand, on to her deck, followed by a score of his men.

"Now, or we shall be massacred, fire!" cried Lafitte, in a voice that rung above the shouts of the boarders, at the same time parrying a blow aimed at his breast by the count; and the light vessel recoiled shuddering in every joint, from the discharge of her whole broadside.

The iron shower was fatally hurled. The larger boat, which was within a few fathoms of the schooner, was instantly sunk, and fifty men were left struggling in the waves. The barge along side, shared the same fate before half its crew had gained the deck of the vessel.

A fierce and sanguinary contest now took place. In vain Lafitte called to the count to desist that Constanza was on board and in safety.

"Liar in thy throat! villain!" with more rapid and energetic blows of his cutlass, was alone the reply he received from his infuriated antagonist.

Lafitte now fought like a tiger at bay upon the quarter-deck of his schooner, his followers encircling him, each hand to hand and steel to steel with a boarder.

Two nobler looking men than the distinguished combatants, have seldom trode the battle deck of a ship of war. In courage, skill, and physical energies, they seemed nearly equal, although the count was of slighter make, and possessed greater delicacy of features. Cutlass rung against cutlass, and the loud clangor of their weapons was heard far above the din and uproar of battle.

The combatants on both sides, as if actuated by one impulse, simultaneously suspended the fight to gaze upon their chief, as if victory depended alone upon the issue of this single encounter.

They fought for some moments with nearly equal success, mutually giving and receiving several slight wounds, when a blow, intended by Lafitte who fought in the defensive, to disarm his antagonist, shivered his steel boarding-cap, which dropped to the deck, while a profusion of rich auburn hair fell down from his head, clustered with almost feminine luxuriance around his neck. At the same instant, the sword of the count passed through the breast of his antagonist.

A wild exclamation, not of pain, but of surprise and horror escaped from Lafitte, and springing backward, he stood staring with dilated nostrils, a heaving breast, from which a stream of blood flowed to the deck, and eyes almost starting from their sockets, upon his foeman.

"Art thou of this world? speak!" he cried in accents of terror, while his form seemed agitated with super-human emotion.

The count remained in an attitude of defence, displaying by the derangement of his hair, a scar in the shape of a crescent over his brow, and transfixed with astonishment, gazing upon his foe, who moved not a muscle, or betraying any sign of life, except in the deep sepulchral tones, with which he conjured him *'to speak!'*

The count slightly changing his position, an exclamation of joy escaped the venerable Lafon, and tottering forward, he fell into his outstretched arms.

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"Henri, my son my only son!"

"My father!" and they were clasped in each other's arms.

Their close embrace was interrupted by a deep groan and the heavy fall of Lafitte to the deck.

"Henri! It is indeed *my brother!*" exclaimed the wounded man, raising his head "for forgive me, Henri, before I die!" and he fell back again to the deck.

At the sound of his name, the count started, gazed earnestly upon his pale features for an instant, and all the brother yearned in his bosom.

With a heart bursting with the intensity of his feelings, he silently kneeled beside his brother.

"Achille!"

"Henri!"

They could utter no more, but wept together in a silent embrace; the count laying his head upon his brother's bosom, whose arms encircled him with fraternal love, while the aged parent kneeling beside them, with his uplifted hands, blessed them.

Suddenly a loud scream pierced their ears and starting up, the count beheld Constanza making her way with a wild air towards him, followed by Theodore, who had, till now, detained her in the state-room, lest in her excitement of mind, she should mingle among the combatants. The voice of her lover reached her ears in the silence that followed the discovery of the brothers, and she flew to the deck.

"Oh, my Alphonze! my only love! we will part no more!" she exclaimed, throwing herself into his arms.

The count affectionately embraced her; but his face betrayed the whilst, unusual emotion, and his eye sought his brother's.

"Take her! fold her in your arms, Henri! she is yours pure as an angel!" he replied, comprehending the meaning of his glance. "Here, Constanza, let me take your hand yours, Henri" and he joined them together: "May God bless and make you truly happy!" he continued, while his voice grew more feeble.

"My father! my venerable father! I am ashamed to look you in the face! forgive your repentant son! I am dying, father!

The aged man kneeled by his son, and blessed him! and wept over him! in silence.

"My brother Henri!" continued the dying man: "I have wronged you; but I have suffered! Oh! how deeply! How true, that crime brings its own punishment! Forgive! forgive me, Henri! Think not you have slain me mine is the blame. I armed your hand against my life!"

"Constanza! forgive! I have loved you in death! Farewell," he added, after a moment's silence, while they all kneeled around him. "Farewell, my father brother Constanza farewell! Théodore!" he said, affectingly taking the hand of the youth "Théodore, my orphan boy, farewell! May God bless and protect you, my child! Henri! be a brother to him."

The count pressed his hand in silence.

"Now, once more adieu, for ever! May God forgive!" and, with this prayer on his lips, he expired in the arms of his father and brother.

CONCLUSION.

One autumn twilight, five years after the peace was ratified between the two belligerent powers Europe, and the North United States a group might have been observed by one, sailing up to the capital of Louisiana, gathered on the portico of an elegant villa, situated on the banks of the Mississippi, a few miles below the city. This group consisted of six. In a large armed chair, sat an old gentleman, with a dignified air, and a bland smile, dancing upon his knee a lovely child, just completing her third summer, with sparkling black eyes, and silken hair of the same rich hue, while an old slave, seated at his feet, was amusing herself with the antics of the delighted girl.

Near the steps of the portico, stood a gentleman of middle age, with a lofty forehead, slightly disfigured by a scar, a mild blue eye, and manly features, who was directing the attention of a beautiful female, leaning on his arm, to the manoeuvres of a small vessel of war then doubling one of the majestic curves of the river.

The lady, united in her face and person the dignity of the matron with the loveliness of the maiden. The sweet face of the cherub upon its grandsire's knee, was but the reflection of her image in miniature!

Leaning against one of the columns of the portico, stood a noble looking and very handsome young man, in a hunting-dress. A gun rested carelessly upon one arm, and a majestic dog, venerable with age, whom he occasionally addressed as Léon, stood upon his hind legs, with his fore paws upon his breast.

Leaving this brief outline of the happiness and fortunes of those whom we have followed through their various adventures, we will take leave of the reader with a few words of explanation.

Henri, on reaching France, fell heir to the title and estates of the nobleman whose name Alphonze, the Count D'Oyley, he assumed. Lafon was a name given to their aged captive, by the buccaneers, from his resemblance to one of their number, who bore that name. Gertrude has long since been translated to a better world. Achille, after exiling himself from his native land, assumed the name of Lafitte, by which and no other, he was known to his adherents, and to the world:

"He left a corsair's name to other times, Link'd with one virtue and a thousand crimes."