

sparkle as he withdrew his hand, when, cautiously putting forth his own left, he touched the cold, thin brown fingers to those of the man before him. This operation ended, he quietly sipped a few drops of anisette, and rolled and lighted another paper cigar.

"Well, amigo! let us now proceed to business," said Brand, gaily, "for dinner will soon be ready, and we have no time to lose. How stands the account?"

"The papers are on board the felucca, and it will be more convenient, when the settlement is made, to come on board with the money. How would to-morrow morning do? There's no hurry."

"Just as you choose, friend of my heart! The doubloons, or the silk, or broadcloth is ready for you at any moment. Pay you in anything except the delicious wines of France. Bueno!" he added, pulling out a splendid gold repeater, with a marquis's coronet on the chased back. "And now, amigo! accept this little token into the bargain."

Don Ignacio's fiery eye twinkled with greed; but it was only for a moment, when, giving a quick glance at the coronet and coat of arms, he waved his forefinger gently to and fro, and shook his head.

"What? No! Why you know it once belonged to the Captain-General of Cuba, old Tol de roi de riddle rol—what was his name? He gave it me, you know, together with some other trinkets, for saving his life—a you remember? Very generous old gentleman—nobleman, indeed—he was. May he live a thousand years or more, if he can!"

Ay, Don Ignacio did remember the circumstance attending that generous transaction, and he remembered to have heard also that the captain-general made a present of all his money and jewels with the point of a broad blade quivering at his throat. He said nothing, however, in allusion to this interesting episode, but he smiled meaningly, and went on with his cigar.

"Not take it, eh? Well, amigo, I must look you up something else; but now for dinner. Babette, clear away for dinner. Here are the keys of the wine-cellar. The best, my beauty, and plenty of it." Then turning to his companion: "Suppose we take a stroll to the Tiger's Trap; the sun is sinking, and a walk will give us an appetite for the turtle-soup—vamos!"

CHAPTER XII.

DOCTOR AND PRIEST.

WHILE Captain Brand and Don Ignacio Sanchez walked pleasantly along the pebbly shore of the clear blue inlet to the Tiger's Trap, let us, too, saunter amidst the habitations which sheltered the pirate's haunt. Apart from the matty sheds of the shelly cove of the basin, where the Centipede and Panchita were anchored, there was a nest of red-tiled buildings, which served the crew of the former vessel for a dwelling when in port. It was pleasantly situated on a little sandy plateau, within a stone's throw of the water, and shaded by a cluster of palm-trees; while in the rear was a dense jungle of canes and bushes, through which led numerous paths to a small lagoon beyond. The buildings were of one story, constructed of loose stones, the holes plastered with yellow clay, with broad, projecting eaves extending over roughly-built piazzas. Seated at table in a room in one of these buildings we have described, were two men. One, the shorter of the two, was dressed in a long, loose bombazine cassock, girded about his waist by a white rope, which fell in knotted ends over his knees. Around his open neck was hung a string of black ebony beads, hooked on to a heavy gold cross which rested on his capacious breast, and which the wearer was continually feeling and occasionally pressing to his lips. His face was dark and sensual—thick, unctuous lips, a flat nose, and large black eyes—while a glossy fringe of raven hair went like a thick curtain all around his head, only leaving a bluish-white, round patch on the shaved crown. This individual was the Padre Ricardo, who, for some good reasons best known to himself, had left his clerical duties in his native city of Vera Cruz and taken service with Captain Brand. One of the reasons for leaving—and rather abruptly, too—was for thrusting a cuchillo into the heart of his own father, who had reported him to his superior for his licentiousness. The padre, however, always declared that he was actuated entirely by filial duty in killing his old parent, to save him the pain and disgrace which would have followed the exposure of his son! He still clung to the priestly calling, and prided himself upon his fasts and vigils, and never omitted the smallest forms or penances; and said mass from Ave Maria in the early morning to Angelus at vesper time in the evening. For Captain Brand he was always ready to shrive a

dyling pirate—and pretty busy he was, too, at times—or hear the confession of one with a troubled conscience in sound health; which, if important to the safety or well-being of the fraternity, he took a quiet opportunity of imparting to his superior in command. In these pursuits he not only made himself useful to Captain Brand, but he became more or less his confidant and adviser, and seemed to maintain his influence by ghostly advice over the superstitious feelings of the men. The padre, however, utterly detested the sea, and never trusted his soft feet in the water if he could by any possibility avoid it; but since he had plenty to eat and drink on the island, and no end of prayers for his amusement when in charge of the haunt—as he was—to look out for the people who were left when the Centipede sailed on a cruise, he thus passed the time in a delightfully agreeable manner.

The companion who sat opposite to the padre was a tall, gaunt, cadaverous person, evidently of French extraction, with something kind and human about his face; but yet the physiognomy expressed the utmost determination of character—such a heart and eye as could perform a delicate surgical operation without a flutter of nerve or eyelid, and who would stand before a levelled pistol looking calmly down the barrel as the hammer fell. His face was intellectual, and he never smiled. His whole appearance portrayed a thorough seaman. Where he came from no one knew; nor did he ever open his lips, even to the captain, with a reason for taking service among his band. All known was, that he landed from a slaver at St. Jago, and was engaged by Don Ignacio to serve professionally with Brand to assist the patriots on the Spanish main. When, however, he reached the rendezvous of the pirates, and discovered that they were altogether a different sort of patriots than he had bargained for, he nevertheless made no objections to remain, and took the oath of allegiance; only stipulating, that he should not be called upon to take an active part in their proceedings. Here, then, he remained for nearly three years, attending to the sick or wounded, taking no interest in the accounts of the exploits of the freebooters around him; rarely, indeed, holding speech with any one save his room-mate, the padre, or occasionally a dinner or a walk with Captain Brand. On the last expedition, however, of the Centipede, he had been induced to go on board, so that he might become a check and guard over the brutal ruffian who had been placed temporarily in command; but, as we have already seen, his influence had been of little avail.

There was yet another occupant of the room inhabited by the doctor and Padre Ricardo; and a low moaning cry caused the former to rise quietly from his chair and approach the low iron bedstead on his side of the lodging. There, beneath a light gauze mosquito-net, lay our poor little Henri—his once round, rosy, innocent face now pale and thin, with a red spot on each cheek, and a dark, soft line beneath the closed eyes. Unceasingly he moved in his fitful slumber; and putting his little hands together as if in prayer, he murmured, "Oh! mamma, mamma!" Beside the bed stood an unglazed jar of lemonade, together with a phial and a spoon. The doctor drew nigh, and, gently pushing aside the curtain, stood looking at the child for some minutes. Presently the little sick boy feebly stretched out his delicate, thin limbs, and unclosed his eyes. Oh! how dim, and sad, and touching was that look, as he gave a timid, half-wild stare, and then, closing the lids tight together, the hot drops bubbled out and coursed slowly down his tender cheeks.

The doctor, with the gentleness of a woman, bent over him, and taking up his poor, limp little hand, he remained feeling the fluttering pulse and catching the hot breath on his dark cheeks. As if communing with himself, as a glow of compassion lighted up his care-worn visage, he muttered, "By the great and good God who hears me, if I save this child, I will restore him to his heart-broken mother!" He sank down on his knees by the bedside as he made his vow, and, letting the little hand rest on the bed, he buried his face in his large bony hands. What thoughts passed through that man's mind none but the Almighty knows; but when he arose his stern features had resumed their wonted expression, and pouring a little lemonade in a glass he held it to the sleeper's lips. Then moving noiselessly back to the table, he said, in a low tone—

"Padre, the boy will live. His fever is leaving him, and he will get well."

"Ave Maria Santissima!" ejaculated the Padre, crossing himself and kissing his cross, "I pray for him! You must give him to me, Doctor, I will make him a little priest, and he shall swing the

censer and chant the Misericordia, when I get the new chapel built."

"Time enough to think of that, mi Padre, when he gets strong again. But just now all the prayers you can say for him will do him no good, and so I hope you won't put yourself to the trouble."

"Cierro, amigo, Doctor; but don't sneer at the prayers of the Church. They do good; they ease the soul and soothe the pangs of purgatory."

"Ah! and how long do you expect to stop in purgatory?"

"What a question to ask your pious and devout Padre Ricardo!"

"A question you'll find it difficult to answer," retorted the doctor, as he opened a book lying on the table before him, and put an end to the dialogue. His companion quietly helped himself to a measure of pure gin, and unclasped the covers of his richly-bound missal.

Scarcely, however, had their conversation ceased when a hoarse hum of many voices was heard in the direction of the sheds without, mingled with shouts of uproarious laughter.

"Look!" cried the doctor, looking out of an open window; "the people have knocked off work and are coming home to their supper. They seem to have brought some of the crew of the felucca with them too. We shall have a loud night of it, for the captain has sent them a pipe of wine and a barrel of rum to carouse with."

"Pobre citos! They have had a hard time of it during the summer; short of rum, and water too, I hear, and they need refreshment and repose. So many of my poor flock killed too by that savage American corvette, and I not near to administer the last consolations and holy rites," sighed the padre, as he kissed the crucifix and bowed his head. "There is Lascar Joe, too, among the missing! He refused the sacrament, infidel as he was, the day before he sailed; but what turtle-soup he made!" The padre hereupon sighed deeply again, but whether for the loss of the Lascar or the soup no one knows.

The noise without increased; the rattle of crockery, the clinking of glasses, the moving of feet, and all the sounds of hungry, boisterous sailors at table. Soon, too, a shout or cheer would be heard, then a verse of a song, roars of laughter, and now and then the tinkle of a guitar struck by vigorous fingers in waltz or fandango.

"Merci!" muttered the doctor, as he looked compassionately at the sick child on the bed; "those noisy devils will, I fear, disturb the little boy, and it's too hot here, Padre, for the sick child."

"It is warm, my son!" he replied, as his thick, unctuous lips parted with a smile at his companion's allusion to another and a hotter place; "but I think our good Capitano would have a cot slung for my little priest in the saloon of the big building there. It is always cool on the crag, you know!"

"Ah! perhaps he will!" said the doctor, reflectively; "I'll see about it."

Stepping again to the bedside of the little sufferer, he laid a hand gently on his forehead, where the soft curls lay in confusion about his temples, and then quickly touching his pulse he regarded him attentively for a few moments, while at the same time a light glow of perspiration came faintly over the innocent face and spread itself down the neck.

"His fever is breaking!" whispered the doctor to the padre; "his breath is regular and cool, and he is sleeping sweetly. Now, if you like, we will go to see the captain; and if he consents, I will carry the child when he wakes to the dwelling." The doctor carefully closed the door of the room as he and his companion stepped out into the open court-yard and moved towards the spacious sheds beyond.

(To be continued.)

SUMMER IN THE COUNTRY.

THE bright skies, green trees, ripening corn, broad meadows, orchards and gardens, streams and rivers, the ever-varying and ever-beautiful aspects of the country, wear their most inviting garb at this season of the year; and those of us who are compelled to dwell in the labyrinths of brickwork, called towns and cities, sigh for the healthy breeze and the bright face of Nature. Who amongst us—at this time of the year, at all events—would not willingly exchange all the pleasures of town for a quiet home in the country?

We want wholesome air. "Air," says old Fuller, "is a dish one feeds on every minute, and therefore it must needs be good." We want light, "God's eldest daughter;" such fair, bright light as never



SUMMER IN THE COUNTRY.

shines in town. We want a pleasant prospect, "a medley of land and water;" something that shall refresh us with its beauty and tranquillity. We want a garden where we may rusticate, and sit beneath

the shadow of old trees; a garden that shall yield us flowers and fruits. We want a home to live in, fit for the summer weather, that shall look pleasant, and, like a cheerful friend, seem to welcome us when

we come home, and that shall be thoroughly comfortable in all its arrangements. As sensible people, we are anxious to escape from

"The crowd, the buzz, and murmurings
Of this great hive, the city;"

to make the best use of our liberty, and recruit our exhausted energies.

How we long for the pleasant walk in the shady lane!—for the ramble in the wood, where, of old, we gathered nuts and blackberries!—for the velvety meadow, where the lounging kine are blinking in the sunshine!—for the path through the cornfields, on the yellow upland!—for the wide prospect from the hill that stretches away to sea!

Our artist has given us a picture of these summer thoughts. We see a pleasant group amongst trees and flowers. The group may be taken to typify the revolving seasons of life—the childhood of spring, the womanhood of summer, the maturity of autumn, the "frosty but kindly" winter of old age. The artist has not forgotten the swallows. Those seekers after a perpetual summer have found it for awhile in an English garden. But the artist shows us these swallows on the wing, fluttering away to warmer climes, over thick forests and deep waters, even to the old land of the Pharaohs.

Lord Bacon tells us "Lucullus answered Pompey well, who, when he saw his stately galleries and rooms, so large and well lighted, in one of his houses, said, 'Surely, an excellent place for summer; but how do you do in winter?' 'Why,' said Lucullus, 'do you not think me as wise as the birds that change their abode toward the winter?'" The migration of the swallows has engaged the attention of every observant man, and is one of the many remarkable illustrations of animal instinct. Winter is unknown to the swallows, for they leave the green meadows of England before it arrives, and live a life of enjoyment among the myrtle and orange groves of Italy and the palms of Africa. In this respect we cannot copy their example, and, indeed, it would be tedious work; and but comparatively few of us can adopt the plan of Lucullus, and possess ourselves of separate mansions, specially suitable for summer or winter; but, thanks to cheap railways, we can enjoy the fresh air and green fields for a trifle, coming back to our homes, wherever they may be, all the better and brighter for our trip—our frames invigorated by the change of air and mode of life, and our minds stored with new ideas.