

BUG-JARGAL:
OR,
A TALE OF THE
MASSACRE IN ST. DOMINGO.

1791.

BY VICTOR HUGO,
AUTHOR OF "NÔTRE DAME DE PARIS."

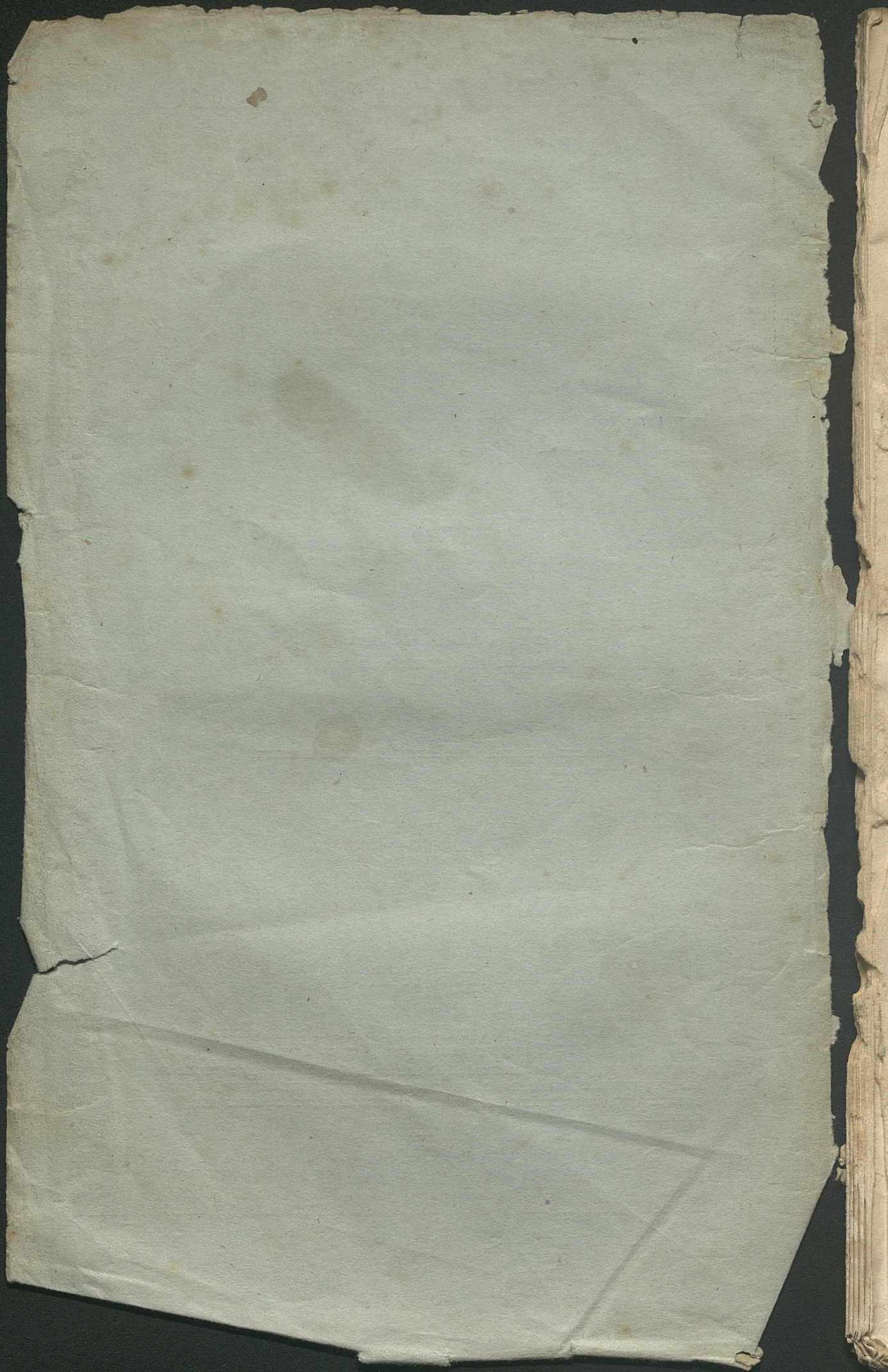
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PREFACE.

IN 1818 the author of the following work had attained the age of sixteen years; it appears that he wrote a volume in fifteen days. It was BUG-JARGAL. Sixteen years! It is the age when the mind feels itself equal to any task; the age of young hopes; a dazzling sun, and a glittering horizon: all is improvisation.

The present volume, therefore, was written two years before *Han d' Islande*: and although, seven years later in life, the author reviewed and rewrote a large portion of the work, it is none the less both in the conception and variety of its details the first work of the author.

He should, perhaps, beg the indulgence of his readers for detaining them with matters of so little importance to them: but he thought that the small number of persons who delight to classify by the rank of life, and by the order of birth, the various works of a poet, how obscure soever that poet may be, would not be offended at being informed of the age of Bug-Jargal: and it was with him as with the travellers who turn about in the midst of their pilgrimage and seek to discover in the foggy folds of the horizon the place from which they took their departure. He was anxious to impress the stamp of memory upon that period of his ardor, boldness, and assurance, when he applied himself to so immense a task; a task no less than the dramatic narrative of the revolt of the blacks of St. Domingo in 1791—a struggle of giants, three worlds hanging in suspense upon the issue: Europe and Africa as the combatants, and America as the scene of the war.

Paris, March, 1832.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following episode, the subject of which is the revolt of the slaves of St. Domingo in 1791, wears such an air of circumstance, that the author came under the ban of the Censor, and was forbidden to publish it. A rough sketch of the work, however, having already been printed, and distributed in a restricted number of copies in 1820, at an epoch when the politics of the day was little occupied with Hayti, it is evident, that if the subject he treats has since acquired a new degree of interest, it is not from any fault of the author. These are events, which have adapted themselves to the book, and not the book to the events.

However that may be, the author did not dream of rescuing his production from the kind of twilight, in which it had been enshrouded : but being apprised that a publisher in the Capital had proposed to reprint his anonymous sketch, he thought to prevent that reprint by bringing out his own work reviewed, and, in a great measure reconstructed ; a precaution, which spared his self-love a little ennui, and perhaps saved his publisher a bad speculation.

Several distinguished individuals, both colonists and functionaries, who were embroiled in the troubles of St. Domingo, having been apprised of the approaching publication, had a desire to communicate to the author materials of a still more valuable character than had been previously embodied in the work. Of this aid the author retains a lively and grateful recollection. The documents, thus obtained, have been singularly useful in rectifying the narrative of D'Auverney, filling up its former incompleteness in respect of local accuracy, and its uncertainty in relation to historical verity.

In conclusion, the reader ought to be informed, that Bug-Jargal is only a fragment of a more extensive work, which was intended to be composed under the title of "TALES UNDER A TENT." In the supposition of the author, several French officers during the wars of the Revolution agreed to while away the long nights of bivouac by the alternate recital of their several adventures. The following episode constitutes a part of that series of narrations. It can be detached from its fellows without the slightest inconvenience : moreover, the original series has never been completed, and never will be : no necessity seems to demand it, and the completeness of the tale gives satisfaction to all parties concerned.

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BUG-JARGAL:

OR,

A TALE OF THE MASSACRE IN ST. DOMINGO.

CHAPTER I.

* * * * *

THE bivouac was set. In the regular series it now came the turn of our captain, Leopold D'Auverney; with an air of surprise, he assured his comrades that he could recall no event of his life which could lay claim to their attention.

'But, captain,' said Lieutenant Henri 'apart from all your modesty, it is the common report, that you have been an untiring traveller, and have seen the world. Have you not paid visits to the Antilles, to Africa, Italy, Spain?—Ah, captain, here's your lame dog.'

D'Auverney started from his chair; the fragrant regalia fell from his fingers, as he turned toward the entrance of the tent at the moment that an enormous dog came limping to his side. As the animal hobbled past, he crushed the cigar; the captain heeded it not.

The dog, with the utmost expression of joy, wagged his tail, licked his master's feet, uttered many a faint whine, and, after several sorry attempts at antics and gambols, came and crouched at the captain's feet. Amid deep and even intense emotion, D'Auverney caressed the faithful fellow with his left hand, musing in a half mechanical reverie, while with the other he loosened the glazed strap of his gorget; the words came from his lips like the endless burthen of a song, 'You here, Rask! you here!' At length, however,

breaking from his trance, he exclaimed, 'Who brought you back?'

'By your leave, my captain.'

For some moments the honest sergeant Thaddeus had been standing at the up-lifted curtain of the tent, his right arm enveloped in the folds of his riding-coat, his eyes moistening with tears, as he watched the denouement of this Odyssey. As it drew near its close, he ventured to open his lips:

'By your leave, my Captain.'

At these words D'Auverney raised his eyes.

'Thou, Thad? And how the devil wert thou able——? Poor dog! I thought him in the English camp. Where did you find him then?'

'Thank God! you see me, my Captain, as happy as that little nephew of yours was, when you first introduced him to the mysteries of declension: "*cornu*, a horn, *cornu*, of a horn."

'Never mind that, but tell me, where didst thou find him?'

'I did not find him. I merely went off in search.'

The captain rose and extended his hand to the generous sergeant; but that of the latter remained enveloped in his riding-coat. The captain, hardly aroused from his vacant reverie, did not seem to observe the circumstance.

'It was because—— you see, captain, from the moment poor Rask was lost, I perceived, if Thad may be so bold, by your leave, that there was something missing from our circle. To confess the truth, that very evening, when he failed to come, as usual, and share my honest rations, it

would have taken but little to have made old Thaddeus fall to sobbing and blubbering, like a baby. But no, thank God! twice only in his life has Thaddeus shed tears; the first was when—that is, the day when—

The sergeant hesitated, and scanned the countenance of his captain with an evident air of disquietude.

'The second was, when it struck the fancy of that odd and merry blade Balthazer, corporal in the seventh demi-brigade, to make me tear the hides off a bunch of onions.'

'I think,' exclaimed Henri, as he burst into a loud laugh, 'that you omitted to tell us on what occasion you first wept.'

'Out with it, Thaddeus. Was it not, my old friend, when you were dubbed first grenadier of France, by the sword of Latour D'Auvergne? Tell the truth,' said the captain, as he continued his caresses to the happy Rask.

'No, captain; if sergeant Thaddeus had tears to shed, they could only have burst from these eyelids on that black day when he shouted "fire" upon Bug-Jargal, or as he is otherwise called, Pierrot.'

A cloud of successive emotions seemed to flit across the features of D'Auverney. Quickly approaching the sergeant, he made an effort to grasp his hand; but, notwithstanding the great honor of such a condescension, old Thaddeus retained his arm in its hiding-place beneath his riding-coat.

'Yes, captain,' continued Thaddeus, retiring a few paces, while D'Auverney regarded his old friend with an expression bordering upon anguish, 'yes, I had tears then to shed; yes, he was worthy of a man's tears. His skin was black, it is true, but the powder in the cannon is black, and—and—'

The honest sergeant was racking his brain to give a noble finale to his whimsical comparison. There was something in the lame approach to a simile which pleased his fancy, but he essayed in vain to give it utterance; and after returning, so to speak, many times to the assault, and charging his ideas at every vulnerable point of its significance, like a prudent general repulsed from a fortified post, he raised the siege and pursued his narrative, unmindful of the young officers, who were enjoying the sergeant's discomfiture.

'Do you recollect, captain, how the poor negro rushed upon us, all out of breath, at the very moment when ten of his comrades, who stood hostages for his return, were brought forth? Yes, the cords were already bound upon their arms. I had

command of the platoon. When, with his own hands, he tore off the chains of his hostages to take their place, how inflexible he was in resisting their ardent generosity! O, what a noble man! He was a true Gibraltar. And then, captain, how straight and proud he stood there, just as if he were going to lead off a ballet, and his dog, old Rask there, who seemed to guess what was about to happen, leaped upon me and seized me by the throat—'

'Thad,' interrupted the captain, 'you do not usually pass over that part of your story, without bestowing a few caresses on Rask. See, how the honest fellow is gazing at you!'

'Right, my captain,' answered Thaddeus, with evident embarrassment, 'poor Rask may be gazing at me, but—the old Malagrida used to tell me it was a bad omen to pat a dog with the left hand.'

'And why not use the right?' demanded D'Auverney with surprise, for the first time observing the arm enveloped in the riding-coat, and the pallid countenance of Thaddeus. The embarrassment of the sergeant began to deepen.

'By your leave, captain, it is because—. You already have a maimed dog; I fear you are also to have a maimed sergeant.'

The captain in an instant started from his seat.

'How? What? What say you, my old Thaddeus? Maimed! Let's see your arm—maimed! Great God!'

D'Auverney trembled with suspense; the sergeant slowly unrolled his mantle, and offered to the eye of his captain the arm wrapped in a handkerchief, stiff with the coagulated blood.

'Oh! my God!' murmured the captain, as he carefully raised the bandage. 'But tell me, my old friend, how—?'

'O, that is a very easy matter. I told you that I saw you bewailed the loss of your fine dog, the noble fellow whom the redcoats stole away; poor Rask, the companion of Bug—. Enough, enough; I resolved to fetch him back again this very day, at the risk of my own life. I wanted to eat one supper again, with something like an appetite. Well, you see, I gave your soldier, Mathelet, his orders, over and over again, to give the best polish to your best uniform, as the morrow is the day of battle; then I stole softly out of the camp and, with only my sabre in hand, took my way over hedges and ditches, to reach the English camp by the shortest cut. I had hardly gained the first outposts, when, by your leave, captain, I discovered in a little copse upon my left, a riotous troop of the redcoats. Crawling up to spy out their

business, without their catching a glimpse of my movements, I discovered in the very midst of them old Rask, bound to a tree, while two of the John Bulls, naked as two Hottentots, were boxing away at each other's bones, and making as great a racket as the bass-drums of a demi-brigade. They were two English privates, fighting a duel for the ownership of your stolen dog. The moment Rask saw me, he gave so furious a spring in his collar that the cord snapped, and in a twinkling the good fellow was pulling away at my trowsers. As you might imagine, the troop did not long sit idle. I plunged into the neighboring copse; Rask followed. Many a bullet whistled past my head. Rask answered them with hearty barks; but, happily, they could not hear his voice amid their own noisy outcry of "French dog, French dog," as if your dog was not a splendid, noble blood from St. Domingo. But let that pass. I traversed the thicket, and was just emerging from the opposite side, when two redcoats presented their pistols at my breast. My sabre soon rid me of one of them, and was proceeding to deliver me from his fellow,—but his pistol was charged with ball. There, there's my right arm—never mind. *French dog* fell upon his neck and hugged him, like a meeting of old acquaintances; the Englishman strangled and fell, and, I think, he found it a rude embrace. Now, why should that devil of man be as eager to catch me as ever a beggar was after a *seminariat*? Well, Thad has got back to camp again, and Rask too. I am only sorry that God did not keep that ball to send me in the battle to-morrow—

The countenance of the old sergeant darkened at the thought of not having received the wound in battle.

'Thaddeus,' cried the captain in an irritated tone of voice; but soon softening his manner, he added, 'Why were you so foolish as thus to expose your life for a dog?'

'It was not for a dog, captain; it was for Rask.' The features of D'Auverney in an instant relaxed their stern complexion. The sergeant continued, 'For Rask, the dog of Bug—'

'Enough, enough, my old Thad!' exclaimed the captain, raising his hand to his forehead, and stifling a starting tear. 'Come,' added he after a short pause, 'let us be going; lean upon my arm; attend me to the quarters of the surgeon.'

After a modest resistance, Thaddeus yielded. The dog, who during this scene had in his joy half gnawed through a fine

bearskin for his master, sprang up at the signal, and followed them from the tent.

CHAPTER II.

THE preceding episode had awakened the liveliest curiosity in the breasts of the mirthful story-tellers.

Captain Leopold D'Auverney was one of that class of men, who, upon whatever round of the ladder fortune or the fluctuations of society may have left them, continue to inspire a high degree of respect and interest. There was nothing, however in his appearance which would impress at first sight. His manners were cold and distant, and his features of an indifferent beauty. A tropical sun, in throwing its bronze tinges over his face, had failed to contribute also that vivacity of gesture and conversation which is found in the Creole, united with a nonchalance that is frequently full of grace and elegance. D'Auverney was a man of few words, rarely a listener, but always exhibited a readiness for action. The first upon his horse, and the last to retire to his tent, he seemed to seek in bodily fatigue a means of distraction from some corroding reminiscences. Upon the early wrinkles of his open brow, sad thoughts had engraven their severe outline. They were not of that kind, of which men can rid themselves by communication, nor of that species which readily mix in the frivolous conversation of companions, and are thus soon absorbed in the ideas and opinions of others. Leopold D'Auverney, whose physical powers the arduous labors of war could not subdue, seemed to experience an insupportable fatigue in what are termed the encounters of wit. He shunned controversy and dissension as eagerly as he courted the din of arms. If he occasionally allowed himself to be drawn into a dispute, he would throw out a few sentiments, full of good sense and solid reason, and then, at the very point of conquering his adversary, would dismiss the subject with the remark, 'To what purpose is all this?' and leaving the company, would proceed to his commander to inquire what could be done, while waiting the hour for the charge or the assault.

His comrades pardoned his cold, taciturn and reserved habits, for they found him on every occasion brave, generous and benevolent. The lives of many of their circle he had saved, at the imminent danger of his own, and they had learned, that though his lips were rarely opened, his purse at least was never closed. Beloved by the

army, all forgave him a hauteur of conduct, the sole fruit of which was the requisition of a reverence somewhat more formal than his rank could claim.

He had seen but few years. Though supposed to be about thirty, he was far from having reached that period of life; and notwithstanding he had fought for some time in the ranks of the Republican army, the adventures of his life were unknown to his companions in arms. The only being, besides Rask, who ever elicited from him any lively demonstration of attachment, was the noble old sergeant Thaddeus, who had with him entered the corps, and never quitted his side. From this individual his comrades had wrung a few vague particulars of his mysterious fortunes.

It was known that D'Auverney had suffered great reverses of fortune in the West Indies; that having married in St. Domingo, he soon after lost his wife and all his relations in the massacres which marked the progress of the Revolution in that magnificent colony. At the present epoch of French history, reverses of this character were so common that they elicited a kind of universal sympathy, and every one seemed ready to assume and bear a part.

But Captain D'Auverney was less commiserated for the losses he had suffered, than for his manner of enduring their memory; for, under the thin veil of an icy indifference, any one might easily catch glimpses of a wound that was internal and incurable.

At the commencement of battle, his brow would appear calm. During the action his spirit was as intrepid as if the eye of his ambition was upon the rank of a marshal; yet after the victory, he was as retiring and modest as if his highest desire were to be a private in the ranks. His comrades, observing his contempt of honor and advancement, could not comprehend the reason, why, before a combat, his eye seemed to glisten with an indefinable hope or desire,—not divining that D'Auverney, amid all the chances of war, had but one hope and but one desire—death.

On one occasion the National Representatives despatched a delegation to the army, to nominate him the general of a brigade upon the very field of battle: he declined the honor because, by separating from his company, it would be necessary to part with his sergeant Thaddeus. A few days after, he offered to head an expedition of great danger, from which, however, contrary to universal anticipation, and certainly against his own wishes, he returned in safety. Then was he over

heard, in a fit of mortification, to regret his former refusal of promotion, 'for,' said he, 'since the enemy's cannon is fated to spare me, the guillotine, which is thirsting to decapitate every fortunate aspirant, might haply drop its keen and welcome edge on this neck of mine.'

CHAPTER III.

SUCH was the individual whose mysterious history, the moment he had left the tent, gave rise to the following conversation.

'I'll wager,' said Lieutenant Henri, wiping from his red boot a large spot of mud which the dog had left upon it as he hobbled by, 'I'll wager that our captain would not exchange his dog's lame foot even for those ten baskets of Madeira we had a glimpse of the other day in the general's wagon.'

'Tut, tut!' said the aid-de-camp Paschal, in a gay tone, 'that would be driving a bad bargain. I know something about that affair: the baskets are empty, and,' he added in a serious tone, 'thirty bottles with their corks out would, as you are aware, lieutenant, be of no service to the paw of this poor dog, out of which the most that could be fashioned would be but—a little bell-handle.'

The gravity with which the aid-de-camp pronounced these last words convulsed the company with laughter. A young officer of the Basque-Hussars, Alfred, who alone did not join in the merriment, exclaimed with an air of chagrin,

'I do not see, gentlemen, any great subject of mirth in what has transpired. This dog, and this sergeant, whom I observe to be ever attending D'Auverney, appear to me to be objects that should excite a little more curiosity in us to know their history. In fine, this scene—'

Piqued at the chagrin of Alfred and the gay humor of the company, Paschal interrupted him—

'Come, come; this scene is getting very sentimental. What does it amount to? Merely a dog recovered and an arm broken.'

'Captain Paschal, you are in error,' replied Henri, casting the bottle he had just emptied out of the tent; 'this Bug—, or so called Pierrot, has awakened my curiosity most provokingly.'

Though more than half inclined to be angry, Paschal restrained his passion on observing that the glass, which he thought empty, was again sparkling to the brim. At this moment D'Auverney re-entered

CHAPTER IV.

and resumed his seat without uttering a word. His air was thoughtful, but his countenance wore an expression of composure. So pre-occupied did he appear to be with the foregoing scene, that he heard nothing of the discordant chatter around him. Rask, who had followed his steps into the tent, couched at his feet, and raising his generous eyes, gazed in his master's face, as if he shared the emotions of his internal sorrow.

'Your glass, Captain D'Auverney. Try it—'

'Ah, thank God!' replied the captain, with the intention of answering Paschal's remark, 'the wound is not dangerous; the arm is not broken.'

The involuntary respect which his companions in arms always observed towards their captain, was the only motive that restrained the laughter that was ready to burst from the lips of Henri.

'As you are no longer apprehensive for Thaddeus,' he replied, 'and we are all assembled here to abridge this long night of bivouac by relating our several adventures, I hope, my dear friend, you will fulfil your engagement by recounting to us the history of your lame dog and of Bug—, something or other, I know not what, otherwise called Pierrot, or as your sergeant called him, that true Gibraltar.'

To this question proposed in a half-serious, half-comical tone of voice, D'Auverney would not have replied, if all had not joined their entreaties to those of the lieutenant. At length he yielded to their urgent solicitations.

'I will endeavor to gratify you, gentlemen, but you must expect only the rapid narration of an event, in which I played merely a secondary part. If the attachment which exists between Rask, Thaddeus and myself, has led you to anticipate the development of some extraordinary mystery, I foresee you will be disappointed. Let us proceed, however, to the narrative.'

Silence was instantly restored in the company. Paschal emptied at one draught his gourd of brandy. Henri wrapped himself in his bearskin to protect him from the freshness of the night-breeze, while Alfred finished humming his favorite Gallician catch of *mata-perros*.

D'Auverney remained musing for a moment to refresh his memory with events, which had long since been replaced by others. At length he commenced his narrative, at first in a voice almost inaudible and with frequent pauses.

THOUGH a native of France, I was sent in my early years to St. Domingo, to an uncle of mine, a colonist of unbounded wealth, whose daughter it had been determined I should eventually espouse.

The residence of my uncle was near Fort Galifet, and his plantations occupied the larger portion of the plains of the Acul. This unfortunate position, the mention of which may seem to you unimportant, was one of the primary causes of the disasters and total destruction of our family.

A body of eight hundred negroes cultivated the immense domains of my uncle. I must confess that the sad and pitiable condition of these slaves was rendered still worse by the insensibility of their master. My uncle might be reckoned of that class of planters—fortunately limited in its numbers—whose hearts a long habit of despotism has contributed to harden. Accustomed to be obeyed at his very glance, the least hesitation on the part of a slave was punished with the severest treatment, while the intercession of his children frequently served only to increase the strength of his anger. Upon such occasions we were constrained to content ourselves with meliorating in secret the evils we could not prevent or turn aside.'

'Aha! now for a philanthropic episode,' said Henri, in an under tone, as he bent over the shoulder of his neighbor. 'I hope the captain will not let the misfortunes of the *ci-devant* blacks pass without an incidental dissertation upon the duties which humanity imposes on those who bear her insignia, *et cetera*. I'm sure, it would not have been omitted by the Massiac Club.*'

* Our readers have perhaps forgotten, that the Massiac Club of which Lieutenant Henri speaks, was an association of sympathisers, called *Negrophiles*. This club, formed in Paris upon the outbreak of the Revolution, had instigated most of the insurrections which at that time burst forth in the colonies.

Some may perhaps be astonished at the bold levity with which the young lieutenant rails at those philanthropists, some of whom, no thanks to the presiding genius of the guillotine, still survive. But we must recollect, that before, during and after "the Reign of Terror," freedom of thought and speech took refuge in the camp. This noble privilege occasionally cost the head of a general, but one circumstance wipes off all reproach from the glorious escutcheon of those brave soldiers, that the informers of the Convention denominated them, "the gentlemen of the army of the Rhine."

'I shall thank you, Henri, to spare me your ridicule,' observed D'Auverney coldly, after having listened to the lieutenant's raillery. He resumed—

'Among all these slaves one only had found favor in the eyes of my uncle. He was a Spanish dwarf, a griffe* in color, and was presented to our family by Lord Effingham, a former governor of Jamaica.

'Contracting during a long residence in Brazil, the habits and propensities of Portuguese ostentation, my uncle loved to surround himself with a retinue correspondent to his riches. Numerous slaves, habited in livery like European servants, gave his house the appearance of a knightly castle. That nothing might be wanting to this ambitious display, he had dubbed Lord Effingham's slave his domestic buffoon, in imitation of those old feudal princes who kept jesters at their courts. The griffe Habibrah—such was his name—was one of those singular beings, whose physical formation is so strangely distorted that it would appear to be the shape of a monster if it were not at the same time so comical as to excite a smile. This hideous

* An accurate definition of terms will perhaps be necessary to the understanding of this and some other words, which may be used in the course of D'Auverney's narrative. M. Moreau of St. Méry, developing the system of Franklin, has classed in their generic species the different tints which the mixture of the colored population presents. In his supposition, man forms by the union of whites with whites and blacks with blacks, a totality capable of division into one hundred and twenty-eight parts. Proceeding on this principle, he affirms that an individual is near or distant from either extreme color, as he approaches or recedes from the sixty-fourth term, which constitutes the proportional mean.

In this system, every man who has not eight parts of white is accounted black. From black to white they distinguish nine principal stocks, which have their intermediate varieties according to the greater or less number of parts, which they retain of one or the other color. These nine species are the *sacatra*, the *griffe*, the *marabout*, the *mulatto*, the *quadroon*, the *mongrel*, the *mamelouc*, the *quarteronné*, and the *sang-mêlé*.

The *sang-mêlé*, continuing its amalgamation with the white blood, vanishes in an indiscriminate confusion with the latter color. It is said, however, that there is always perceivable on a particular part of the body, the ineffaceable traces of its origin. The *griffe* is the result of five combinations, and may possess from twenty-four to thirty-two parts white, and from eighty-six to one hundred and four black.

dwarf, fat, short and corpulent, moved about on a pair of slender weak legs, which he folded under him when he sat down, as a spider would its branching members. His enormous head, deeply sunken between his projecting shoulders, bristled up with frizzly wool, and was embellished with two ears of such dimensions that his comrades were accustomed to say, that Habibrah made use of them to wipe his eyes when he wept. His face wore an incessant grimace, yet as incessantly changing: it was a singular mobility of features, which threw around his ugliness all the rare charms of variety. My uncle loved him for his uncommon deformity and his unalterable gaiety. Habibrah was a favorite. While the other slaves were burdened with labor, Habibrah had no other care than to bear behind his master a large fan of Bird of Paradise feathers to chase away the flies and mosquitoes.

Seated on a rush mat at my uncle's feet, the dwarf always received upon his own plate the remains of his master's favorite dish. In order to manifest his gratitude for so many favors, he made use of the buffoon's privilege, the right to do everything and say anything merely for the diversion of his master, setting off his thousand foolish remarks with hideous contortions, and ready at the slightest signal of my uncle to run to his side with the agility of an ape and the submission of a dog.

'I acknowledge I did not like the demeanor of the slave. There was something too cringing in his servility, and if slavery was not his disgrace, the office of a servant had degraded him to the level of the brute. I had some emotions of benevolent sympathy for those unhappy negroes whom I saw toiling all day, with scarcely as much clothing as might conceal their chains; but this deformed buffoon, this fawning wretch with his ridiculous dress variegated with lace and filled with little bells, awakened in my breast nothing but contempt. The dwarf never employed the influence which his servility had gained over his patrons for the protection or relief of his fellow-slaves. He never besought a favor of a master, who often inflicted such terrible chastisements upon his servants, but was even overheard on one occasion, when he thought himself alone with my uncle, urging him to redouble the severity towards his unfortunate comrades. Nevertheless he did not seem to be viewed with distrust and jealousy by his companions in slavery, nor to excite their hatred. On the contrary, he inspired them with a degree of respectful fear, far removed from aversion, and when they

CHAPTER V.

saw him passing about among their dwellings with his huge pointed cap, ornamented with the tiny bells, and strange figures traced over it with red ink, they would say to each other in a low voice, "He is an *obi*!"*

"These details, gentlemen, to which I have called your attention, but very little at that time occupied my thoughts. Completely absorbed in the unmingled emotions of a love, across which nothing seemed destined to pass, a love shared from earliest infancy with the woman who was allotted to my arms, I gave little heed to anything which was not immediately connected with my Marie. Accustomed from my tenderest years to regard as my future wife, her who was already a kind of sister, there sprang up between us an unrestricted fondness, the nature of which will hardly be understood when I describe it as a commingling of fraternal devotedness, with that impassioned elevation of soul which marks the confidence of the conjugal communion. Few men have passed their early years more happily than myself; few have felt their souls expand into life under a more lovely sky, and under the influence of a concord, delicious with the overflowing happiness of the present, and the brightest hopes of the future. Surrounded almost from birth with all the luxuries of opulence, in a country where color suffices to confer all the privileges of rank, passing my days near the being who possessed all my love, beholding this affection idolized by our several parents, who alone could thwart its final fruition—and all this at an age when the youthful blood dances in the veins, in a land where summer never passes away and where nature is ever beautiful; was there anything wanting to complete my blind faith in my happy star? Am I not justified in saying, "few men have passed their early years more happily than myself?"

The captain hesitated a moment, as if his voice failed him at these recollections, of departed happiness, but soon resumed the narrative in accents still more melancholy than the preceding.

"It is true, also, that I have even better reasons for adding, that no one could pass his latter days more miserably"—and then as if the very feeling of his miseries had imparted fresh strength, he resumed his narrative in a firm and confident tone of voice.

It was in the midst of such illusions and chimerical hopes, that I reached my twentieth year. The annual festival of my birthday in the month of August, 1791, was the period determined on by my uncle for my union with Marie. You will readily conceive that the prospect of happiness so overflowing and so perfect, absorbed all my faculties; and you will conjecture that my recollections of the political controversies, which had for the two previous years been agitating the colony, are not very distinct. I will not therefore detain you with the stories of Peinier, nor of M. de Blanchelande, nor of the unhappy Colonel Mauduit, who met so tragical a fate. Nor will I attempt to depict the rivalry of the *Provincial Assembly* of the north with the *Colonial*, which assumed the title of *General Assembly* upon finding the word *colonial* savor of slavery. For myself, amid these mutual jealousies which divided the Cape and Port-au-Prince, if I held any opinion it was necessarily in favor of the Cape, as we dwelt within its limits, and my uncle was a member of the *Provincial Assembly*.

On a single occasion I chanced to take an active part in a debate upon the affairs of the times and the state of the colony. This was at the time of that disastrous decree of May 15th, 1791, by which the National Assembly of France admitted free people of color to an equal participation of political rights with the whites. At a ball given in Cape Haytien by the Governor, many young colonists were uttering warm and violent censures of an enactment which so deeply mortified the self-love of the whites. I had not yet mingled in the conversation, when I saw a rich planter approaching the group, whose equivocal color threw suspicion on his origin, and in consequence rendered his reception among the whites a matter of some difficulty and no little annoyance. Advancing hastily towards the young planter, I addressed him in a somewhat elevated tone of voice—

"Pass on, sir; they are uttering sentiments here which might be displeasing to the ears of one who has *sang-mêlé* in his veins."

The imputation irritated him to such a degree that he immediately sent me a challenge. We were both wounded in the duel. I must confess my error in this provocation, and it is probable that what we term *the prejudice of color* would have been insufficient to have urged me to the

* A sorcerer.

step, had not the planter also dared to lift his wanton eyes towards my fair cousin; at the very moment he received that unexpected humiliation from my lips he was proceeding to hand her out in the dance.

However this may be, I watched with rapture the approach of the hour, when I should call my Marie my own, and disregarded the constantly increasing effervescence which held all classes about me in so violent an agitation. Gazing intently upon my approaching felicity, my eyes were blind to the fearful cloud, which already nearly covered our political horizon, and which, when it burst, uprooted in its course every vestige of the ancient régime. Even at that period those timid spirits, who are ever the most ready to catch the alarm, did not seriously anticipate a revolt of the slaves; the latter class were too deeply despised to be feared. But there existed between the whites and the free mulattoes hatred and jealousy enough to overturn the existing order of things in the colony, as soon as the fatal moment should arrive for this long suppressed volcano to explode.

Early in that fatal month of August, so long and so ardently prayed for by myself, a strange incident occurred, which mingled unforeseen misfortune and disquiet with my hitherto tranquil hopes.

CHAPTER VI.

UPON the banks of a beautiful river, which watered his plantation, my uncle had constructed a small pavilion of arching boughs, surrounded by a mass of dense foliage, which Marie daily visited to inhale the soft refreshing sea-breezes, that from morning until sunset, during the more sultry months of the year, blow regularly upon St. Domingo: the coolness of these breathings from the ocean is mysteriously augmented or decreased in exact ratio with the heat of the day.

Every morning I anticipated her visit by embellishing this beautiful retreat with the rarest flowers I could cull.

One day Marie came running to meet me, in the deepest alarm. Entering her verdant cabinet as usual, she discovered with mingled surprise and terror, all the flowers with which I had that morning decked it, torn in pieces and trodden under foot, while a bouquet of freshly-gathered marigolds were placed upon her accustomed seat. Hardly had she recovered from her stupor, when she heard the soft tones of a guitar issuing from the coppice surrounding the pavilion. Soon after a voice,

which could not have been mine, began to sing a Spanish song in the tenderest strains. Her fear, and perhaps her maiden timidity had prevented her from distinguishing anything but the frequent repetitions of her own name. Her apprehensions receiving fresh alarm from this intrusion, she betook herself to a precipitate flight. Fortunately no obstacle was offered to her steps, and no effort put forth by any one to detain her.

The recital filled me with transports of rage and jealousy. My first suspicions fastened upon the free *sang-mêlé*, with whom I had recently had an altercation, but in my perplexity I resolved not to let my rashness become the cause of an ineffectual search. Reassuring the terrified Marie of my devotion, I promised to keep an assiduous watch over her person until the happy hour arrived when I should be permitted to protect her with my constant and unrestricted services.

Rightly conjecturing that the audacious intruder, whose insolence had thrown my Marie into such an affright, would not content himself with a first attempt to disclose what I divined to be his passion for her, I placed myself in ambush that very evening, after all on the plantation were wrapt in slumber, and watched at the base of the building in which my betrothed slept. Hidden by the thicket of tall sugar-canes, I waited—and not in vain. Towards midnight, a grave melancholy prelude, rising upon the silent air some paces from my station, awakened me from my reverie of anxiety. The sounds fell upon my ear like a stunning blow;—they proceeded from a guitar, and that guitar was just beneath the window of my Marie. Brandishing my poniard in a delirium of rage, I sprang towards the spot from which the sounds came, crushing under my feet the brittle stalks of the sugar-cane. Suddenly I felt my arms seized—I was flung to the earth with superhuman force—my poniard was violently wrenched from my grasp—the dim light flashed from its polished surface as it was brandished above my head. At the same time two glaring eyes sparkled in the shadow of the night near my own, and from a double row of white teeth, of which the darkness allowed me but a faint glimpse, escaped these words, pronounced in the low accents of smothered rage, "*Te tengo, te tengo.*"*

Rather surprised than alarmed, I struggled, but in vain, with my formidable adversary. Already the point of the steel

* I have you, I have you.

CHAPTER VII.

had pierced my vest, when Marie, awakened by the guitar and the tumult of steps and voices, suddenly presented herself at the window. She recognized my voice, saw the glistening of the poniard, and uttered a shriek of anguish and terror. That rending cry at once paralyzed the arm of my victorious antagonist; he paused as if petrified by the song of an enchantress; for an instant in his indecision he held the poniard at my breast, then casting it angrily from him he exclaimed in French, "*Non! non! elle pleurerait trop!*" (No, no; 'twould cost her too many tears.) As he finished these mysterious words he disappeared in the cane-thicket, and before I had risen from the ground, bruised in this unexpected and unequal struggle, not a sound, not a vestige remained of his presence or his departure.

It would be difficult to recount the thoughts which passed through my mind when I had recovered from my stupor in the arms of my Marie, to whose interference I was so strangely indebted even for my rescue from the hands of him who appeared to be disputing her affections with me. More indignant than ever at the appearance of an unexpected rival, I felt a still deeper chagrin at the thought of being indebted to his generosity for my life. "After all," thus mused my self love, "it is to Marie I owe my preservation, because it was the magic power of her voice alone that caused him to release the poniard?" I could not, meanwhile, deny that there was something magnanimous in the feeling which had prompted my unknown rival to spare my life. But who was this rival? I puzzled myself with suspicions, which lived by devouring each other as they rose. It could not be the *sang-mêlé* planter, whom my jealousy had at first accused. He was far from possessing that extraordinary measure of physical strength which my antagonist had exhibited, and the voice, moreover, was altogether different from his.

The person with whom I had wrestled seemed to be naked to the waist; none but slaves in the colonies are thus habited. But the suspicion of his being a slave I instantly dismissed; sentiments, such as those which had influenced him to cast away the poniard, could not by any possibility belong to a slave; my spirit refused to foster the revolting supposition, that I had a rival in a slave. But who was my rival? I resolved to wait and watch.

MARIE had awakened the old nurse, who served her rather in the capacity of a mother,—she had lost her own while yet in the cradle. I passed the remainder of the night by her side, and as soon as the day broke we informed my uncle of these inexplicable occurrences. His surprise and rage knew no bounds: but his pride, like my own, would not allow him to harbor the idea, that the unknown lover of his daughter could be a slave. The nurse received orders not for a moment to leave the side of Marie: and as the sessions of the Provincial Assembly and the cares, which the increasingly menacing attitude of colonial affairs gave to the principal colonists, together with the surveillance of his plantations allowed my uncle no leisure, he authorized me to attend his daughter upon all her walks, until the day of our marriage, which had been fixed for the twenty-second of August. At the same time presuming that the new lover could only have come from beyond his own domestic retinue, he ordered the inclosures of his domains, which had even hitherto been guarded night and day, to be watched with still greater rigor.

Having taken these precautions in concert with my uncle I was eager to put them to the test. Proceeding to the pavilion upon the river side, and repairing the disorder of the preceding day, I replaced the flowers with which I had been accustomed to embellish its natural beauties for my Marie.

When the hour arrived, at which she usually retired to that cool retreat I armed myself with my carabine charged with ball, and prepared to accompany my cousin to the pavilion. The old nurse followed.

Marie, to whom I had not mentioned my precaution of having removed the traces of her affright upon the previous day, first entered the leafy cabinet.

"See, Leopold," said she to me, "my arbor presents the same disordered appearance as when I left it yesterday: your labor has been spoiled, your flowers are torn and withered. What astonishes me most," added she, taking in her hand a bunch of wild marigolds placed upon her turf seat, "what astonishes me most is that this vile bouquet has lost none of its hues since yesterday. Look, my dear Leopold, it has the appearance of having been freshly gathered."

I was petrified with astonishment and rage. My morning's labor was already destroyed, and those sad ill-omened flowers, whose freshness had awakened the

curiosity of my poor Marie, had been insolently thrust in place of the roses I had strewn there.

'Calm your emotion,' said Marie, who observed my agitation, 'calm yourself; let us forget the past; this insolence will never be repeated. Let us trample the memory of the wretch under our feet, as we now trample this odious bouquet.'

I was cautious not to excite her fears by undeceiving her, and therefore without informing her that the person, who she thought would never again return, had already returned, I suffered her to gratify her innocent indignation and trample the marigolds under her feet. Trusting that the hour had at last arrived for the discovery of my mysterious rival I assigned Marie her seat in silence between the nurse and myself.

Hardly had we begun to enjoy the refreshing air, when Marie placed her finger upon my lips; sounds, diminished in strength by the wind and the noise of the rushing water, struck her ear. I listened: the same sad slow prelude arose, which on the preceding night had aroused my fury. I would have started from my seat, but a gesture from Marie held me back.

'Leopold,' said she in a low voice, 'restrain your ardor; perhaps he is about to sing, and without doubt his words will discover who he is.'

In fact, a voice, the melody of which was somewhat masculine though plaintive, issued a moment after the prelude from the depths of the wood, and along with the grave notes of the guitar were blended the words of a Spanish romance, whose every sentence resounded so distinctly in my ear, that to this day my memory retains almost every expression and term.*

'Wherefore dost thou fly from me, Maria? Wherefore dost thou fly from me, young girl? Why, that terror when thou hearest me? I am formidable indeed! I know how to love, to suffer, and to sing!

'When through the outspringing stems of the cocoa trees upon the river side I see thy light pure form gliding, my vision is dazzled, O Maria! Then I seem to see a spirit pass by!

'And when, Maria! I hear the enchanting accents, which escape like a melody

from thy lips, my throbbing heart seems to mingle its plaintive murmur with thy harmonious voice.

'Alas, thy voice to me is sweeter than the voice of those young birds, spreading their wings in the heavens, who come from the shores of my own native land.

'From my native land, where I reigned a king, from my native land, where I was free.

'Free and a king, young girl! I will forget all for thee; I will forget all,—kingdom, family, duty, vengeance; yes, even vengeance, though the moment soon hastens for gathering its bitter and delicious fruit, so slow alas in ripening!'

The voice had sung the preceding stanzas with frequent and melancholy pauses, but as it finished these last lines, it assumed an accent of piercing terror.

'O Maria! thou resemblest a noble palm tree, slender and gently balanced upon its trunk; and in the eye of thy young adorer thou art reflected like the palm tree in the transparent waters of the fountain.

'But knowest thou not, that sometimes there dwells in the depths of the desert a hurricane, jealous of the happiness of the fountain? It rushes forth: the air and the sand are mingled together under the flapping of its heavy pinions: it envelopes the tree and the spring in a fiery whirlwind; the fountain is dried up, the verdant circle of the leaves, majestic as a crown and graceful as the silken locks, which the stately palm tree wears, withers beneath its poisonous breath.

'Tremble, O white daughter of Hispaniola!* Tremble, lest all around thee soon become a hurricane and a desert! Then wilt thou regret the love, which might have conducted thee to me, as the joyous Katha, the bird of safety, guides across the sands of Africa the traveller to the bubbling fountain.

'And wherefore wouldst thou repulse my passion, Maria? I am a king, and my brow rises above the brow of all my rivals. Thou art white, and I am black: but the dayspring wedded to the shades of night gives birth to the aurora and the sunset, an offspring more beauteous than either of the parents.'

* It was judged useless to reproduce at length the words of the Spanish song, '*Porque me huyes, Maria?*' etc.

* Hispaniola is the first name given to St. Domingo by Christopher Columbus at the period of its discovery in December, 1492.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DEEP sigh, prolonged upon the trembling chords of the guitar, accompanied these last words. I was boiling with rage. 'A king! a black! a slave!' A thousand incoherent ideas, awakened by this mysterious song, whirled through my brain. A violent desire to terminate at once the existence of this unknown being, who thus dared to associate the name of Marie with his songs of love and defiance, took possession of my soul. I seized my carabine with a convulsive grasp, and rushed in fury from the pavilion. In her affright, Marie extended her arms to hold me back, but I had already plunged into the thicket on that side, whence the voice had proceeded. I searched the copse on every side. I plunged the muzzle of my carabine into the bushes, hunted about all the large trees, stirred up all the taller plants. Nothing, nothing,—and still nothing met my eye. The fruitless search, added to still more fruitless reflections upon the romance I had heard, changed my anger into confusion. Would, then, this insolent rival of mine always, like a spirit, elude my grasp? Was I never to succeed in discovering him?

At this moment the sound of bells aroused me from my reverie. I turned around. The dwarf Habibrah was at my side.

'Good day, master,' said he, with a reverential bow, but his sinister glance, obliquely directed at my weapon, appeared to remark with an indefinable expression of malice and triumph the anxiety depicted upon my brow.

'Speak!' I impatiently exclaimed. 'Hast seen any one in this wood?'

'None but yourself, *senor mio*,' replied he calmly.

'Hast not heard a voice?'

The slave paused a moment, as if meditating a reply. I boiled with rage.

'Instantly,' I exclaimed, 'reply instantly, wretch! Hast heard a voice here?'

Boldly fastening upon me the glance of his huge eyeballs, that were as round as those of a tiger-cat, he replied:

'*Que quiere decir usted** by a voice, master? There are voices everywhere and in everything. The birds have voices, there is the voice of the waterfall, and the voice of the wind rustling the leaves.'

I interrupted the annoying poetaster by giving him a violent shaking.

'Miserable buffoon! cease to make me your jest, or you shall hear what voice the barrel of a carabine gives forth. Answer

me in four words. Have you heard in this wood a man singing a Spanish air?'

'Yes, *senor*,' replied he without moving a muscle, 'and there were some words in his song. Wait, master, and I will explain them. I was walking along the borders of this thicket, listening to the music which the little silver bells of my *gorra** wake in my ear, when suddenly the wind joined to this concert of mine some words of a language you call Spanish, the language in which I first lisped, when my age was counted by months instead of years, when my mother suspended me upon her back by strings of red and yellow wool. I love that tongue. It recalls the hours when Habibrah was small, but not a dwarf, an infant, but not a fool. I approached the voice and heard the conclusion of his song.'

'Well, is this all?' demanded I impatiently.

'Yes, master *hermoso*, but if you wish I will tell you, what this serenade means.'

I was almost ready to embrace the poor buffoon for joy.

'Speak,' I cried, 'speak, Habibrah, there's my purse. Ten purses heavier than that are yours, if you tell me who the singer is.'

He took the purse, opened it and laughed.

'*Diez bolsas*, heavier than this! But, *demonio*! that would make a full *fanega* of good crowns stamped with the image *del rey Luis quince*, as many as would be needed to sow the field of the great magician of Grenada, Altornino, who knew the secret art of making them spring up *buenos doblones*. But don't be angry, young master, I will soon come to the point. Recall, *senor*, the last words of the song: "Thou art white and I am black, but the dayspring wedded to the shades of night gives birth to the aurora and the sunset, an offspring more beauteous than either of the parents." Now if that song tells the truth, the griffe Habibrah, your humble slave, sprung from the union of a negress and a white, is more beautiful than yourself, *senorito de amor*. I am the offspring of the dayspring wedded to the shades of night: I am the aurora and the sunset, of which the Spanish song speaks, and you are only the pale day. Then I am more beautiful than yourself, *si usted quiere*,† more beautiful than a white.'

The dwarf interrupted his fanciful ex-

* By this term the Spanish griffe designated his buffoon's cap.

† If it please you.

* What do you mean?

position with long bursts of laughter. At length I intervened to cut short this folly—
, What mean you by these extravaganzas? Is that what the singer meant?

'Just that, master,' replied the buffoon with a malicious smile. 'It is plain that *le hombre*, who could sing such *extraganzas*, as you call them, can only be and really is a mere fool like myself! There, I have earned *las diez bolsas*.'

I had just raised my hand to chastise the innocent but untimely raillery of the slave, when a fearful shriek from the thicket surrounding the pavilion, resounded through my ears. It was the voice of Marie.

I rushed wildly along, I ran, I flew, asking myself in my terror, what new misfortune I was about to meet. Breathless with suspense I reached the verdant cabinet, and there a frightful scene awaited my view.

A monstrous crocodile, whose body was half hidden under the bushes and brakes of the river bank had inserted his enormous head through one of the verdant arches which sustained the roof of the pavilion. His yawning and hideous jaws were stretched out towards a young black of colossal stature, who with one arm supported the fainting Marie, while the other was boldly plunging the iron prongs of a *bisaigue* into the serrated jaws of the monster. The crocodile struggled furiously against the bold and powerful hand which held him at bay. At this moment I appeared at the threshold of the arbor. Marie uttered a faint cry of joy, tore herself from the arms of the negro and cast herself into mine, with the exclamation, '*I am saved!*'

At this movement together with the shriek of Marie, the negro hastily turned about, crossed his arms upon his heaving breast, and casting a melancholy glance upon my betrothed cousin, stood immovable, and apparently unconscious of the presence of the crocodile, while the latter, delivered from the well-plied weapon, was on the point of grasping him between his bloody jaws. In fact, all would soon have been over with the courageous black had I not placed Marie upon the knees of her nurse, who, more dead than alive, was seated upon a bench. Darting towards the monster I inserted the muzzle of the carabine into his mouth and discharged its contents.

Having received a mortal wound the animal twice or thrice opened his bleeding jaws and swimming eyes, and then shut them again; it was only a convulsive effort: suddenly he turned with a loud

crash upon his back, struggled for a moment and his two long scaly paws stiffened in the agonies of death.

The negro, whose life I had so fortunately saved, turned his head and watched the last struggles of the monster, then fixing his eyes upon the ground and raising them slowly towards Marie, who leaning upon my bosom began to recover her consciousness, said to me, while the accents of his voice expressed even more than despair,

'*Porque le has matado?*'*

Then turning away with rapid steps without waiting my reply he plunged into the copse and instantly disappeared.

CHAPTER IX.

THIS terrific scene with its singular denouement, and the various emotions which preceded and followed my futile search in the wood, became a perfect chaos in my brain. Marie was still distracted and absorbed in the causes of her affright, and some time elapsed before we could communicate our incoherent thoughts, otherwise than by glances and slight pressures of the hand. At length I broke the silence.

'Come, Marie, let us leave this spot! Some ill omen hangs over this place!'

Exchanging a burning kiss upon my lips, as if she had only been waiting the permission for the salute, she leaned upon my arm, and we left the odious arbor.

My first question was, how it happened that at the very moment of her fearful peril, she had received the miraculous assistance of the athletic black, and if she knew who owned the slave—for the coarse drawers, scarcely veiling his nakedness, plainly discovered that he belonged to the enslaved class of islanders.

'The slave,' said Marie, 'is doubtless one of my father's negroes, who must have been laboring near the river, when the sudden appearance of the crocodile caused me to utter the shriek which warned you of my danger. All I know is, that at that very instant he rushed from the wood, and came to my relief.'

'From which quarter did he come?' I demanded.

'From the side opposite to that whence the singing proceeded and where you entered the thicket.'

This incident was a disturbing force in the identity which my mind had discovered between the Spanish words addressed to me by the brave negro, and the ro-

* Why didst thou kill him?

mance which my unknown rival had sung in the same language.

Additional probabilities, however, quickly presented themselves to my imagination. The courageous black, of a stature almost gigantic, endowed with a prodigious strength, was probably the rude antagonist, with whom I had sustained the encounter on the previous night. The circumstance of his nudity was another remarkable indication. The singer in the grove had said, 'I am black,' a third coincidence. He had declared himself a king, while Marie's protector was but a slave. With feelings of astonishment I recalled the air of serene majesty stamped upon his open countenance, plainly discernible amid all the characteristics of the African race. The lustre of his eye, the whiteness of his teeth, the transparent hue of his skin, the width of his brow, uncommon even for a negro, the scornful inflation which imparted to his lips and nostrils so proud and commanding an expression, his noble mien, the beauty and symmetry of his form, which though rendered meagre and somewhat repulsive by the toils of daily labor, possessed a Herculean development,—when I recalled all these characteristics, I inwardly confessed that the imposing aspect of the slave might well befit the physical outline of an African king.

Calling up a host of other incidents, my suspicions would fasten with trembling and with rage upon this insolent negro, as the one whom I was seeking for chastisement. Again indecision would return and drive away my resolutions.

And what, in reality, was the foundation upon which I had erected my suspicions? A large part of the island of St. Domingo being in the possession of Spain, it was but a natural consequence, that many negroes belonging originally to the colonists of St. Domingo, and even born there, should mix up their own jargon with the Spanish tongue. And because this slave had addressed me a few words in Spanish was it a sufficient reason for supposing him the author of a romance in that language, a fact which necessarily implied a degree of mental culture impossible in my estimation for the genius of a slave?

The mysterious reproach, with which he returned his generous rescue from the jaws of the crocodile, expressing such a disgust of life, might be explained by his condition as a slave, without having recourse to the hypothesis of a vain and impossible affection for his master's daughter.

His presence in the thicket around the arbor was perhaps merely fortuitous; his

strength and stature were insufficient grounds of identity with my nocturnal antagonist. Upon so slight suspicions could I have the heart to accuse him before my uncle and deliver over to the implacable vengeance of that haughty spirit, a poor slave, who had displayed such fortitude in succoring my own Marie? At the moment when these reflections had softened my anger, Marie entirely dissipated it by remarking to me in her sweet voice—

'My dear Leopold, we owe this negro some reward: but for him I had perished! You would have arrived too late.'

Those few words were decisive. It changed my intention of seeking out the slave who had saved Marie, but it also changed the object of that search: the former was for punishment, the latter was for reward.

My uncle having been apprized by me that he owed his daughter's life to one of his slaves, promised me his liberty, if he could be found in the body of those unhappy beings upon his own plantation.

CHAPTER X.

THL this period my natural disposition had inclined me to keep aloof from the plantations where the blacks labored. It was too painful for me to behold the sufferings of beings whom I could not relieve. But when upon the following day my uncle proposed to have my company in his tour of surveillance, I accepted the proposal with eagerness, hoping to discover among the thousand laborers the savior of my beloved Marie.

In this survey I had an opportunity of witnessing the power which the master's glance possesses over his slaves: but alas, how dearly is it bought! The negroes, trembling in the presence of my uncle redoubled their efforts and their activity: and yet there were traces of the deepest detestation in the terror that agitated their frames.

Irascible by habit, my uncle was ready to fall into a passion, even at failing to meet with a subject for his anger, when Habibrah, who was always dogging his steps, called his attention to a black, who, being overcome with fatigue, lay asleep under a thicket of dates. The affrighted negro sprang up, and as he rose, exposed to view a young Bengal rose bush, which my uncle had cultivated with great care, and upon which the negro had unhappily couched. The shrub was ruined. The master, already irritated at what he con-

sidered the idleness of the slave, became furious at the sight of the shrub. Beside himself with rage he detached from his belt the scourge, armed with pointed thongs, which he always carried with him upon his walks, and raised his arm to strike the negro, who had fallen upon his knees.

The scourge fell not. I shall never forget that moment. A powerful grasp suddenly arrested the hand of the colonist. A black—it was the one I was in search of—exclaimed in French—

‘Strike me: I am the offender. But strike not my brother, who has merely touched the rose bush.’

The unexpected interposition of the negro, to whom I owed the safety of Marie, his gestures, his looks, the proud and even imperious accents of his voice, struck me with a momentary stupor. His generous imprudence, far from covering my uncle with shame, only increased his rage, and turned it from the culprit to his defender. Exasperated at the interference my uncle disengaged his arm from the grasp of the athletic negro, loaded him with threats, and again raised the scourge to strike. This time the whip was wrested from his hand. The black broke the nail-studded handle as easily as if he were breaking a straw, and trampled under his feet the shameful instrument of vengeance. I was fixed to the ground with surprise, my uncle with fury. Never before had it happened that his authority had thus been set at defiance. His eyes rolled as if they were ready to burst from their sockets: his blue and swelling lips trembled. For a moment the slave regarded him with a calm dignity, then suddenly and with an air of majestic serenity presented him with the handle of an axe he had been holding in his hand,

‘White,’ said he, ‘if you would strike me, use this weapon.’

Scarcely conscious of his own emotions, my uncle would certainly have grasped the axe and granted the black his request, had I not in my turn interfered. Hastily seizing the weapon I hurled it into the pit of a *noria*, which was close at hand.

‘What have you done?’ exclaimed my uncle in a voice of rage.

‘I have spared you,’ I replied, ‘the misfortune of striking the preserver of your daughter. This is the slave to whom you owe the life of Marie; it is he, whose liberty you have promised me.’

The moment was ill chosen to claim the promise. My words had scarcely fallen upon the chafed spirit of the colonist, when he replied:

‘His liberty!’ repeated he gloomily. ‘Yes, he deserves to see the end of his slavery. His liberty! We shall see what sort of liberty the judges of the court-martial will award him!’

The ill-omened words chilled my hopes. Marie and myself supplicated in vain. The negro, whose carelessness and negligence had given rise to this scene, was punished with the bastinado, and his defender for having lifted hand against a white was immured within the dungeon walls of Fort Galifet. For a slave to do this against his master was an offence that involved the life of the criminal.

CHAPTER XI.

You can judge, comrades, to what a height my interest and curiosity were wound up by all these circumstances. The inquiries, which I made concerning the prisoner, revealed the few following particulars. I found that his companions entertained the deepest respect for the young negro. A slave like themselves, a signal from his hand ensured their instant obedience. He had not been born among them: they knew neither his father nor his mother: it was reported, that a few years previous to that time, he had been thrown upon St. Domingo by a slave-ship. This circumstance rendered the influence still more remarkable which he exercised over all his companions, not excepting even the creole blacks, who, you are aware, usually profess the most profound contempt for the negroes of Congo, (a term which, though improper and indefinite, designates in the colonies all such negroes as have been brought directly from Africa.)

Though absorbed in the deepest melancholy, his extraordinary strength, united to a wonderful adeptness in every branch of labor, rendered him the most valuable slave upon the plantations. He could turn the wheel of the *norias* with greater rapidity and for a longer time than could be done by the most able horse. He often performed the labor of ten of his companions in a day in order to rescue them from the chastisement reserved for negligence or fatigue. Thus he won the adoration of the slaves, but the veneration which they cherished for his person was different from the superstitious terror which surrounded Habibrah, and seemed to have some mysterious source of emanation: it was a sort of worship.

Strange as it may appear he was as gentle and unassuming with his equals,

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who gloried in obeying his signals, as he was proud and haughty when confronted with the *overseers*. It is but just to remark, that the latter class of privileged slaves, those intermediate links which bind the chain of servitude to that of despotism, uniting the baseness of their condition to the insolence of authority took a malignant pleasure in burdening him with labor and hardships. They could not, however, withhold their respect for the proud sense of honor which had led him to affront my uncle. Not one of them had ever ventured to inflict upon him the humiliating punishment of the scourge. If for any cause they chanced to condemn him, twenty negroes would rise up and offer to suffer in his stead, while without moving a muscle he would calmly assist in the execution of the punishment upon his own back, as if he were well aware that they were only discharging an imperative duty. This singular man was known throughout the negro-quarters by title of Pierrot.

CHAPTER XII.

THESE details only added fuel and flame to my youthful imagination. Full of gratitude and compassion, Marie commended and shared my enthusiasm, and Pierrot acquired so strong a hold upon our interest, that I resolved to visit him and serve his cause. Anxiously did I await the means of a conference.

Although still young, yet as nephew of one of the wealthiest colonists of Cape Haytien, I was made captain of the militia in the parish of Acul. Fort Galifet was confided to their vigilance, and that of a detachment of yellow dragoons, whose leader, usually a sub-officer of this company, held the command of the Fort. Fortunately, at this period, the commandant was the brother of a poor colonist, to whom I had rendered some important assistance, and who was entirely devoted to my service.

His auditors here interrupted D'Auverney by the exclamation, 'Thaddeus!'

'Your conjectures are correct,' resumed the Captain. 'You will readily conceive it was not difficult through his aid to obtain access to the dungeon of the negro. As captain of the militia I had a right to visit the Fort. Meanwhile to avoid awakening the suspicions of my uncle, whose anger was yet warm, I was careful to repair thither at the hour in which he took his mid-day nap; all the soldiers, excepting those on guard, being also asleep.

Guided by Thaddeus I arrived at the door of the prisoner's cell; Thaddeus opened it and withdrew; I entered.

The black was seated; his extraordinary stature would not permit him to stand erect. He was not alone, an enormous dog sprang growling towards me. 'Rask!' cried the black. The young dog obeyed, returned and crouched at his master's feet, where he continued to devour the fragments of a miserable repast.

I was in uniform; the light that streamed through into the narrow dungeon, through the loophole, was so feeble that Pierrot could not distinguish my features and person.

'*I am ready,*' said he, in a calm, firm tone. As he uttered these words, he made an effort to rise.

'*I am ready,*' he repeated.

'I believe,' said I, in surprise at the freedom of his movements, 'I believe you bear irons.'

The intensity of my emotions made my voice tremble. The prisoner did not appear to recognise me. The fragments of the manacles rattled under the thrust of his foot.

'Irons? I have broken them.'

There was something in the tone, with which he uttered these last words, which seemed to say, *I was not made to bear chains.*

I resumed the address.

'They had failed to inform me that your dog was left you for a companion.'

'I brought him hither myself.'

My astonishment continued to increase. The door of the dungeon was closed on the outside by triple bolts of iron. The loophole, scarcely six inches in length, was secured by two bars of steel. He seemed to have perceived the drift of my reflections, for rising as well as the low vault would permit, he detached with but little effort an enormous stone placed above the loophole, and removed the bars that were fastened to the outer edge of this stone, and thus effected an opening through which two men could easily pass. This aperture looked out upon a forest of cocoa and palm trees, covering the mountain over against which the fort was built.

Surprise held me dumb; suddenly a beam of light shone upon my face. The prisoner started back and drew himself up, as if by mistake he had trodden upon an adder, and his forehead dashed against the overarching vault. An undefined commingling of a thousand conflicting sentiments, a strange expression of hatred, kindness, and sorrowful astonishment

chased each other over his features. Then suddenly resuming the empire over his thoughts, his features in an instant became calm and cold, and he fastened his gaze with indifference upon mine. He stared me in the face, as if he knew me not.

'I can live two days longer without food.'

I started with a thrill of horror upon remarking the meagre appearance of the unhappy captive. He continued:—

'My dog will eat only from my hand: if I had not enlarged the loophole poor Rask must have perished of hunger. It were better the fate were mine, than his, since death is my speedy doom.'

'No,' I exclaimed; 'No; you shall never perish of hunger.'

He did not understand me.

'Doubtless,' he continued, with a bitter smile, 'I can survive two days longer without food; but *I am ready*. Mr. Officer, to-day were better than to-morrow. Do no harm to my poor dog.'

I now understood what he meant by saying, '*I am ready*.' Charged with a crime punishable with death, he thought I had come to conduct him to his execution; and yet this man, endowed with such colossal strength, and with the means of flight open before him, calmly and gently addressed a comparative child, with '*I am ready*.'

'Do no harm to my poor Rask,' he repeated once more. I could contain myself no longer.

'What! You take me, then, for your executioner, and even doubt my humanity toward this generous dog, who has harmed no one.'

He began to relent; the tone of his voice grew softer.

'White,' said he, extending his hand, 'white, pardon me. I love my dog; and,' added he after a short silence, 'your race has done me much evil.'

I clasped him to my breast, I pressed his iron-hand in mine, and quickly undeceived him.

'Do you not recognize me?' I exclaimed.

'I know you as a white, and in the eyes of the whites, however excellent their disposition, a black is a pitiful object! Besides, I have reason to complain of you.'

'For what!' I exclaimed in astonishment.

'Have you not twice preserved my life?'

This singular accusation excited a smile; he perceived it, and pursued with increased bitterness:

'Yes, I must complain. You have sav-

ed me from a crocodile and from a colonist; and still worse, you have taken away my right to hate you. I am wretched, miserable!'

His mysterious language and incoherent ideas no longer surprised me; they were in harmony with himself.

'My indebtedness to you is still greater than yours to me,' I replied. 'To you I owe the life of my betrothed, Marie.'

He started with an electric shock. 'Marie!' he ejaculated in a stifled voice; and his head which was resting upon his hands trembled in the violence of his emotions, while his chest heaved with heavy sighs.

I acknowledge that my suppressed suspicions were awakened, but they were revived without any intermixture of anger or jealousy, I was too near the goal of happiness, and he too near that of death, for such a rival, if indeed he were one, to excite in me any other sentiments than those of benevolence and pity.

At length he raised his head. 'Go,' said he, 'and spare your thanks!' After a pause he added, 'yet my rank is not inferior to your own!'

These last words, in the liveliest manner, aroused my curiosity, and I urged him to inform me who he was, and what he had suffered; but in vain. He maintained a stubborn silence. My manner had touched his heart; my offers of assistance, and my entreaties appeared to overcome his former disgust of life. He retired for a moment, and soon returned, bringing some bananas and a large cocanut. Then closing the aperture in the wall, he began to eat. As our conversation increased in spirit, I observed that he spoke both the French and Spanish with facility, and his mind seemed to have enjoyed no small degree of cultivation: he was familiar with many Spanish romances, which he sang with a tender sensibility of expression. This singular man had been so unaccountable to me in many other points of view, that until the present moment the purity of his language had escaped my notice. I made a fresh attempt to discover the cause of such refinement, but in vain. At last I left him, after ordering my faithful Thaddeus to treat him with all possible care and attention.

CHAPTER XIII.

EVERY day at the same hour I repeated my visit to the prisoner. The embarrassment of his position gave me much uneasiness; deaf to my entreaties, my uncle

was obstinately bent upon his death. I did not conceal my fears from Pierrot, but he listened to them with indifference.

Often, when we were together, Rask would enter bearing around his neck a large palm-leaf, upon which a few characters, unintelligible to me, were traced. Unfastening the leaf, the black would run his eye across the ciphers and then tear it in pieces. On each occasion I had been accustomed to stifle my curiosity and suspicion, and not to open my lips.

One day I entered without his appearing to notice me. His back was turned to the door of the cell, and he was singing in a melancholy tone the Spanish air, *Yo que soy contrabandista*.* As he finished the song, turning hastily around, he exclaimed, 'Brother, promise me, if you are ever tempted to distrust me, to banish your suspicions when you hear me chanting that song.'

His manner was earnest and imposing; I promised as he desired, without being able to conjecture what he meant by the words, 'if you are ever tempted to distrust me'— He took the hollow shell of the nut, which he had gathered on the day of my first visit, filled it with palm juice, touched it to my lips, then quaffed it at a draught. From that day forward he always called me *brother*.

Meanwhile I began to cherish a hope of his deliverance. My uncle's first irritation had passed away. The festivities of my approaching marriage with his daughter had occupied his mind with gentler thoughts. Marie united her supplications to mine. I represented to him that the offence of Pierrot was not intentional, and that the prisoner had only endeavored to hinder his master from committing an act of barbarous severity; that by his hazardous struggle with the crocodile he had rescued Marie from certain death, that to him we were both indebted, he for his daughter, and I for my bride. I urged, moreover, that Pierrot was the most vigorous and active among his slaves, (for I no longer dreamed of obtaining his freedom, having resolved to be contented with securing his life); that he could perform the labor of ten negroes, that his single arm was sufficient to set in motion the cylinders of a sugar-mill. He listened to my rhapsody and importunity, and intimated that he would perhaps withdraw the accusation. I did not inform the black of this change in my uncle, wishing to enjoy the pleasure of announcing to

him his unlimited freedom, if it were obtainable from my uncle. It was matter of great surprise to me, that the prisoner, while under the impression of being devoted to death, still despised the use of the means of flight which were in his power. I disclosed my surprise to him. 'I shall remain,' he replied coldly, 'lest they think I am capable of fear.'

CHAPTER XIV.

ONE morning Marie came tripping to my side in the happiest mood. Her beaming countenance and sweet figure were stamped with something even more angelic than the joy of a pure undivided love. It was the consciousness of a noble action.

'Listen,' said she, 'in three days it will be the 22d of August, and our wedding-day. It will soon pass—' I interrupted her.

'Marie, do not say *soon*, for there are yet three days.' She smiled, and a blush suffused her cheeks.

'Do not interrupt me, Leopold,' she continued, 'an idea has occurred to me which will gratify you. You know that I went to the Cape yesterday to purchase my wedding ornaments, not that I value these gems and diamonds, for they make me no more beautiful in your eyes. I would give all the pearls in the world for one of those flowers destroyed by that vile man who left the bunch of marigolds; but let that pass. It is my father's pleasure to load me with such gewgaws, and to gratify him I shall feign a desire to possess them. Yesterday there came a *basquina* of flowered China satin, enclosed in a box of scented wood, which I fancied exceedingly. My father noticed that this robe attracted my attention. On our return, I begged him to promise me a gift after the manner of the old chevaliers; you know he likes to be compared to an old chevalier. He swore by his honor, he would grant the present, I demanded, whatever it might be. He thinks it is the *basquina* of China satin; that is not my aim; it is the life of Pierrot. This shall be my nuptial gift.'

I could not refrain from clasping such an angel in my arms. My uncle's word was sacred; and, while Marie proceeded to claim from him its fulfilment I ran with all haste to Fort Galifet, to announce to Pierrot that his safety was henceforth certain.

'Brother!' I cried out in entering, 'brother! rejoice! your life is saved.'

* I who am a smuggler.

Marie has asked it of her father for her nuptial gift!"

The slave started up. 'Marie! nuptials! my life! How can all these be associated together?'

'Very readily,' I answered. 'Marie, whose life you saved, is about to marry —'

'Whom?' shouted the slave, and his glance grew wild and terrific.

'What? have you not heard?' replied I softly; his fearful expression became more gentle and resigned.

'Ah! it is true,' said he, 'it is yourself! what is the appointed day?'

'The 22d of August.'

'The 22d of August! art mad?' he exclaimed with an expression of anguish and alarm.

He paused. I regarded him in astonishment. After a short silence, he suddenly seized me by the hand. 'Brother, I owe you too much; I cannot withhold my warning. Believe me, return to the Cape, and marry before the 22d of August.'

I besought him, but in vain, to explain the meaning of these enigmatic words.

'Adieu!' said he, with an air of singular solemnity. 'I have, perhaps, already said too much; but I hate ingratitude still more than perjury.'

I quitted him, filled with indecision and apprehensions, which, however, my thoughts of happiness soon dispelled.

My uncle withdrew his complaint that very day. I returned to the Fort to liberate Pierrot. Thaddeus, knowing him to be free, along with me entered the prison. He was no longer there. Rask, who was its sole tenant, came fawning upon me; to his neck was attached a palm-leaf, seizing the rude scroll I read these words, '*Thanks! you have saved my life a third time. Brother, forget not your promise.*' Underneath was written, as if for a signature, the words, '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*'

The astonishment of Thaddeus was still greater than mine; ignorant of the secret of the loophole, he imagined the negro had metamorphosed himself into his dog. I allowed him to entertain this superstitious belief, contenting myself with exacting from him a profound silence upon all he had seen.

I would have led away Rask, but, as we issued from the Fort, he dashed into the neighboring hedge and disappeared.

CHAPTER XV.

My uncle, exasperated at the flight of

the slave, ordered a thorough search to be made for him, and wrote to the governor, placing Pierrot entirely in his power when he should be retaken.

The 22d of August arrived. My union with Marie was celebrated with magnificent pomp in the parish of Acul. How happy did the day pass, from which I date all my misfortunes! I was intoxicated with a joy which those only who have experienced it can understand. Pierrot and his ill-omened advice were entirely banished from my recollection. The evening, so long and impatiently awaited, at length arrived. My young bride withdrew to the nuptial chamber, whither I could not follow as speedily as I might have desired. A tedious but indispensable duty first claimed my attention. My office of captain of the militia forced me on this night to go the rounds of the posts of Acul, and such precaution were at this period imperiously demanded by the troubled state of the colony, and by the partial revolt of the blacks, which, though promptly suppressed, had taken place in the preceding months of June and July, in the plantations of Thibaud and Lagoscette; but more especially by the turbulent disposition of the free mulattoes, the irritation of whose feelings the recent punishment of the rebel Oge had only served to increase. My uncle was the first to remind me of my official duties; I resigned myself without a murmur to the task. Arrayed in my uniform, I set forth. I visited the first stations without meeting any cause for alarm; but about midnight, as I was walking in a musing and listless mood near the batteries on the bay, I perceived in the horizon a reddish light, rise and extend itself, in the direction of Limonade and Saint-Louis du Morin. Both the soldiers and myself at first attributed it to some accidental fire, but a moment after the flames became so distinct, and the smoke, uplifted by the wind, increased and thickened to such a degree, that I promptly retraced my steps to the Fort, to give the alarm and send assistance.

Passing by the negro-quarter, I was surprised at the extraordinary agitation which prevailed there. The majority were still awake, and whispering and beckoning to one another in great excitement. A strange name, *Bug-Jargal*, pronounced with much reverence, fell frequently upon my ear, in the midst of their unintelligible jargon. From the few words I was able to understand, I gathered that the blacks on the northern plain were in open revolt, and had delivered to the flames the dwellings and plantations situ-

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ated on the other side of the cape. As I passed through a marshy piece of ground my foot stumbled against a heap of hatchets and pickaxes hidden among the canes and rushes. Justly alarmed, I immediately put the militia of Acul under arms, ordering them to keep a strict guard over the slaves. All became calm again.

Meanwhile the flames seemed every moment to increase in the direction of Limbé. We could even distinguish the distant noise of artillery and musketry. About two in the morning my uncle, whom I had awakened, unable longer to conceal his alarm, ordered me to leave in Acul a part of the militia in command of the lieutenant, and while my poor Marie was still asleep or awaiting my coming, I obeyed my uncle, who, as I have said, was a member of the provincial assembly, and with the remainder of the soldiers took up my march for the Cape.

I shall never forget the aspect of the town as I approached it. The flames which were devouring the adjacent plantations spread over it a sombre light obscured by the torrents of smoke, which the wind swept down the streets. A whirlwind of sparks and cinders formed by the burning fragments of the sugar cane, driven with violence, like a deluging snow over the roofs of the dwellings and against the rigging of the vessels moored in the roadstead, threatened the town every instant with a conflagration no less destructive and overwhelming, than that of which its environs were the prey. It was a frightful and striking spectacle to behold, on one hand, the pale inhabitants exposing their lives to dispute with this terrible scourge, the possession of the roofs, which alone remained of their immense wealth: while on the other, the vessels, dreading a similar fate, and favored by the wind which was so fatal to the unhappy colonists, spread their swelling sails, and were flying away over the billows, that were tinted with the bloody fires of the incendiary.

CHAPTER XVI.

DEAFENED by the cannon from the Forts, the outcries of the fugitives, and the distant sound of the falling timbers, I knew not which way to direct my soldiers, when I encountered upon the parade ground, the captain of the yellow dragoons who served us as guide. I will not pause, comrades, to describe the picture, spread out before us upon the burning plain. Others have depicted these first disasters of the Cape, and

I would pass rapidly over these recollections of blood and fire. I will restrict myself to the simple summary of facts, that the rebellious slaves, were already masters of Dondon, of Terrier Rouge, of the borough of Ouanaminté and even of the unfortunate plantations of Limbé; and the latter circumstance filled me with fearful apprehension, on account of its vicinity to Acul.

I presented myself in haste at the palace of the governor, M. De Blanchelande. All was confusion, in which the governor shared. I demanded my orders, begging him to attend as quickly as possible to the safety of Acul, as it was already threatened with destruction. He was surrounded by M. de Rouvray, field-marshal and one of the principal landed proprietors; M. de Touzard, lieutenant-colonel of the Cape regiment; some members of the Colonial and Provincial Assemblies; and by many of the principal colonists. At the moment of my appearance, this omnigenous council, was in the midst of one of its tumultuous and empty deliberations.

'Governor,' said a member of the Provincial Assembly, 'it is but too true; the rebels are the slaves and not the free *sang-mêlés*: we have foreseen and predicted it these many days.'

'You affirmed what you did not believe,' angrily rejoined a member of the Colonial Assembly, called the *general* Assembly. 'You said it to gain credit at our expense, and you were so far from expecting a real insurrection of the slaves, that it was the intrigues of your Assembly which in 1789, got up that ridiculous hoax of a revolt of three thousand blacks upon the hill of the Cape; a revolt in which only one national volunteer was killed, and he by his own comrades!'

'I repeat it' resumed the *provincial*, 'our foresight is the more judicious: that is plain enough. We remain here watching the colonial affairs, while your Assembly in a body is gadding off to France, to get up a decree for this laughable ovation, which finally dwindles away into a reprimand from the National Representation. *Ridiculus mus!*'

The member of the Colonial Assembly responded with bitter disdain: 'Our fellow citizens have re-elected us with unanimous voice!'

'It is you,' replied the other, 'it is your exaggerations which took off the head of that unfortunate man, who showed himself in a coffee-house without the tri-colored cockade; and which hung the mulatto Lacombe for a petition commencing with these *obsolete* words: "In the name

of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!"

"It is false!" cried the member of the general Assembly. "It is the struggle of principles with privileges, of the *crooked* against the *hooked*!"

"I have always been of the opinion, sir, that you were an *independent*!"

To this reproach from the member of the Provincial Assembly, his adversary replied in a triumphant air: "You confess yourself then to be a *pompon blanc*. I leave you under the weight of your own avowal."

The quarrel would probably have proceeded farther had not the governor interfered.

"What, gentlemen, has this to do with the imminent danger which threatens us? advise me, and do not be driving your fangs into each other. Listen to the reports which have reached me. The revolt commenced at ten o'clock last night among the negroes of the plantation, of Turpin. The slaves commanded by an English negro, named Bouckmann, have dragged away the occupants of the plantations of Clément, Trémès Flaville, and Noë. They have fired all the plantations and massacred the colonists with unwonted barbarity. A single circumstance will reveal to you their horrible intentions: Their standard is the body of a child borne upon the point of a pike."

A tremulous murmur interrupted M. de Blanchelande. "Behold what is passing without," he pursued. "Within all is disorder. Many of the inhabitants of the Cape have killed their slaves; fear renders them cruel. The more moderate or brave limit themselves to shutting up their hordes under a safe key. The *petits blancs** charge these disasters upon the free *sang-mêlés*. Many mulattoes have fallen victims to the popular fury. I have given them an asylum in the church, guarded by a battalion of the troops: and to prove that they are not in conspiracy with the revolted blacks, the *sang-mêlés* ask of me arms and posts which they may defend by themselves."

"Do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed a voice, which I instantly recognized; it was that of the planter suspected of being a *sang-mêlé*, with whom I had fought the duel. "Do nothing of the kind my governor; give no arms to the mulattoes."

"You would ward off the blow from yourself?" said a colonist, haughtily.

The other appeared not to understand

* Whites not proprietors, prosecuting within the Colony their various branches of industry.

him and continued: "The *sang-mêlés* are our most violent enemies. They alone, are to be feared. I contend, that we should suspect a revolt in their quarter and not in that of the slaves. Are the slaves worthy of a single fear?"

The disconcerted member hoped by these invectives against the mulattoes, to effect an entire separation of himself from their category, and to destroy in the minds of his audience of whites the opinion, which placed him among that despised caste. There was too much cowardice in the attempt to make it successful; a murmur of disapprobation made him sensible of his failure.

"Yes sir," said the old field-marshal de Rouvray, "yes, the slaves are worthy of a fear, they are forty against three; and we should have good reason to complain, if we could oppose to the negroes and mulattoes only such whites as yourself."

The colonist bit his lips in chagrin.

"General," resumed the governor, "what think you then of the petition of the mulattoes?"

"Give them arms governor!" replied M. de Rouvray, "away with such pretences!" and turning towards the suspected colonist: "Do you hear, sir? go, arm yourself."

The humiliated colonist left the assembly with all the marks of concentrating rage.

Meanwhile the cries of distress which broke forth through the town, extended from time to time even to the residence of the governor and recalled to the members of this conference, the subject they had assembled to consider.

M. de Blanchelande hastily transmitted an order in pencil to an aid-de-camp, and broke the gloomy silence, with which the assembly were listening to these alarming rumors.

"The *sang-mêlés* shall be armed, gentlemen, but there remain other measures to be taken."

"The Provincial Assembly must be convoked," said the member of that Assembly, who had spoken at the moment of my entrance.

"The Provincial Assembly!" repeated his antagonist of the Colonial Assembly. "What are we but the Provincial Assembly?"

"Because you are yourself a member of the Colonial Assembly!" replied the *pompon blanc*—

The *independent* interrupted him:

"I no longer know either the *colonial* or the *provincial*. There is but one Assembly, the *general*: do you understand, sir!"

"Very well," retorted the *pompon blanc*,

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'I tell you there exists only the National Assembly of Paris.'

'Convoke the Provincial Assembly!' repeated the independent with a scornful laugh, 'as if it were not dissolved at the moment the general decided on holding its sessions here.'

A universal exclamation burst forth from the auditory, which had become weary of this idle discussion.

'Messrs. Deputies,' cried a contractor, 'while you occupy yourselves with this senseless foolery, what is to become of my cotton trees and my cochineal?'

'And my four hundred thousand indigo plants at Limbé!' added a planter.

'And my negroes, for which I paid thirty dollars a head, as the lot runs!' said the captain of a slave ship.

'Every moment that you lose,' pursued another colonist, 'costs me sample and tariff in hand, ten quintals of sugar, which at seventeen heavy piastres the quintal, makes one hundred and thirty pounds, ten sous, French currency!'

'The colonial, or what you call the general authority, is an usurpation,' again began the eager disputant, overcoming the tumult by strength of lungs. 'Let it remain at Port-au-Prince fabricating decrees for two leagues of territory, and two days of duration, but let it leave us here in peace. The Cape belongs to the Provincial Congress of the north, and to it alone!'

'I contend, urged the independent, 'that his excellency the governor has no right to convoke any other than the General Assembly of the representatives of the colony presided over by M. de Cadusch!'

'But where is your president, M. de Cadusch?' asked the *pompon blanc*, 'where is your assembly? There are not yet four members of it arrived, while the Provincial Assembly is all present. Are you eager to represent in your own person a whole assembly, a whole colony?'

This rivalry of the two deputies, faithful echoes of their respective assemblies, again called forth the interference of the governor.

'Gentlemen, will you not come to some end in quarrelling over your eternal assemblies, provincial, general, colonial and national? are you not all assisting the decisions of this assembly by invoking three or four others?'

'Morbleu!' cried General de Rouvray in a voice of thunder, bringing his iron fist violently down upon the council-table; 'what cursed babblers! I would rather my lungs were struggling against a twenty-four pounder. What will these two Assemblies do for us, who dispute the path,

like two companies of grenadiers, ready to mount the assault? Very well! Convoke both of them, governor; I will make of them two regiments and march them against the blacks; we will try if their fusils can make as much noise as their tongues.'

After this vigorous sortie, he leaned towards his neighbor (it was myself) and said in a low voice: 'What think you a governor on the part of the king of France can do between two Assemblies, each pretending to be the sovereign? These are the fine talkers and the wordy, supple advocates, who spoil every dish here as they do in the metropolis. If I had the honor of being the lord-lieutenant viceroy, I would thrust all this petty canaille out of doors. I would say: The King reigns and I govern. I would send responsibility along with these self-styled Representatives to the devil; and with twelve crosses of Saint Louis, promised in His Majesty's name, I would farm out the rebels on the island of Tortugas which has been heretofore inhabited by desperadoes of their own kin, the buccaniers. Mark my words, young man. The philosophers have given birth to the philanthropists who have in turn begotten the *négrophiles*, who in their turn have generated cannibals for the whites, so called until we can find for them a Greek or Latin appellation. These pretended liberal ideas, with which France is reeling and drunken, fester into poison under the tropics. We must treat the negroes with kindness and not raise them suddenly to freedom. All the horrors you behold this day in St. Domingo, spring from the Massiac club, and the insurrection of the slaves is only a revulsion from the fall of Bastille.'

While the old soldier thus exposed to me his straightforward policy, full of frankness and sincerity, the stormy discussion continued. A colonist, one of the few who partook of the revolutionary frenzy, calling himself citizen-general C—, on account of having presided at some bloody executions, cried out:

'We must raise a guillotine rather than the sword. Nations must have terrible examples: Let us terrify the blacks! It is I who allayed the revolts of June and July, by planting on each side of the avenue to my dwelling, the heads of fifty slaves in lieu of as many palm trees. Judge then each one of you, of the proposition I am about to make. Let us defend the approach to the Cape with the negroes, who yet remain faithful.'

'How! what imprudence!' echoed from all sides. 'You do not understand me, gentlemen,' said the citizen-general. 'Let

us make a cordon of the heads of negroes, drawn completely around the city, from Fort Picolet to point Caracol. Their insurgent comrades will not dare approach. In such a moment as this we must make sacrifices for the common cause. I am the first to devote myself to it. I have five hundred slaves not yet revolted; They are at your service.'

A movement of horror awaited this execrable proposition—'Abominable! horrible!' exclaimed every voice.

'Such measures as these have already ruined us,' said another colonist. 'If the revolted slaves of July and August, had not been so hastily executed, we would have been able to have detected the thread of the conspiracy, which the axe of the executioner severed.'

Citizen C—— for a moment preserved an angry silence then muttered between his teeth: 'I cannot think I am an object of suspicion. I am connected with the Negrophiles; I correspond with Brissot and Pruneau of Pomme-Gouge in France; Hans-Sloane in England; Magaw in America: Pezll in Germany; Olivarius in Denmark; Wadstrohm in Sweden; Peter Paulus in Holland; Avenando in Spain; and the abbé Pierre Tamburini in Italy!' His voice rose in proportion, as he advanced in his nomenclature of Negrophiles—He concluded with the contemptuous remark, 'But there are no philosophers here!'

For the third time M. de Blanchelande endeavored to learn the counsels of the deputies.

'Your excellency,' said one voice, 'this is my advice: let us all embark on board the *Leopard*, which is moored in the roadstead.'

'Let us set a price on the head of Bouckmann,' said another.

'Let us acquaint the Governor of Jamaica of the revolt,' said a third.

'Yes; and then he will send us again the paltry assistance of five hundred muskets,' retorted a deputy of the Provincial Assembly. 'Let us despatch a special vessel to France, your Excellency, and let us wait——!'

'Wait! wait!' interrupted M. de Rouvray, in a violent outburst of disgust. 'Will the flames which are already kindling in a circle about our city, wait? M. de Touzarde, let the drums beat 'to arms'; take the cannon and meet the rebel forces, with your grenadiers and chasseurs. Your Excellency, let patrols be established in the parishes on the east; establish a few posts in Trou, and at Vallières; I will myself take charge of the plains of Fort Dauphin. I will direct the movements there; my

grandfather who was a colonel of the horse in the regiment of Normandy, served under the Marshal de Vauban; I have studied Folard and Bezout, and have some experience in the defences of a country. Besides, the plains of Fort Dauphin almost hemmed in by the sea and the Spanish frontiers, have the form of a peninsula, and will in some sort protect themselves; the peninsula of Mole offers a similar advantage. Let us use our advantages and act!'

The energetic language of the old veteran quickly silenced discordant voices and opinions. The general was in the right. The consciousness which each one felt, as to the objects of his real interest, rallied all advices around that of M. de Rouvray, and while the governor by a grateful pressure of the hand, testified to the brave officer, that he felt the value of his counsels, though they had been uttered like orders, and the importance of his assistance, all the planters joined in demanding the prompt execution of the proposed measures.

The two deputies of the rival assemblies alone seemed to dissent from the general adherence to the governor, and from their respective corners kept muttering over the words, *encroachment of the executive power, hasty decisions and responsibility.*

I seized this moment to obtain from M. de Blanchelande the orders I had impatiently solicited; quitting the assembly I put my troops in order, and returned immediately on my road to Acul, regardless of the fatigue which was oppressive to all but myself.

CHAPTER XVII.

DAY began to break. I was in the place of rendezvous, awakening the militia, couched upon their cloaks, in inextricable confusion, among the yellow and red dragons, the fugitives of the plain, the bleating and bellowing cattle, and goods of all species brought into the town by the planters of the environs. I had commenced to collect my little band from this disordered multitude; when I discovered a yellow dragon, covered with sweat and dust, running at full speed towards me. I advanced to meet him; and from the few broken sentences that escaped him, I learned, to my consternation, that my fears had been realized; the revolt had gained the plains of Acul, and the blacks were besieging Fort Galifet, in which the militia and the colonists were inclosed. It should be remarked, that this Fort Galifet was a very small affair; any work of defence thrown up of earth being called a *fort* in St. Domingo.

There was not a moment to be lost:—mounting those of my soldiers for whom I could find horses, and guided by the dragoon, I reached my uncle's domains about ten o'clock in the evening.

I scarcely gave a glance at these immense plantations, now only a sea of flames, that were rushing over the plains with huge billows of smoke, across which the wind, from time to time, bore volumes of sparks and cinders from the huge trunks of trees that were bristling with fire. Frightful crackling sounds, mingled with roaring noises, seemed to reply to the distant howlings of the blacks, whom we already heard, but could not yet distinguish. The destruction of such vast wealth, destined for my own enjoyment, drew from me not a passing sigh; I had but one thought—it was the safety of Marie. Marie saved, of what importance was all else! I knew she was shut up within the fort, and I only prayed that I might reach it in time. This single hope sustained me in my anguish, and gave me the courage and strength of a lion.

At length a turn in the road gave us a view of Fort Galifet. The tricolored flag floated still above the platform, and a well sustained fire crowned the circumference of its walls. I uttered a cry of joy! 'Gallop on, put the spurs to your steeds! loosen the reins!' shouted I to my companions. Redoubling our speed, we directed our course across the fields towards the Fort, at whose base we caught a view of the mansion of my uncle. Its doors and windows were broken in, but it still remained standing, and red with the reflection from the conflagration, which had not reached it, because the wind blew from the sea, and it was isolated from the plantations.

A multitude of negroes, lying in wait in this house, showed themselves occasionally at every opening, and even upon the roof; their torches, their pikes, their hatchets, glistening in the midst of the flashings of their musketry, which they constantly directed against the Fort; while another crowd of their comrades, mounted, fell back, and again remounted the besieged walls, which they had loaded with their scaling ladders. This tide of blacks, continually repulsed, and as constantly springing up again upon those grey walls, resembled, at a distance, a swarm of ants, trying to climb the shell of a large tortoise, of which the slow animal rids himself, from time to time, at a single shake of his armor.

At length we reached the outer works of the Fort; my eye fastened upon the flag which waved over it. I encouraged my

fellow-soldiers, in the name of their families, shut up, like mine, within those walls, and to whose succor we had come. A general acclamation was the response. Forming my little squadron in line, I prepared to give the signal for charging down upon the assailing mob.

At this moment a loud and piercing cry rose from the interior of the Fort, a whirlwind of smoke entirely enveloped the edifice, rolled its black folds for some moments around the walls, from which escaped a noise like the bellowing of a furnace; and when it cleared away we saw Fort Galifet, surmounted by a red flag. All was lost!

CHAPTER XVIII.

I CANNOT express what passed through my brain at this horrible spectacle. The capture of the Fort, the butchery of its defenders, twenty families massacred, and the whole blown to atoms within!—I acknowledge, to my shame, all of this occupied my thoughts not for an instant. Marie lost to me—a few short hours after those which had made her mine for ever! lost by my own fault; for, had I not quitted her the preceding evening, at my uncle's orders, to go to the Cape, I could have defended her, or, at least, died by her side, and mingled my blood with hers. And this would have been, in some respects, not to lose her! Thoughts of my desolation changed my grief into madness. My despair was that of remorse.

Meanwhile my exasperated companions cried out *vengeance!* Grasping our sabres between our teeth, with pistols in both hands, we precipitated ourselves into the centre of the victorious insurgents. Although greatly our superiors in point of numbers, the blacks fled at our approach; but we saw them on our right and on our left, before us and behind us, butchering the whites, and hastening to fire the Fort: their very cowardice increased our fury.

At a postern gate of the Fort, Thaddeus, covered with wounds, presented himself before me. 'Captain!' he exclaimed, 'your Pierrot is a sorcerer, an *obi*, as these accursed negroes say, or, at least, a devil. We might have held our ground, you would have arrived, and all would have been saved had he not penetrated the Fort, I know not how, and see! As for your uncle, his family, Madame'—

'Marie!' I interrupted, 'where is Marie?' At this moment an athletic black rushed from behind a burning palisade, bearing a young female, who was screaming and struggling in his arms. It was

Marie; the black was Pierrot. 'Perfidious wretch!' I shouted.—I discharged a pistol at him, just as one of the rebel slaves cast himself before the ball and fell dead. Pierrot turned back, and appeared to address some words to me, then sprang with his booty into the thicket of burning canes. An instant after an enormous dog followed him, holding in his mouth a cradle, in which was the lost child of my uncle. I recognized him: it was Rask. Transported with rage, I discharged my second pistol, but it missed him.

I ran like a madman in chase, but my double nocturnal journey, so many hours passed without report or nourishment, my fears for Marie, the sudden transition from the summit of happiness to the lowest depths of misery, all these violent emotions of the soul had exhausted me to a still greater extent than bodily fatigue. After taking a few steps my brain reeled; a cloud spread over my eyes, I fell, and fainted away.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN I revived I was in the devastated mansion of my uncle, and in the arms of Thaddeus. The eyes of the noble fellow were fixed upon me, full of anxiety.

'Victory!' cried he, when he felt my pulse throb again under his hand; 'victory! the negroes are routed, and our captain has come to life!' I interrupted his cry of joy by my unchanging question, 'Where is Marie?' My thoughts were still wild and distracted; I had a vague notion of the feeling and not the remembrance of my misfortune. Thaddeus hung his head. At such an omen my memory returned; I retraced, in thought, the horrible night of my nuptials; the gigantic negro bearing off Marie in his arms through the flames, rose up before me like an infernal vision. The frightful light which had burst over the colony, showing to all the whites their enemies in the persons of their slaves, discovered to me, in this Pierrot, once so noble, so generous, so devoted, and thrice indebted to me for his life, an ingrate, a monster, a rival. The forcible abduction of my wife, even upon the night of our marriage, proved to me what I had at first suspected, and at last I clearly recognized in the singer of the pavillion, no other than the execrable ravisher of Marie. In so short a period, what a change!

Thaddeus informed me, that he had vainly pursued Pierrot and his dog; that the negroes had withdrawn, though their

numbers might have easily trampled down my feeble band; and that the conflagration of the estates of my family was still raging, without the possibility of its being checked.

I asked if it was known what had become of my uncle, to whose chamber they had borne me. He took me silently by the hand, led me towards the alcove, and drew aside the curtains.

There, extended upon his bloody bed, lay my unfortunate uncle, a poniard plunged into his heart up to its haft. From the calmness of his features we discovered that he had been struck during his sleep. The couch of the dwarf Habibrah, who customarily slept at his feet, was also stained with blood, and spots were observable on the laced vest of the poor fool, which was cast upon the floor, a few paces from the bed.

I had not a doubt but that the buffoon had perished, a victim to his well-known attachment for my uncle; massacred, perhaps, by his comrades in defending his master. Bitterly did I reproach myself for the prejudice which had led me to pass such false judgments upon Habibrah and upon Pierrot; and I mingled with the tears, torn from my heart by my uncle's untimely fate, many a regret for his ill-fated jester. In obedience to my orders, they searched for his body, but in vain. I conjectured that the negroes had borne away the dwarf and cast him into the flames; and I ordered, that in the funeral service of my father-in-law, prayers should also be said for the repose of the soul of the faithful Habibrah.

CHAPTER XX.

FORT Galifet was destroyed, our dwellings had disappeared; a longer residence among these ruins was useless and impossible. The same evening saw us on our return to the Cape.

As soon as I arrived a burning fever seized me. The effort I had made to overcome my despair had been too violent. The spring, bent beyond the powers of its elasticity, broke; I fell into a delirium. All my hopes deceived, my love profaned, my friendship betrayed, my fortunes ruined, and, above all, implacable jealousy, deprived me of my reason. It seemed as if flames were gushing through my veins; my brain whirled round; I had furies in my heart. I pictured to myself Marie in the power of another,—in the power of a master, of a slave, of Pierrot! Then (as I was afterwards told), I sprang wildly

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from my bed, and six men could scarcely hold me from dashing my brains against the angle of the walls. Ah, why did I not then die!

The crisis passed. The physicians, the care of Thaddeus, and, perhaps, the vigor of the vital energies in youth, overcame the illness—an illness which ought to have proved so great a blessing! At the end of ten days I recovered; I uttered no complaint, for I was contented yet a while to live—for vengeance!

As soon as I was convalescent I reported myself to M. de Blanchelande, and begged for a post in the army. It was his desire to consign to my care the defence of some fort: I conjured him to enrol me as a volunteer in one of the active bands, which they sent, from time to time, to scour the country against the blacks.

They had fortified the Cape with all possible haste. The insurrection was making fearful progress. The negroes of Port-au-Prince began to show their discontent. Biassou commanded those of Limbé, of Dondon, and of Acul; Jean François caused himself to be proclaimed generalissimo of the insurgents in the plain of Maribarou; Bouckmann, afterwards renowned for his tragic end, overran, with his brigands, the borders of Linonade; while the bands of Morne-Rouge recognized for their chief a negro named BUG-JARGAL.

The character of the latter, if we might credit the daily accounts of him, contrasted, in a singular manner, with the ferocity of his companions. While Bouckmann and Biassou were inventing a thousand species of torture for the prisoners which fell into their hands, Bug-Jargal was eager to furnish them with the means for leaving the island. The former were driving bargains with the Spanish vessels that were cruising about the coasts, and sold to them, in advance, the spoils of the unhappy inhabitants whom they had put to flight. Bug-Jargal, on the contrary, was sinking to the bottom many of those freebooting corsairs. By his orders M. Colas de Maigné, and eight other distinguished colonists, had been detached from the wheel to which Bouckmann had caused them to be fastened. They cited a thousand other acts of generosity, on his part, which it would be tedious to relate.

My hopes of vengeance, meanwhile, did not promise much for a speedy accomplishment. The rumors concerning Pierrot ceased. The rebels commanded by Biassou kept the Cape in constant alarm. They had, on one occasion, dared to scale the hill which overlooks the town, and the cannon from the citadel had with difficulty

repulsed their assault. The governor resolved upon forcing them back into the interior of the island. The militia of Acul, of Limbé, of Ouanaminte, and of Maribarou, joined to the Cape regiment, and with the formidable companies of the red and yellow dragoons, constituted our active army. The militia of Dondon and of Quartier-Dauphin, strengthened by a corps of volunteers, under the command of the merchant Poncignon, formed the garrison of the town.

It was the first object of the governor to rid himself of Bug-Jargal, whose rapid movements alarmed him. He sent against him the militia of Ouanaminte and a battalion from the Cape. This corps returned two days after, having met with a signal repulse. The governor, firmly bent on vanquishing Bug-Jargal, again despatched the same corps, with a reinforcement of fifty yellow dragoons, and four hundred militia from Maribarou. This second army was still more roughly handled than the first. Thaddeus, who took part in the expedition, was seized with a violent fit of chagrin, and swore, on his return, that he would revenge it on Bug-Jargal.

A tear fell from the eyes of D'Auverney; he crossed his arms upon his breast, and appeared, for some minutes, to be plunged in a painful reverie; at length he resumed his narrative.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE rumor reached us, that Bug-Jargal had quitted Morne-Rouge, and was leading his troops to the mountains to join Biassou. The governor shouted for joy: 'We have him now!' he exclaimed, rubbing his hands in ecstasy at the thought. On the following morning the colonial army was a league beyond the limits of the Cape. At our approach the insurgents precipitately abandoned Port-Margot and Fort Galifet, where they had established a post, defended by large pieces of artillery, taken from the batteries on the coast; all their bands fell back towards the mountains. The governor was already rejoicing over his triumph. We pursued our march. Each one of us sought, as we traversed the arid and desolate plains, to bestow a last sad glance upon the spot where had been his fields, his dwellings, and his riches; often we were at a loss to recognize even the place.

Sometimes our march was arrested by conflagrations which the cultivated fields had communicated to the forests and the meadows. In that climate where the

earth is yet in its virgin state and vegetation is superabundant, the burning of a forest is accompanied by singular phenomena. Often, before it is discovered, it is heard in the distance, springing up and roaring with the deep distant rumbling of a swollen cataract. The crashing of the trunks of trees, the crackling of the branches, the roots snapping in the ground, the trembling of the tall herbage, the bubbling of the lakes and marshes enclosed within the forests, the whistling of the flames that devour the air, all send forth a noise which rises and falls with the progress of the conflagration. Perchance you may see a row of verdant trees yet untouched, a long time surrounded by the blazing fire. Suddenly a tongue of the flames opens its way through one of the extremities of this fresh girdle; the serpentine coils of bluish flame rapidly run the length of the trunks, and in a twinkling the front of the forest disappears under a veil of molten gold; all burns and blazes up at the same instant. A canopy of smoke falls from time to time under a strong breath of wind, and envelops the flames. It rolls and unrolls again; it rises and falls, it dissipates, it thickens; suddenly it becomes black; a kind of fiery fringe quickly nips off the borders; a deafening noise is heard, the fringe is gone, the smoke mounts on high, and showers, in its flight, a cloud of red cinders, which continue for a long period to fall around upon the earth.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE evening of the third day we entered the gorges of the Grande-Rivière. It was conjectured that the blacks must be twenty leagues distant in the mountains. We pitched our camp upon a hill, which, from the manner in which its surface was trampled down and despoiled, seemed to have served our enemies for the same purpose.

Our position was not well chosen, though we were yet unmolested. The eminence was commanded, on all sides, by rocky peaks covered with dense forests. The asperity of these escarpments had given to this place the name of Dompté-Mulâtre. The Grand-Rivière flowed behind the camp; contracted between its shores, it was at this point narrow and deep. Its banks nearly perpendicular bristled with tufts of bushes, impenetrable to the sight. Often its waters were hidden by the tangled runners of vines, which clinging to the branches of the maple, with its red flowers scattered among the bushes, cast its shoots from shore to

shore, and crossing in a thousand directions, formed over the river immense canopies of verdure. The eye which, from the heights of the neighboring rocks, gazed upon the scenery, thought it saw humid meadows sprinkled with roses. A dull sound of rushing water, or, occasionally, a wild teal plunging suddenly beneath this flowery veil, alone disclosed the course of the river.

The sun had ceased to gild the sharp summits of the distant mountains of Don-don; gradually the darkness spread over the camp, and the silence was broken only by the cries of the crane or the measured tread of the sentinels.

On a sudden the dreadful songs of *Oua-Nassé* and of the *Camp de Grand-Pré* were heard above our heads; the palms, the *acomas*, the cedars, that crowned the rocks, were set on fire, and the livid lights discovered to us, upon the neighboring summits, numerous bands of negroes and mulattoes, whose copper tint glowed in the light of the flames.

The danger was imminent. The officers, starting from their slumbers, ran to collect their soldiers; the drum beat 'to arms;' the trumpet sounded the alarm; our lines were formed in haste and disorder; but the rebels, instead of profiting by our confusion, remained motionless, looking at us, and continuing to sing *Oua-Nassé*.

A gigantic black appeared, unattended, upon the most elevated of the secondary peaks which enclosed the river; a flame-colored feather waved upon his brow, a hatchet was in his right hand, a red flag in his left;—I recognized Pierrot! If a carabine had been within my reach, rage would have led me to commit a base action. The black repeated the chorus of *Oua-Nassé*, planted his flag upon the peak, launched his hatchet into our midst, and threw himself into the surges of the river. Only one regret arose within me, for I feared only that he would now die by some other hand than my own.

Immediately the blacks began to roll upon our columns enormous fragments of rocks; a shower of bullets and arrows fell upon the eminence. Our soldiers, enraged at not being able to reach their assailants, were perishing in despair, crushed by the rocks, riddled by balls, or pierced with arrows.

Suddenly a terrific noise seemed to issue from the centre of the Grande-Rivière. An extraordinary scene was passing there. The yellow dragoons, severely annoyed by the rocky masses which the rebels threw down from the heights of the declivities,

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had conceived the idea of escape, by taking refuge under the flexible vaults of running vines with which the river was covered. Thaddeus had first put this scheme in motion, which, besides its ingenuity—

Here the narrative was suddenly interrupted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MORE than a quarter of an hour had elapsed, since sergeant Thaddeus, with his right arm in a sling, had slipped in unperceived, and appropriated a corner of the tent, where his violent gestures alone expressed the interest which he took in the recitals of his captain.

At this period, not deeming it respectful to allow so direct an eulogy to pass without thanking D'Auverney, he began to stammer in a confused tone:—‘You are very kind, my captain.’

A general burst of laughter broke forth. D'Auverney turned about, and exclaimed in a severe tone:

‘What, you here Thaddeus! and your arm?’

At this language, so strange to his ears, the features of the old soldier grew dark; he reeled and turned away his head to wipe away the tears which trickled from his eyes.

‘I did not believe,’ he at length answered in a low voice, ‘I never would have believed that my captain, could become so offended with his old sergeant, as ever to have addressed him with a “you.”’

The captain hastily rose from his seat.

‘Pardon me my old friend, pardon me, I knew not what I said; stay, Thad, dost thou pardon me?’

Tears started from the eyes of the sergeant in spite of his own efforts to stifle them.

‘See! this is the third time,’ he stammered forth, ‘but these are tears of joy.’

The reconciliation was effected. A short silence ensued.

‘But tell me Thad,’ demanded the captain gently, ‘why hast thou quitted the surgeon’s quarters to come hither?’

‘It is because, by your leave, it is because, I came to ask you, my captain, if I should put the ornamented housing on your charger to-morrow.’

Henri burst out into a laugh: ‘You would do better to ask the surgeon, if he would put two ounces of lint to-morrow on your wounded arm.’

‘Or to inform you,’ said Paschal, ‘if you might drink a little wine to refresh yourself; meanwhile here is some brandy,

which cannot fail to do you good: try it my brave sergeant.’

Thaddeus advanced, made a respectful bow, excused himself for taking the glass in his left hand, and drank to the health of the company. His feelings began to acquire animation.

‘You were, my captain, where—Oh yes! it was I who proposed to crawl under the vines, to prevent good Christians from being crushed by stones. Our officer, who could not swim, afraid of being drowned, which was all very natural, opposed it with all his might, until he saw, by your leave, gentlemen, a large flint-stone which just missed him, fall upon the river without sinking, because of the herbage. “It were better,” he then exclaimed, “to die like Pharaoh of Egypt than like Saint Etienne. We are not saints, and Pharaoh was a military man like ourselves.” My officer, a learned man as you perceive, was very willing to take up with my advice, provided I would be the first to make a trial. I consented. I descended along the bank, leaped beneath the arbor holding on to the branches above, when I felt myself seized by the leg: I struggled, I shouted for help, I received many sabre cuts, and then a troop of dragoons, like so many devils, came tumbling down pell-mell under the arbor. They were the blacks of Morne-Rouge, who had doubtless been concealed there, in order to fall upon our backs like a loaded sack, the moment after. That would not have been a very good time for fishing.—They fought, they swore, they screamed. As they were naked they were more active than we; but our blows told better than theirs. We swam with one arm and fought with the other as one must do in such cases. Those who knew not how to swim, suspended themselves by one hand to the vines, and the blacks caught them by their feet and drew them down. In the midst of this strife, I saw a great negro who was deending himself like a very Satan against eight or ten of my comrades; I swam towards him, and recognized—Pierrot, otherwise named Bug—, but that should not come in till by and by; should it, my captain? I recognized Pierrot. Since the taking of the Fort we had been deadly hostile to each other. I seized him by the throat, he was on the point of ridding himself of me by a thrust of his poniard, when he caught a view of my features, and instead of killing me, surrendered; that was very unfortunate, my captain, for if he had not surrendered himself—but this will be seen by and by.—As soon as the negroes saw him taken, they leaped like so many tigers

upon us to rescue him; the militia were about to jump into the water to assist us, when Pierrot seeing doubtless that the negroes would all be massacred, uttered a few words, which were real witchcraft, for it put them all to flight. They plunged and disappeared in a twinkling. This battle under the water would have been very agreeable, and would have been very amusing, no doubt, if I had not lost a finger in the struggle, and wet ten cartridges, and if — poor man! but so it was written, my captain. — And the sergeant, after having supported the back of his left hand upon the grenade of his official cap, raised it towards heaven with an air of inspiration.

D'Auverney was violently agitated. 'Yes,' said he, 'yes, thou art right, my old friend, that night was a night of fate.'

He was on the point of yielding to his old habit of falling into one of his deep reveries, had not the assembly eagerly pressed him to continue. He resumed the narrative.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHILE the scene that Thaddeus has described—Thaddeus, with an air of triumph approached and placed himself behind the captain—while the scene that Thaddeus has described was passing behind the fortified eminence, I had, with some of my company, by dint of climbing from bush to bush, attained a peak called *Pic du Paon*, from the radiating tints which the mica presented to the rays of the sun spread over its surface. This peak was on a level with the position of the blacks. The way once open, the summit was soon covered with militia; we opened an active fire. The negroes with poorer arms than our own, could not return the fire with equal effect: they began to grow discouraged; we redoubled our furious attack, and soon the nearest rocks were evacuated by the rebels, who meanwhile took care to roll the bodies of their dead down upon the remainder of the army, which was still drawn up in battle array upon the old eminence. We then felled and bound together with palm leaves and cords many trunks of those enormous wild cotton-trees, out of which the aboriginals of the island made canoes capable of using an hundred oars. By the aid of this temporary bridge, we passed over to the abandoned peaks, and a part of the army was thus posted on an advantageous summit. At this sight the courage of the blacks gave way. We sustained our fire;

a few piteous cries, with which the name of Bug-Jargal was mingled, on a sudden echoed through the army of Biassou. Great alarm was manifested; numerous bands of the blacks of Morne-Rouge appeared upon the rock where floated the scarlet flag: they prostrated themselves, elevated their standard, and then precipitated themselves with it into the abyss of the Grande-Rivière. This pantomime seemed to signify that their chief was dead or taken.

Our courage increased to such a pitch, that I resolved with the army to drive the rebels from the rocks which they still occupied. Having caused a bridge of the trunks of trees to be cast from our peak to the nearest rock, I myself rushed first into the centre of the negroes. My brave band was about to follow me, when one of the rebels, by a few blows of his hatchet, cleft the slight fastenings of the bridge, and it fell with a tremendous crush. The fragments rolled into the abyss, dashing upon the rocks with a frightful echo.

I turned my head; at this moment I felt myself seized by six or seven blacks, who disarmed me. I struggled like a lion; they bound me with withes of bark, heedless of the bullets which my brave fellows rained about them.

My despair was only softened by the shouts of victory which a moment after I heard lifted up around me; I saw the blacks and mulattoes in confusion clambering up the steepest summits, uttering cries of distress. My keepers followed their example; the most vigorous of their number placed me upon his shoulders, and bore me towards the forests, leaping from rock to rock with the agility of a chamois. The flashes of flames soon ceased to guide him, but the feeble light of the moon sufficed to direct his steps and he began to lessen his speed.

CHAPTER XXV.

AFTER traversing several thickets and crossing many torrents, we reached a high valley of a singularly savage aspect. This place was wholly unknown to me even by rumor.

The valley was situated in the very heart of the ridges, which, in St. Domingo, are called *the double mountains*. It was a large green savannah imprisoned within walls of naked rocks, sprinkled over with tufts of pines, *gayacs* and *palmettes*. The piercing cold air which reigns almost continually in this region of the island, though it never freezes, was still farther increased by the freshness of the

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night which was scarcely passed. The blush of morning began to revive the whiteness of the high surrounding acclivities; while the valley, still plunged in profound darkness, was lightened only by a multitude of fires kindled up by the negroes; for this was their rallying point.

The broken members of their army, there collected in disorder. The blacks and the mulattoes from time to time arrived in wild bands, with cries of distress or howlings of rage. Fresh fires, sparkling like the eyes of a tiger, throughout the dark savannah, marked at each moment that the circle of the camp was widening.

The negro whose prisoner I was, had placed me at the foot of an oak, whence I observed with indifference this singular spectacle. Having fastened me by the girdle to the trunk of the tree against which I was leaning and tightened the double knots which fettered all my movements, the black placed upon my head his cap of red wool, doubtless to indicate that I was his property, and after having assured himself that I could neither escape, nor be taken from him by others, prepared to depart. I resolved to address him; I asked him in the Creole patois if he was of the band of Dondon or of *Morne-Rouge*. He paused and replied with an air of pride, *Morne-Rouge*! A thought flitted across my brain: I had heard the commendations of the generosity of the chief of that band, Bug-Jargal, and though without a single pang resigned to a death which would deliver me from all my misery, the thought of the tortures that awaited me if I should receive death at the hands of Biassou, did not fail to inspire me with horror. My only request was to die without these tortures. It was perhaps a weakness, but in such moments our human nature always recoils. I thought if I could free myself from Biassou, I might perhaps obtain from Bug-Jargal, a death without the infliction of barbarous punishments, the death of a soldier. I asked this negro of *Morne-Rouge* to conduct me to his chief Bug-Jargal. He started up, "Bug-Jargal!" he said, striking his forehead with despair, then passing suddenly to an expression of fury, he cried, shaking his fist at me, "Biassou! Biassou!" After uttering this menace of torture he left me.

The anger and grief of the negro recalled to my mind, that circumstance of the battle, from which we had inferred the capture or death of the chief of the *Morne-Rouge* bands. I no longer doubted his fate, and I resigned myself in despair to the

vengeance of Biassou, with which the black seemed to have been menacing me.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MEANWHILE darkness yet covered the valley, in which the crowds of blacks and the number of fires continually increased. A group of negresses came to kindle a fire near me. In the numerous bracelets of blue, red, and purple glass, that glistened like scales upon their arms and legs; in the ornaments which loaded their ears; in the rings which embellished their fingers and toes; in the amulets fastened upon the bosom; in the charmed necklace suspended around the neck; in the apron of colored feathers which alone veiled their nakedness; and above all, in their noisy cadences, in their wild and haggard looks, I recognized the *griotes*. You are not, perhaps, aware, that there exists among the blacks of many African countries, negroes endowed with a rude talent of poetry and improvisation, resembling madness. These negroes wandering from kingdom to kingdom, occupy in those barbarous countries the same position with the ancient rhapsodists, and in the middle ages, with the *minstrels* of England, the *minnesingers* of Germany and the *trouvères* of France. They are called *griots*. Their wives, possessed like themselves of a frantic demon, accompany the barbarous songs of their husbands by wanton dances, presenting a grotesque parody of the bayaderes of Hindostan, and of the Egyptian *almées*. It was a crowd of such women, who had seated themselves in a circle a few steps from me, their legs bent under them in the African manner, around a heap of dry branches, which in burning made its red light tremble upon their hideous faces.

As soon as their circle was formed they joined hands, and the eldest, who wore a heron's feather in her hair, began to cry, *Ouanga!* I understood that they were about to carry on one of those sorceries, which they designate by that name. All repeated, *Ouanga!* The oldest, after a short silence to rehearse her part, tore out a handful of her hair and cast it into the fire, pronouncing the sacramental words: *Malé o guiab!* which, in the jargon of the Creole negroes, signifies, *I devote myself to the devil!* All the griotes, imitating their senior, delivered to the flames a lock of their hair, gravely repeating, *Malé o guiab!*

This strange invocation and the burlesque grimaces by which it was accom-

panied, drew from me, that species of involuntary convulsion, which in spite of itself, frequently seizes upon the most serious mind, even when plunged amid the deepest afflictions, and which is called *the maniac laugh*. This laugh escaping from a sad heart, gave occasion for a scene singularly gloomy and frightful.

The negresses, disturbed in their mysteries, rose up as if starting out of a deep slumber. They had not until now been aware of my presence. They ran tumultuously towards me, howling *Blanco ! blanco !* I have never seen a combination of figures with such varieties of horror as was exhibited in the fury and distortions of these black faces, with their dazzling teeth, and their white eyes, crossed with large veins swollen with blood.

They would have torn me in pieces. The oldest, she of the heron plume, gave the signal, as she cried out with frequent repetitions, *Zoté cordé ! zoté cordé !* The furies suddenly paused, and I saw them, with deep surprise, all once, unfasten their aprons of feathers, cast them upon the grass, and commenced to circle around me in that lascivious dance, which the blacks call *la chica*.

This dance, whose grotesque attitudes and lively movements express only pleasure and gaiety, at that time borrowed from various accessory circumstances an ill-omened character. The demoniac glances cast upon me by the griotes in the midst of their wanton evolutions; the doleful accents which they gave to the joyous air of *la chica*; the shrill and lengthened groan, that the venerable president of the black sanhedrin drew from time to time from her *balafo*, (a species of spinnet which hums like a small organ, composed of a score of wooden pipes, diminishing gradually in length and thickness); but above all the horrible laugh which each naked sorcerer at certain pauses in the dance presented me in her turn, almost touching her black face to mine, all announced to me what frightful punishment awaited the *blanco* profaner of their Ouanga.

I recalled to mind the custom of those savage nations who dance around their prisoners previous to their massacre, and waited patiently for these women to execute the ballet of the drama, for which I was to furnish the bloody denouement. I could not but tremble when I saw, at a moment marked by the *balafo*, each griote place in the burning flames, the point of a sabre, the iron of a hatchet, the extremity of a long sail-needle, the prongs of a pincer, and the teeth of a saw.

The dance drew near its end; the instruments of torture were at a white heat. At a signal from the old woman, the nude negresses moved in regular succession, to seek in the fire for some horrible weapon of torture.

Those who could not furnish themselves with a glowing iron, seized a burning brand. I clearly comprehended what punishments were reserved for me, and that I should find in each danseuse, an executioner. At another signal from their coryphaeus, they recommenced a last round, with frightful and hideous lamentations. I closed my eyes, to shut out from my vision the sports of these female demons, who howling with fatigue and rage, kept time with each other by striking their burning irons together over their heads, dashing off at each clash myriads of sparks. I waited in agony the moment when I should feel my flesh tormented, my bones calcined, my nerves wrung under the searing grapple of the pincers and saws, and a cold shudder spread through all my members. It was a moment of horror!

Happily it did not last long. The *chica* of the griotes had just attained its last period, when I heard in the distance, the voice of the negro who had made me prisoner. He ran towards them, crying out, *Que haceis, mugeres de demonio ? Que haceis alli ? dexais mi prisionero !** I opened my eyes, it was already broad daylight. The negro with a thousand angry gestures, ran bounding towards me. The griotes paused; but they seemed less moved by his threats than amazed by the presence of a strange looking individual, by whom the black was accompanied.

He was a very short and very fat man, a sort of dwarf, whose face was hidden by a white veil, pierced with three holes, for the eyes and mouth, after the manner of penitents. The veil, which fell upon his neck and shoulders, left his hairy chest naked, the color of which appeared to me to be like the griffes, and upon which shone, suspended by a gold chain, a sun of a mutilated silver ostensor.

The cross-shaped handle of a poniard was seen protruding above the scarlet belt which confined his under shirt, striped with green, yellow, and black, the fringe of which descended to his large and deformed feet. His arms, naked like his breast, brandished a white wand; a chaplet, composed of *adrezarack* beads, were suspended from his belt near the poniard,

* What are you doing, women of the demon ? What are you doing there ? Leave me my prisoner.

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and his brow was surmounted by a conical cap ornamented with little bells, in which, as he approached me, I was not a little surprised to recognize the *gorra* of Habibrah. Among the hieroglyphics with which this sort of mitre was covered, one could observe stains of blood. It was doubtless, thought I, the blood of the buffalo. These traces of murder appeared to me a fresh evidence of his death, and awakened in my heart a final regret for his murder. At the moment when the griotes perceived this heir of Habibrah's cap, they cried out, as with one voice, *the obi!* and fell prostrate to the ground. I conjectured that this was the sorcerer of Biassou's army. '*Basta! basta!*' said he with a deep and solemn voice on coming near them, '*dexais el prisoniers de Biassou!*'* All the negresses hastily started up, cast away the instruments of death with which they were loaded, resumed their aprons of feathers, and at a signal from the Obi disappeared like a swarm of locusts.

At this moment the eyes of the Obi appeared to fasten on me; he leaped up, fell back a step, and waved his white wand towards the griotes as if he would recall them. However, after grumbling between his teeth the word *maledicho*,† and whispering a few words in the ear of the negro, he slowly withdrew, crossing his arms in an attitude of deep meditation.

CHAPTER XXVII.

My guardian now apprised me that Biassou had demanded to see me, and that I must be prepared in an hour to hold an interview with their chief.

There yet remained to me then one more hour of life. While awaiting its passage, my glances wandered over the rebel camp, whose singular physiognomy, the day revealed to me in its minutest details. In any other frame of mind I could not have repressed a laugh at the ill-chosen vanity of the blacks, who were almost all loaded with military and priestly ornaments, despoiled from their victims. The most of these ornaments, indeed, were but tattered and bloody rags. It was not rare to see a gorget shining under a priest's band, or an epaulette upon the missal chasuble. For the purpose of relaxation from labors to which they had all their lives been condemned, the negroes were enjoy-

ing an inactivity, unknown to our soldiers, even when withdrawn to their tents. Some were sleeping in the full sunlight with their heads near a burning fire, while others, with their eyes alternately dull and furious, were singing a monotonous air, squatted upon the threshold of their *ajoupas*, a species of hut covered with the leaves of the banana or palm-tree, whose conical form resembles our open tents. Their women, black or copper-colored, assisted by the children, prepared the food of the combatants. I saw them stir up with pitchforks the yams, the bananas, potatoes, peas, cocoa-nuts, maize and a species of cabbage which they call *tugo*, and a variety of other indigenous fruits, which were boiling up around quarters of pork, of tortoise and of dog-flesh, in large copper kettles stolen from the dwellings of the planters. In the distance or on the borders of the camp, the griotes and their females, were formed in large groups around the fires; their wild songs, which the wind bore to me in disconnected catches, mingling with the sounds of the guitars and balafos. Sentinels stationed on the summits of the neighboring rocks, watched the head-quarters of Biassou, whose only entrenchment in case of attack was a circular cordon of waggons, loaded with booty and munitions of war. The black sentinels, standing erect upon the sharp points of the pyramids of granite, with which the mountains bristled up in every quarter, frequently turned around, like the weather-cocks on gothic spires, shouting to each other with all the strength of their lungs, the watchword which announced the security of the camp: *Nada! nada!**

From time to time, groups of fantastical negroes gathered about me. All regarded me with a menacing air.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

At length a platoon of these soldiers well armed marched towards me. The black, to whom I seemed to belong, unfastened me from the tree to which I was bound, and delivered me to the officer of the troop, from whose hands he received in exchange a large bag of gold, which he instantly opened. It was filled with piastres. While the negro, kneeling upon the grass, was eagerly counting his prize, the soldiers led me away. I surveyed their encampment with much curiosity. They wore a uniform of coarse cloth, reddish

* Hold! hold. Release the prisoner of Biassou.

† Curses on my luck.

* Nothing! nothing!

brown and yellow, cut in the Spanish style. A kind of Castilian *montesa** ornamented with a large red cockade, concealed their woolly hair. In place of a cartridge-box they had something resembling a game-bag fastened upon their hips. Their arms consisted of a heavy musket, a sabre and a poniard. I afterwards learned that this was the uniform of the body-guard of Biassou.

After several circuits among the irregular range of ajoupas, which encumbered the camp, we arrived before the entrance of a cave hewn out by nature, at the foot of one of those ledges of rocks, by which the savannah was walled in. A large curtain of a Thibet stuff we call Cachmere, and which is less distinguished for the brilliancy of its colors, than for its varied designs and firm texture, closed to the eye the entrance of the cavern. It was surrounded by many double lines of soldiers equipped like those who had led me thither.

After passing the watchword with the two sentinels who guarded the threshold of the grotto, the leader of the troop raised the Cachmere curtain, and introduced me as he retreated a few steps in the rear.

A copper lamp with five sockets, suspended by chains from the vault, cast a flickering light upon the damp sides of this cavern, which was shut out from the light of day. Between two rows of mulatto soldiers, I perceived a man of color, seated upon an enormous block of mahogany, which was half covered by a carpet of parrot feathers. His costume was too ludicrous for gravity. A magnificent sash of twisted silk, to which hung a cross of Saint Louis, retained about his hips a pair of drawers of a coarse blue cloth; a waistcoat of white dimity, too short to reach even to his sash, completed his apparel. He wore grey boots, a round hat surmounted by a red cockade, and epaulettes, of which one was of gold with two silver stars of a major-general, the other of yellow wool. Two copper stars, apparently the fixtures of spurs, had been fastened upon the latter, doubtless to render it worthy of figuring near its brilliant brother. These two epaulettes, not being confined in their proper places by transverse loops, hung dangling down on either side of the breast of the chief. A sabre and pistols richly damasked, were placed upon the carpet of feathers near him.

Behind his throne, stood silent and motionless, two children clothed in the dress

of slaves, each bearing a large fan of peacock feathers. These two slave children were whites.

Two cushions of crimson velvet, which seemed to have belonged to the private chapel of some priest, marked two seats on the right and left of the mahogany block. One of these places, that on the right, was occupied by the Obi who had wrested me from the fury of the griotes. He was seated, his legs folded under him, holding his wand erect, and as motionless as a porcelain idol in a Chinese pagoda. Through the apertures of his veil, I saw his glittering eyes shining, and earnestly fastened upon me.

On each side of the chief were rolls of flags, banners and standards of every description, among which I noticed the white flag of fleur-de-lis, the tri-colored flag, and the flag of Spain. The others were ensigns of fancy. There was likewise a large black standard suspended amid its fellows.

At the end of the hall, above the head of the chief, another object drew my attention. It was the portrait of the mulatto Ogé, who had been broken on the wheel the preceding year for the crime of rebellion, along with his lieutenant, Jean Baptiste Chavaune, and twenty other blacks, or *sang-mêlés*. In this portrait, Ogé, the son of a butcher of Cape Haytien, was represented, as he is usually painted, in the uniform of a lieutenant-colonel, with the cross of Saint Louis and with the badge of the order of the Lion, which he had purchased in Europe of the Prince de Limbourg.

The sacatra chief, before whom I was presented, was of a medium height. His ignoble figure exhibited the traces of a rare mixture of craft and cruelty. He bade me approach, and regarded me for some time in silence; then he burst into a laugh, which closely resembled the peculiar cry of the hyena.

'I am Biassou,' said he to me.

I was prepared to hear that name; but I could not hear it from those lips, in the midst of that ferocious laugh, without an internal shudder. My countenance, however, remained calm and proud; I made no reply.

'Very well!' resumed he, in very bad French; 'is it because you are ready and anxious to be empaled, that you cannot bend your back-bone in the presence of Jean Biassou, generalissimo of the conquered countries, and major-general of the armies of *Su Magestad Catolica*. (The policy of the principal rebel chiefs was to pretend that they were acting at one time

* This color is that of the Spanish cockade.

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for the king of France, again for the revolution, and sometimes for the king of Spain.)

Crossing my arms upon my breast, I gazed at him with a fixed stare. He began to giggle. This *trick* was a habit of his own, somewhat idiosyncratic, which can be expressed by no other terms than a hyena's giggle.

'Oh! oh! *me pareces hombre de buen corazon*.* Well, listen to what I have to say. Are you a Creole?'

'No,' I replied, 'I am a Frenchman.' My assurance made him frown. He resumed his giggling.

'So much the better; I perceive by your uniform, that you are an officer. How old are you?'

'Twenty years.'

'When did you reach that age?'

Upon this question, which awakened within me such bitter recollections, I remained a moment absorbed in my struggling thoughts. He repeated the demand quickly. I replied, 'The day on which your companion, Léogri, was hung.'

Anger contracted his features, his sneering laugh was prolonged, but he stifled his passions.

'Twenty-three days have passed since Léogri was hung,' he replied; 'Frenchman, this evening you can bear the message from me, that you have lived twenty-four days longer than he. I wish to leave you in the world for this one day, so that you may tell him in what consists the liberty of his brothers; what you have seen in the head-quarters of major-general Jean Biassou, and what the authority of the generalissimo is over the *gens du roi*.'

Under the latter title, Jean François, who called himself *grand admiral of France*, and his comrade Biassou, designated their hordes of revolted negroes and mulattoes.

Commanding me to seat myself in a corner of the cave between two guards, and making a signal with his hand to some negroes, clothed in the dress of aides-de-camp: 'Beat to muster; let all the army assemble in front of our head-quarters, and pass in review. And you, Mr. Chaplain,' said he, turning towards the obi, 'clothe yourself in your priestly vestments, and celebrate for us and our soldiers the holy sacrifice of the Mass.'

The obi arose, made a profound bow before Biassou, and whispered a few words in his ear, which the chief hastily interrupted with a loud voice.

'You have no altar, you say, *senor cura*! is that at all surprising in these mountains? But what matters it! Does the *Bon Giu*,* in his worship, need a magnificent temple, an altar ornamented with gold and laces? Gideon and Joshua adored him before heaps of stone; let us do as they did, *bon per*!† It will be accepted of the *Bon Giu* if the hearts are fervent, You have no altar! Well, can you not make one out of that great sugar-box taken the day before yesterday by the *gens du roi*, in the plantation of Dubuison?'

The intention of Biassou was promptly executed. In a twinkling the interior of the grotto was arranged for this parody of the divine mystery. They brought forth a tabernacle and a holy pyx, taken from the parish church of Acul, from the very temple in which my union with Marie had received the ghostly benediction, which was so speedily followed by misfortune. They erected as an altar the stolen sugar-box, which was covered with a white napkin instead of an altar cloth, but which did not prevent one from reading on the lateral face of this extemporaneous altar:

"DUBUISSON & Co., FOR NANTES."

When the holy vessels had been placed upon the cloth, the obi perceived that a cross was wanting; drawing his poniard, whose horizontal guard gave it the desired form, he planted it upright between the chalice and the ostensor before the tabernacle. Then, without taking off his sorcerer's cap, or his penitent's veil, he promptly cast over his back and naked breast, the cope that had been likewise stolen from the priory of Acul, took his station near the tabernacle, opened the silver-clasped missal, from which had been read the prayers at my fatal marriage, and turning towards Biassou, whose seat was some paces from the altar, announced, by a profound salutation, that he was ready.

Immediately upon a signal from the chief, the Cachmere curtains were lifted up and discovered the entire black army, drawn up in a solid square before the opening of the grotto. Biassou laid aside his round hat and kneeled before the altar. 'On your knees!' he cried, with a loud voice. 'On your knees!' repeated the chiefs of each batallion. A roll of the drums was heard. All the hordes were on their knees.

* You would pass for a brave, bold man.

* The Creole patois for the 'Good God.'

† The Creole patois for 'good father.'

I alone had remained motionless upon my seat, my heart revolting at the horrible profanation, which was about to be committed under my eyes; but the two vigorous mulattoes who guarded me, pulled away the seat from under me, gave me a thrust upon the shoulders, and I fell upon my knees like the rest, constrained to render the shadow of reverence to this shadow of a worship.

The obi officiated with great gravity. The two little white pages of Biassou filled the offices of deacon and sub-deacon. The crowd of rebels continuing prostrate, assisted at the ceremony with the responses, of which the *generalissimo* gave the first example. At the moment of the elevation of the host, the obi, raising between his hands the consecrated emblems, turned towards the army and exclaimed in the Creole jargon: *Zoté coné bon Giu; ce li mo fé zoté voer. Blan touyé li, touyé blan yo toute!* At these words, pronounced in a loud and stern voice, which I thought I had heard before, the hordes uttered a fearful roar; for some time they struck their arms against each other, and nothing less than the safe-guard of Biassou, hindered this fearful outcry from sounding my death-knell. I then understood to what an excess of courage and atrocity men can be borne, whom a poniard served for a cross, and over whose spirits, all impressions were so electrical and so deep.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE ceremony ended, the obi turned to Biassou with a respectful reverence. The chief then arose and addressing himself to me, said in French: 'They accuse us of having no religion; you see it is calumny, and that we are good Catholics.'

I know not whether he spoke ironically or seriously. A moment after, he caused a glass vessel full of kernels of black maize to be brought before him, into which he cast some kernels of white maize; then raising it above his head, to be the better seen by all the army, he addressed them: 'Brothers, you are the black maize; the whites, your enemies, are the white maize!' At these words he shook the vase, and when almost all the white grains had disappeared under the black, he cried

* You know the good God; it is He whom, I now present to your eyes. The whites have killed him; kill all the whites.

Since that period, it appears that Tous-saint Louverture has been accustomed to address the same words to the negroes, after having communicated in the holy sacrifice.

out with an air of inspiration and triumph: *Guetté blan ci la la!**

A fresh acclamation, repeated by the echoes of the mountains, welcomed the parable of the chieftain. Biassou continued, frequently mixing his bad French with Spanish and Creole phrases.

† *El tiempo de la mansuetud es pasado.*‡ We have long been as patient as the sheep to whose wool the whites compare our locks; henceforth let us be implacable as the panthers and jaguars of the countries, from which they have torn us. Force alone can recover our rights; all can be won by him who will show himself strong and pitiless. Saint Wolf has two feasts in the Gregorian Calendar, the Paschal Lamb has only one! Is it not true, father Chaplain?

The obi bowed in token of assent.

'They have come,' pursued Biassou, 'they have come, these enemies of the regeneration of humanity, these whites, these colonists, these planters, these men of traffic, *verdaderos demonios*, vomited from the mouth of Alecto! *Son venidos con insolencia*;‡ these haughty ones were covered with armor, with gay colors, with clothes magnificent to the view, and they despised us because we were black and naked. They thought in their pride, they could scatter us as easily as with these peacock feathers I drive away these swarms of gnats and mosquitoes!'

As he finished this comparison, he snatched from the hand of a white slave, one of the fans, which he made them hold behind him, and shook it over his head with many vehement gestures. He resumed:

'But, oh my brothers, our army has rushed upon theirs like the vultures upon a corpse; they are fallen with their fine uniforms under the blows of these naked arms which they thought powerless, ignorant that the generous wood grows harder and tougher when stripped of its bark. They tremble, now, these hateful tyrants! *Yo gagné peur!*§

An outcry of joy and triumph responded to the declamation of the chief, and all the hordes for a long time repeated the words, *Yo gagné peur!*

'Blacks, Creoles, and Congoes,' added Biassou, 'vengeance and liberty! *Sang-mêlès* do not allow yourselves to be

* See what the whites are in comparison with you.

† The time for clemency is past.

‡ They have come with insolence.

§ In the Creole jargon, They are afraid.

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moved by the seductions *de los diabolos blancos*. Your fathers are in their ranks, but your mothers are in ours. Besides, *o hermanos de mi alma*,* they have never treated you as fathers should, but as masters; you were slaves like the blacks. While a miserable wrapper scarcely covered your limbs from the scorching sun, your barbarous fathers were strutting abroad under *buenos sombreros*, clothed on week days with waistcoats of nankeen, and on holy-days dressed in coats of bouracan or velvet, *a diez y siete quartos la vara*† Curses on those unnatural beings! But since the holy commandments of the *Bon Giu* forbid it, you must not even strike your own fathers. Should you meet him in the ranks of the enemy, what hinders *amigos* from saying one to another, 'Touyé papa moí, ma touvé quena toué?'‡ 'Vengeance, *gens du roi*! Freedom to all men!' This cry is echoed through every island; it has gone forth from Quisqueya,§ it has awakened Tobago and Cuba. It is a chief with an hundred and twenty-five maroon negroes from the Blue Mountain, a black from Jamaica, it is Bouckmann who has raised his standard among us. A victory has sealed his first act of brotherhood with the blacks of St. Domingo. No quarter to whites, no mercy to planters! Let us follow his glorious example, the torch in one hand, the hatchet in the other! Let us massacre their families, let us lay waste their plantations; let us not leave a tree upon their domains, which is not dug up by the roots. Let us upturn the earth, that it may swallow up the whites! Courage, then, friends and brothers! We will soon march forth to fight and to exterminate. We will triumph or die. Conquerors, we shall enjoy in our turn all the joys of life; dying, we shall go to heaven where the saints await us in paradise, where each brave will receive a double measure of *aguardiente*¶ and a piastre-gourde a day!‡

This kind of soldier-like sermon, which no doubt appears very ridiculous to you,

* O brothers of my soul!

† At seventeen *quartos la vara* (a Spanish measure, nearly equal to an ell French).

‡ Kill my father and I will kill yours. Mulattoes have really been overheard pronouncing these execrable words, and capitulating in this manner with parricide.

§ The ancient name of St. Domingo, which signifies *Great-earth*. The natives also called it Aity.

¶ Brandy.

gentlemen, produced a powerful sensation upon the rebels. It is true that the extraordinary pantomime of Biassou, the inspired accents of his voice, the strange sneering laugh with which he accompanied his words, gave to his harangue the irresistible powers of delusion and fascination. The art with which he interspersed these details calculated to flatter the passions or the interest of the rebels, added a degree of strength to his eloquence very appropriate to his auditory.

I shall not attempt to describe to you the deep enthusiasm which was manifested throughout the insurgent army after the harangue of Biassou. It was a discordant concert of screams, of groans, and of howlings. Some beat their breasts, others clashed their clubs and sabres. Many, kneeling or prostrate, preserved the attitude of motionless ecstasy. The negroes scarified their bosoms and their arms with fish-bones, which had served them instead of combs to untangle their locks. Guitars, tamtams, drums, and balfos, mingled their sounds with the discharge of musketry. It was the jubilee of the Sabbath.

Biassou waved his hand: the tumult ceased as if by a miracle; each negro fell back into his rank in silence. This discipline, to which Biassou had inured his equals by the simple ascendancy of thought and will, struck me with admiration. All the soldiers of the rebel army appeared to speak and move under the hand of the chief like the strings of a harpsichord under the fingers of a musician.

CHAPTER XXX.

ANOTHER spectacle, another piece of charlatanism and fascination, now arrested my attention; it was the treatment of the wounded. The obi, who discharged in the army the double functions of physician of the soul and physician of the body, had commenced the inspection of the sick. He had laid aside his priestly garments, and commanded them to produce a large case with various compartments, in which were his drugs and instruments. He rarely made use of his surgical utensils, with the exception of his rude lancet, constructed of a fish-bone, which he used very skilfully in blood-letting; he appeared to be very awkward in the management of the tweezers, which served him for pincers, and the knife, which held the place of the bistoury. He confined himself principally to prescribing ptisans of orange from the woods, some

drinks of squills and sarsaparilla, and some draughts of old rum. His favorite remedy, which he pronounced a sovereign panacea, was composed of three glasses of red wine, in which he mixed a powdered nutmeg and the yolk of an egg well roasted in the ashes. He employed this specific to cure all sorts of complaints and maladies. You can readily conceive that his medical practice was as ridiculous as the worship of which he was the minister; and it is probable that the small number of cures which he chanced to effect would not have sufficed to preserve to the Obi the confidence of the blacks, had he not added various juggleries to his drugs, and sought to make up by acting upon their imaginations, what he failed to effect upon their maladies. Thus, he would sometimes limit himself to touching their wounds, describing over them several mysterious signs; again, making a skilful use of the remains of old superstitions, mingled with his recently assumed Catholicism, he would place in contact with the wounds a small fetish stone, covered with lint; and the patient attributed to the stone the beneficial effects of the lint. If any one announced to him that such an one under his care had died of his wounds, and perhaps from his treatment; 'I foresaw it,' he would reply with a solemn voice. 'He was a traitor: in the burning of such a dwelling, he saved a white: his death is a punishment!' The crowd of astonished rebels would applaud the announcement, more and more embittered in their sentiments of hatred and vengeance.

The charlatan, among other means of cure, employed one which struck me by its singularity. It was for one of the black chiefs, very dangerously wounded in the last battle. Having examined the wound for a long while, he dressed it in his best style, then ascended to the altar and exclaimed, 'All this is of no avail.' He then tore out three or four leaves from the Missal, burnt them in the flame of the tapers robbed from the church of Acul, and mixed the ashes of the paper with some drops of wine poured into the chalice. 'Drink,' said he to the wounded man; 'this is the remedy.*' The other

* This remedy is still in use in Africa, particularly among the Moors of Tripoli, who frequently cast the ashes of a page of Mahomet's Koran into their beverage, and thus compound a philtre, to which they attribute many sovereign virtues. An English traveller, whose name has escaped me, terms this beverage 'an infusion of the Koran.'

quaffed it off in a stupor, his eyes fastened with confidence upon the juggler, who held his hands raised above him as if imploring the blessing of Heaven. Perhaps the conviction that he was healed, contributed to the establishment of the cure.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANOTHER scene in which the veiled obi was still the principal actor, succeeded to the last: as the physician had replaced the priest, the sorcerer replaced the physician.

'*Hom̄bres, escuchate!*'* exclaimed the obi, leaping with incredible agility upon the temporary altar, where he seated himself with his legs folded under his parti-colored shirt; '*escuchate, hom̄bres!*' Let those who would read in the book of destiny the words of their future life, approach; I will now unfold it to them: *he estudiado la ciencia de los Gitanos.*†

A crowd of blacks and mulattoes hastily advanced. 'One at a time!' exclaimed the obi, whose hollow voice sometimes assumed that squealing tone which struck me like an old acquaintance; 'if you all come at once, you will all together fall into the grave.' They stopped short. At this moment a colored man, clothed in a white vest and pantaloons, his head bound with a variegated *madras* in the style of the rich colonists, presented himself before Biassou. Consternation was depicted upon his countenance. 'Well!' said the *generalissimo* in a low voice, 'what now? What news have you, Rigaud?' This was the mulatto leader of the band from Aux Cayes, afterwards known as *General Rigaud*, a man of great art under an appearance of candor, and cruel under an air of gentleness. 'General,' replied Rigaud (and he spoke very low, but being placed near Biassou, I overheard his message), 'there is within the limits of the camp a messenger from Jean François. Bouckmann has been killed in an engagement with M. de Touzard, and the whites have threatened to expose his head as a trophy in their city.' 'Is that all?' asked Biassou; and his eyes sparkled with secret joy to learn of the diminution of the

* 'Men, listen.' The signification which the Spaniards attach to *hom̄bres* is inexpressible in a translation. It is intermediate between *man* and *friend*.

† I have studied the science of the Egyptians.

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number of chiefs, and the consequent increase of his own authority.

'The emissary of Jean François has a farther message to deliver.'

'Good!' replied Biassou. 'Put away that pale face of yours, my dear Rigaud.'

'But,' objected Rigaud, 'do you not fear, General, the effect of Bouckmann's death upon your army?'

'You are not as simple as you appear to be, Rigaud,' responded the chief; 'you would prove Biassou. Delay for a quarter of an hour the entrance of the messenger.'

He then approached the obi, who, during this dialogue, which was overheard by me, had commenced his office of diviner, interrogating the wonder-struck negroes, examining the marks upon their foreheads and hands, and distributing more or less happiness for the future, according to the sound, the color, and the size of the piece of money cast by each negro into a dish of silver-gilt at his feet. Biassou whispered a few words in his ear. The sorcerer, without interrupting his duties, continued his metoposcopic operations.

'Whoever bears in the middle of his forehead, upon the wrinkle of the sun, a small square or triangle, will make a great fortune, without trouble or labor. The figure S thrice repeated, in whatever part of the forehead it is found, is a very unlucky sign; whoever bears it will certainly be drowned, unless he avoids the water with the utmost care.'

'Four lines parting from the nose and curving in pairs upon the forehead above the eyes, announce that the bearer will be a prisoner, and will groan in captivity among strangers.'

Here the obi made a pause—'Companions,' he added gravely, 'I have observed this sign upon the brow of Bug-Jargal, chief of the braves of Morne-Rouge.'

These words, which farther confirmed the capture of Bug-Jargal, were followed by the loud lamentations of a band composed only of blacks, whose leaders were clad in scarlet drawers: it was the band of Morne-Rouge.

The obi resumed his sorceries.

'If you have upon the right side of the forehead, along the line of the moon, a figure which resembles a fork, fear to remain idle or to indulge in any excesses.'

'A little sign very important, the Arabic figure 3 upon the line of the sun, foretells some blows from a cudgel.'

An aged negro of Spanish Domingo interrupted the sorcerer. He dragged his his limbs to the spot where the obi stood,

imploping a dressing for his wound. He had been wounded in the forehead, and one of his eyes, torn from the socket, hung down, still dripping with blood. The obi had omitted him in his medical review. At the moment he perceived the maimed negro, he cried out:

'Round figures in the right side of the forehead, upon the line of the moon, foretell maladies in the eyes. *Hombre*,' said he to the miserable wounded creature, 'this sign is very apparent in thy face; let us see thy hand.'

'*Alas! excelentísimo senor*,' replied the other, '*mir' usted mi ojo!*'* 'Fatras,'† replied the obi with some humor, 'I do not need to see thy eye—thy hand, I say!' The poor wretch extended his hand, still murmuring *mi ojo!*

'Good!' said the sorcerer. 'If you find upon the line of life a point surrounded by a small circle, the bearer will be blind of one eye, because this figure announces the loss of an eye.—There, look at the point and the little circle; thou wilt be blind.'

'*Ya le soy*,'‡ replied the fatras, with a piteous groan. But the obi, who was no longer a surgeon, had rudely repulsed him, and pursued his revelations, without heeding the complaint of the poor blind negro.

'*Escuchate, hombres!* If the seven lines of the forehead are small, crooked, feebly marked, they foretell a man whose life will be short.'

'Whoever has between the eyebrows, upon the line of the moon, the figure of two arrows crossing each other, will die in battle.'

'If the line of life which traverses the hand presents a cross at its extremity near the joint, it foretells that the bearer will be seen upon a scaffold.—And here,' observed the obi, 'I ought to tell you, *hermanos*, that one of the bravest supporters of our independence, Bouckmann, bears these three fatal signs.'

At these words all the negroes held their breath: their eyes were motionless, and fastened upon the juggler, expressing that sort of attention which resembles stupor.

'But,' added the obi, 'I cannot reconcile this double sign, which threatens Bouckmann at the same time with a bat-

* *Alas! most excellent lord, look at my eye.*

† A name under which they designate an old negro unfit for labor.

‡ That I am already.

tle and a scaffold. Nevertheless my art is infallible.'

He paused and exchanged a glance with Biassou. Biassou again whispered a few words in the ear of one of his aides-de-camp, who instantly left the grotto.

'An open and drooping mouth,' resumed the obi, turning again to his auditory with his malicious and bantering accent, 'an insipid attitude, the arms hanging down, and the left hand turned back, in any strange, inexplicable manner, announces natural stupidity, nothingness, emptiness, a besotted curiosity.'

Biassou broke out into one of his sneering laughs. At this instant the aid-de-camp returned, conducting a negro covered with mud and dust, whose feet, torn by stones and briars, testified that he had made a long and rapid journey. It was the messenger announced by Rigaud. He held in one hand a sealed packet, in the other an open parchment, impressed with a seal the device of which was a burning heart. In the midst was a cipher formed of the characteristic letters M and N, intermingled, without doubt, to express the union of the free mulattoes and negro slaves. Near the cipher I read this inscription: 'Prejudice is overcome, the rod of iron is broken; *vive le roi!*' This parchment was a passport delivered by Jean-François.

The messenger presented it to Biassou, and after bending to the ground in reverence, placed in his hand the sealed packet. The generalissimo quickly broke the seal, ran over the dispatches it contained, then putting one in his vest pocket, and crumpling the other between his hands, he exclaimed with a disconsolate air—

'*Gens du roi!*'—

The negroes bowed reverently.

'*Gens du roi!* Listen to the message sent to Jean-Biassou, generalissimo of the conquered countries, major-general of the armies of his Catholic Majesty, from Jean-François, first admiral of France, lieutenant-general of his majesty the King of Spain and the Indies:

'Bouckmann, leader of the hundred and twenty blacks of the Blue Mountain in Jamaica, declared independent by the Governor-General of Belle-Combe, Bouckmann, has just fallen in the glorious struggle of liberty and humanity against despotism and barbarism. The generous chief has been killed in an engagement with the white brigands of the infamous Touzard. The monsters have cut off his head, and have announced that they intend to expose it ignominiously upon a scaffold in the

place of rendezvous in Cape Haytien.—Vengeance!'

The deep silence of discouragement for a moment succeeded the reading of this missive to the army. But the obi had raised himself erect upon the altar, and cried out, shaking his white wand with triumphant gesture:

'Solomon, Zorobabel, Eleazar Thaleb, Cardan, Judas, Bowtharicht, Averroes, Albert-le-Grand, Bohabdil, Jean de Hagen, Anna Baratro, Daniel Ogrumof, Rachel Flintz, Altornino! I return you thanks! The *ciencia* of astrology has not deceived me. *Hijos, amigos, hermanos, muchacos, mozos, madres, y vosotros todos qui me escuchais aqui,** what have I predicted? *que habia dicho?* The signs on the forehead of Bouckmann announced that he would live but a short time, and the lines of his hand, that he would be seen on a scaffold. The revelations of my art have been faithfully realized, and events have arranged themselves, so as to execute even those circumstances, that we could not reconcile—death on the battle-field, and the scaffold! Brothers, admire!'

During this discourse, the discouragement of the blacks had changed into a kind of wondering affright. They listened to the obi with a confidence mixed with terror; the latter completely elated with his success, strutted back and forth over the length and breadth of the sugar-box, whose surface offered sufficient space, for the easy display of his diminutive steps. Biassou burst out into one of his hyena-giggles.

He addressed the obi.

'Mr. Chaplain, since you know the events of the future, it is our pleasure that you should read what is to befall our fortunes, what is to happen to us Jean Biassou, *marescal-de-campo*.

The obi paused proudly upon the grotesque altar, where the credulous blacks were gazing at him as a divinity, and said to the *marescal-de-campo*: '*Venga, vuestra merced!*'† At that moment the obi was the important man of the army. The military power yielded to the sacerdotal. Biassou approached. One could read in the glance of his eyes the traces of his vexation.

'Your hand, general,' said the obi stooping to receive it. '*Empezo.‡* The line of the joint, equally marked in all its length, promises you riches and happiness. The

* Sons, friends, brothers, young men, lads, mothers, and all you who listen to me here.

† Come, your grace! ‡ I begin.

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line of life, long, distinctly marked, foretells a life exempt from evils, a green old age; narrow, it designates your wisdom, your witty spirit, the *generosidad* of your heart, finally, I see what the *chiromancos* call the most fortunate of all signs, a collection of small wrinkles that have the form of a tree loaded with branches and which are elevated towards the centre of the hand; it is the certain prognostic of opulence and greatness. *The line of health*, very long, confirms the indications of the line of life; it also marks courage; curved towards the little finger, it forms a sort of hook. General, it is the mark of useful severity."

As he pronounced these words the bright eye of the little obi was fastened upon me through the aperture of his veil, and I again observed a familiar accent somewhat concealed under the habitual gravity of his voice. He continued with the same purpose of gesture and intonation.

"Filled with small circles, *the line of health* announces a great number of necessary executions, that you ought to command. It is interrupted in the middle, forming a semi-circle, a sign that you will be exposed to great dangers from ferocious beasts, that is to say the whites, if you do not exterminate them.—*The line of fortune* surrounded like the line of life with little branches, confirm the future power and supremacy to which you will be called; straight and slender it announces your talents for government. The fifth line, that of *the triangle*, prolonged to the roots of the middle finger, promises the happiest issues to all your enterprises. Let me scan the fingers.—The thumb, traversed in its length by small lines, which reach from the nail to the joint, promise you a rich inheritance: doubtless the full glory of Bouckmann!" added the obi in a loud voice.—"The little eminence which forms the root of the forefinger is charged with small wrinkles, faintly marked: honors and dignities!—The middle finger betokens nothing.—The fourth finger is furrowed with lines crossing each other: you will conquer all your enemies, you will rule all your rivals! These lines form the cross of Saint Andrew, a sign of genius and foresight! The joint which unites the little finger to the hand offers some crooked lines: fortune will load you with favors. I see yet another circle, a presage, which, added to the rest, announces to you power and dignities!"

"Happy, says Eleazer Thaleb, he who bears all these signs! Destiny is charged with his prosperity and his star will bring

him the genius that gives glory. Now General, let me read your forehead.—Whoever says Rachel Flintz the Bohemian, bears in the middle of his forehead upon the wrinkle of the sun, a small square or triangle, will make a great fortune.—Here it is, well defined. If this sign is on the right it promises an important succession—'Still that of Bouckmann! The sign of a horse-shoe between the eyebrows above the wrinkle of the moon, announces that one knows how to avenge himself of injury and tyranny. I bear this sign; you bear it also.'

The manner in which the obi pronounced the words *I bear this sign*, again struck me as somewhat menacing and peculiar.

"It has been observed," he added, "upon all those brave men who have been able to plan a courageous revolt and to break their chains. The lion's claw, which is marked over your eyebrows, testifies your brilliant courage. Finally, General Jean Biassou your forehead presents the most brilliant of all the signs of prosperity: it is a combination of lines that form the letter M, the first in the name of the Virgin. In whatsoever part of the forehead, upon whatsoever wrinkle this figure appears, it announces genius, glory and power. He who bears it, will always triumph in any cause which he embraces; those whom the bearer shall command will never have to regret a loss; on him alone will rest the defence of his party. You are the chosen of destiny!"

"Thanks, Mr. Chaplain," said Biassou, preparing to resume his seat upon his throne of mahogany.

"Stay, General," resumed the obi, "I had forgotten another sign. The line of the sun, strongly marked upon your forehead, proves that you understand yourself, the desire to bestow happiness, much liberality, and a taste for magnificence."

Biassou appeared to comprehend that the forgetfulness was on his part rather than on that of the obi. He drew from his pocket a heavy purse and cast it into the silver plate, to avoid any detraction from *his line of the sun*.

Meanwhile the dazzling horoscope of the chief had produced its effect upon the army. All the rebels, upon whose ears the words of the obi fell with still greater power, since the news of Bouckmann's death, passed from discouragement to enthusiasm, and blindly trusting to their infallible sorcerer and their general of destiny, began to vie with each other in howling, '*Vive l'obi! vive Biassou!*' The obi and Biassou exchanged glances, and I

thought I heard the stifled laugh of the obi respond to the hyena-giggle of the generalissimo.

I could not say why this obi so perplexed my conceptions; it seemed to me that I had elsewhere seen or heard something which resembled this singular being; I longed to hear him speak.

'Mr. Obi, *senor cura doctor medico*. Mr. Chaplain, *bon per*,' I said to him.

He turned haughtily about.

'There is yet one here, whose horoscope you have not drawn; it is I.'

He folded his arms upon the silver sun that covered his hairy breast, and made me no reply. I resumed:

'I am anxious to know, what you can augur of my future life; but your honest comrades have taken away my watch and purse, and I see you are not a conjuror to prophesy *gratis*.'

Advancing hastily close towards me he said faintly in my ear:

'You deceive yourself! Let me see thy hand.'

I presented it to him, looking him full in the face. His eyes glistened; he appeared to be examining my hand.

'If the line of life is cut in the middle by two small transverse and very distinct lines, it is the sign of a speedy death. Thy death is near!'

'If the line of health is wanting in the middle of the hand, and there is but the line of life and the line of fortune joined at their origin, so as to form an angle, the bearer should not expect with this sign a natural death—Expect not then a natural death!'

'If the forefinger is traversed in its whole length by a line, one will die a violent death. Dost thou hear? Prepare thyself for a violent death!'

There was something of joy in this sepulchral voice, that announced my death. I listened to it with indifference and contempt.

'Sorcerer,' I said with a smile of disdain, 'you are very skilful, you prognosticate with great accuracy.'

He approached me again.

'Thou doubttest my science! well! listen once more: The rupture of the line of the sun upon thy brow, tells me that thou takest an enemy for a friend and a friend for an enemy.'

The meaning of these words seemed to refer to the perfidious Pierrot, whom I had loved and who had betrayed me, and to the faithful Habibrah whom I had hated, and whose bloody vestments attested his courageous and devoted death.

'What mean you?' I demanded.

'Listen to the end,' answered the obi. 'I have told thee the future, behold the past: The line of the moon is slightly curved upon thy forehead;—that signifies that thy wife has been taken away—'

I started up and would have rushed from my seat; my guardians held me fast.

'Thou art impatient,' resumed the sorcerer; 'listen then to the end. The little cross which cuts the extremity of this curved line completes the explication. Thy wife was taken from thee the very night of thy nuptials—'

'Wretch! I exclaimed, 'you know where she is! who are you?' I attempted again to free myself and to tear from him his veil; but I was compelled to yield to numbers and to force, and with rage I beheld the mysterious obi leave me with the remark, 'Dost thou know me now? Prepare for thy approaching death!'

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE singular drama, which succeeded under my eyes to the ridiculous comedy that Biassou and the obi had enacted before their astonished bands, served for a moment to distract me from the perplexities into which this strange scene had cast me.

Biassou was re-seated upon his mahogany throne: the obi was placed at his right and Rigaud at his left hand upon the two cushions, which supported the throne of the chief. The obi, with his arms crossed upon his breast, appeared to be absorbed in profound contemplation; Biassou and Rigaud continued chewing their tobacco; and an aid-de-camp, had just entered to ask the *mariscal-de-campo*, if it was his pleasure that the army file off, when at the same moment three tumultuous groups of negroes, with furious clamors arrived at the entrance of the cave. Each of these bands brought a prisoner, whom they desired to place at the disposal of Biassou, not to know whether he would grant them mercy, but to know his pleasure, respecting the kind of death the unhappy captives should suffer. Their sinister cries, but too plainly announced their purposes: '*Mort! mort! Muerte! muerte!*—Death! Death!' cried some negroes in English, who doubtless belonged to the hordes of Bouckmann and who had already arrived to join the French and Spanish blacks of Biassou.

By a motion of his hand the *mariscal-de-campo*, imposed silence, and caused the three captives to advance to the threshold of the grotto. With great surprise I recognised two of them; one was the *citizen-general C****, the philanthropic correspond-

ent of all the Negrophiles on the globe, who had given utterance to such cruel advice respecting the slaves, in the council at the Governor's palace: the other was the equivocal planter, who had such indomitable repugnance to the mulattoes, among whom the whites had classed him. The third appeared to belong to the class of *petits blancs*: he wore a leather apron and had his sleeves tucked up above his elbows. All three had been separately surprised while seeking to hide themselves in the mountains.

The *petit blanc* was first interrogated.

'Who are you?' said Biassou to him.

'I am Jacques Belin, carpenter of *l'Hospital des Pères*, at Cape Haytien.'

Surprise mingled with shame was expressed in the eyes of the *generalissimo* of the conquered countries.

'Jacques Belin,' said he, biting his lips.

'Yes,' replied the carpenter, 'do you not know me?'

'Begin yourself,' said the *mariscal-de-campo*, 'to recognize me, by saluting the *generalissimo*.'

'I shall not bow to my slave,' rejoined the carpenter.

'Your slave, wretch!' exclaimed the *generalissimo*.

'Yes,' answered the carpenter, 'I am your first master. You feign to misunderstand me; but remember Jean Biassou, I sold you for thirty piasters to a Domingo merchant.'

Violent passion contracted every feature of Biassou.

'What!' pursued the carpenter, 'you appear ashamed of having served me! Jean Biassou ought to feel honored by having belonged to Jacques Belin! Your own mother, the old fool! has very often swept out my shop; but at present I have sold her to the steward of *l'Hospital des Pères*; she is so decrepid, that he would only give me thirty-two livres and six cents odd money for her. There, you have your history and hers: but it appears you negroes and mulattoes have grown proud of late, and have forgotten the time when you served on your knees, master Jacques Belin, carpenter at Cape Haytien.'

Biassou had listened to him with that ferocious laugh which gave the appearance of a tiger.

'Well, what matters it?' he replied.

Then turning to the negroes who had led in Master Belin—'Take two wooden saw-horses, two planks and a saw, and lead away this man.—Jacques Belin, carpenter of the Cape, thank me for having procured you the death of a carpenter.'

His laugh assisted to explain the horri-

ble punishment, with which the pride of his old master was about to be visited. I shuddered; but Jacques Belin did not move a muscle; he turned proudly to Biassou:—'Yes! I ought to thank you, for I sold you for the sum of thirty piasters and you brought me more than you're worth.'

They dragged him away.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE other two prisoners had been present more dead than alive at this frightful prologue to their own tragedy. Their humble and terrified attitude, contrasted strangely with the somewhat boastful firmness of the carpenter.

Biassou regarded first one and then the other with his fox-like air; then having sufficiently sated his pleasure by prolonging their agony, he entered into a conversation with Rigaud concerning the different species of tobacco, affirming that that of Havana was only good for smoking in the form of cigars, and that he knew no better Spanish tobacco for chewing, than that of which the late Bouckmann had sent him two barrels, taken from Mr. Lebattu, proprietor of the island of Tortuga. Then suddenly addressing himself to the citizen-general C—:

'What do you think about it?' he asked.

This unexpected apostrophe made the citizen reel. He stammered out a reply.

'I agree, general, in the opinion of your excellency—'

'Flattering words!' replied Biassou. 'I asked you for your opinion, not mine. Do you know of any better tobacco for chewing, than that of M. Lebattu?'

'No, indeed, my lord,' said C—, whose perplexity was a rich fund of amusement to Biassou.

'General! excellency! my lord!' repeated the chief, impatiently, 'you are an aristocrat!'

'Oh! indeed I am not!' cried the citizen-general; 'I am a good patriot of '91, and a warm negrophile!—'

'*Negrophile*,' interrupted the *generalissimo*, 'what does that mean?'

'It is a friend of the blacks,' stammered out the citizen.

'It is not sufficient to be a friend of the blacks,' rejoined Biassou with severity; 'a man must also be a friend to men of color.'

I believe, comrades, I have already mentioned that Biassou was a *sacatra*.

'Men of color was what I intended to say,' replied the negrophile, humbly.

'I am connected with all the most famous partizans of the negroes and mulattoes—'

Biassou, perfectly happy in humiliating the cowardly white, again interrupted him:

'Negroes and mulattoes! What do you mean? Do you come here to insult us with these odious names, invented by the contempt of the whites? There are here only men of color and blacks; do you understand me, Mr. Colonist?'

'It is a bad habit I contracted in childhood,' answered C—; 'pardon me, I did not intend to offend you, my lord—'

'Let alone your *my lord*;' I repeat it, hate these gewgaws of the aristocracy.'

C—, anxious to excuse himself, began to stammer out a new explanation:

'If you but knew me, citizen—'

'Citizen! for whom do you take me?' shouted Biassou angrily. 'I detest this jargon of the Jacobins. Would you make another venture and be a Jacobin? Do you dream that you are addressing the generalissimo of the *gens du roi*! Citizen!—You insolent wretch!'

The poor negrophile no longer knew how to address his man, who equally rejected the titles of *my lord* and of *citizen*, the language of the aristocrats and that of the patriots; he was confounded. Biassou, whose anger was only feigned, enjoyed his embarrassment with the highest zest.

'Ah!' said the citizen-general, 'you judge me very wrongfully, noble defender of the imprescriptible rights of half the human race—'

In the difficulty of finding some sort of a name for this chief, who appeared to refuse them all, he had recourse to one of those sonorous periphrases which revolutionists had substituted for the name and title of the person whom they harangued.

Biassou gazed steadily at him and replied:

'Do you then love the blacks and *sang-mêlés*?''

'Do I love them?' exclaimed citizen C—; 'I correspond with Brissot and—'

Biassou, interrupted him with his eternal sneer.

'Ha! ha! I am delighted to find in you a friend of our cause. In this case, you ought to detest the miserable colonists who have visited our just insurrection with the most cruel punishments; you ought to think as we do, that the whites are the true rebels, since they revolt against nature and humanity: you ought to execrate these monsters!'

'I execrate them!' replied C—.

'Well!' pursued Biassou, 'what do you

think of a man, who in order to suppress the final attempts of the slaves, would plant on either side of the avenue to his dwelling, the heads of fifty blacks?'

The pallid hues of C—'s countenance became frightful.

'What do you think of a white, who could propose to surround Cape Haytien with a cordon of slave's heads?—'

'Mercy! mercy!' cried the terrified citizen-general.

'Do I threaten you?' replied Biassou coldly. 'Let me finish my sentence—with a cordon of slave's heads, extending from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol! What do you think of such an one? Come, answer me!'

The words of Biassou, *Do I threaten you?* had given C— some hope; he thought that perhaps the chief had heard of these horrors without knowing their author, and he replied with some confidence in order to anticipate every presumption against himself—

'I think these are atrocious crimes.'

Biassou giggled. 'Good! and what chastisement would you inflict on the guilty wretch?'

Here the unhappy C— hesitated.

'Very well!' resumed Biassou, 'are you the friends of the blacks or not?'

Of the two alternatives, the negrophile chose the least threatening, and remarking in the eyes of Biassou nothing hostile to himself, he said in a feeble voice:—

'The guilty one merits death.'

'Well answered,' said Biassou quietly, as he cast away his quid of tobacco.

Meanwhile his indifferent manner had imparted some assurance to the poor negrophile, who made an attempt to remove all suspicions which could weigh against himself:—'No person,' he exclaimed, 'has offered more ardent prayers than I have, for the triumph of your cause. I correspond with Brissot and Pruneau of Pomme-Gouge in France; Magaw in America; Peter Paulus in Holland; the abbé Tamburini in Italy, and with—'

He was proceeding in a complacent way to put forth this philanthropic litany which he eagerly recited, but which he had rehearsed in other circumstances and for another end to M. de Blanchelande, when Biassou stopped him short.

'Pshaw! of what use are all your correspondents to me? Only point out to me where your magazines are, your dépôts: my army is in want of munitions. Your plantations are doubtless very rich; your commercial house must be very strong since you correspond with all the merchants in the world.'

Citizen C——hazarded a timid observation.

'Hero of humanity—these are not merchants, they are philosophers, philanthropists, negrophiles.'

'Have done!' said Biassou, tossing his head; 'we shall see what all these devils of unintelligible words will amount to. So then, you have neither depôts nor warehouses to be pillaged? what are you good for?'

This question presented a ray of hope, that C——eagerly seized.

'Illustrious warrior,' he answered, 'have you an *economist* in your army?'

'What is that?' demanded the chief.

'It is,' said the prisoner with as much emphasis as his fears would permit, 'it is a man most indispensably necessary; one who alone can appreciate at their respective values the material resources of an empire, who arranges them in the order of their importance, classes them according to their value, improves and betters them by combining their causes and results, and distributes them in their appropriate channels, like so many fertilizing streams in the great river of general utility, which in its turn tends to enlarge the sea of public prosperity.'

'*Caramba!*' said Biassou leaning towards the obi. What the deuce does he mean by such a farrago of words, strung together like the heads of your chaplet?'

The obi shrugged his shoulders in token of ignorance and contempt. Citizen C——continued:

'I have studied, deign to hear me, valiant chief of the brave regenerators of St. Domingo; I have studied the great economists, Turgot, Raynal and Mirabeau, that friend of man! I have put their theory in practice. I understand the indispensable science of government for all kingdoms and states whatever——'

'The economist is not very economical in his words!' said Rigaud, with his gentle and bantering smile.

'Tell me, then, boaster!' exclaimed Biassou, 'have I kingdoms and states to govern?'

'Not yet, great man,' replied C——'but they are to come; and besides my science descends without derogation to useful details for the management of an army.'

The generalissimo again rudely interrupted him:

'I do not manage my army, Mr. Planter, I command it.'

'Very well,' observed the citizen, 'you will be the general, I will be the intendant. I have some special and valuable information to impart concerning the multiplication of cattle——'

'Do you think we raise cattle?' said Biassou with a sneer; 'we eat them. When the cattle of the French colony fail me, I shall pass the hills on the frontier and take the Spanish oxen and sheep raised in the heights of the great plains of Cotuy, La Vega, St. Jago, and upon the banks of the Yuna; if necessary I shall seek still farther those that graze in the peninsula of Samana and behind the mountains of Cibos, at the parting of the mouths of the Neybe beyond Santo-Domingo. Besides I shall be delighted to punish those cursed Spanish planters; it is they who delivered up Ogé! You see I am not in trouble for the means of support, and that I have no need of your *indispensably necessary science!*'

This vigorous declaration quite disconcerted the poor economist; he made another attempt, however, and threw out his last plank.

'My studies have not been confined to the raising of cattle. I have other special knowledge that can be very useful to you. I can point out the way to manage the turpentine trade and coal-mines.'

'What is that to me!' said Biassou. 'When I need coal I burn three leagues of forest at once.'

'I can teach you the proper uses of each species of wood, pursued the prisoner; the *chicaron* and the *sabieca* for the keels of vessels; the *yabas* for the knees; the *tocumas* for the ribs; the *hacamas*, the *gaïacs*, the *cedars*, the *acomas*——

'*Que te lleven todos los demonios de los diez-y-siete infernos!*'* exclaimed Biassou impatiently.

'Do you like my proposition, my gracious patron?' said the economist in tremor, not understanding Spanish.

'Listen,' replied Biassou, 'I have no need of vessels. There is only one place vacant in my suite; it is not that of *mayor-domo*, it is the place of *valet de chambre*. See, *senor filosofo*, if it will suit you. You will serve me on your knees; you will bring me my pipe, my calalon,† my turtle-soup; you will carry behind me a fan of peacock feathers like those two pages whom you see. Humph! reply: are you willing to be my *valet de chambre?*'

Citizen C——, who had but one thought, and that for saving his life, bent to the earth with a thousand demonstrations of joy and gratitude.

'You accept it then?' said Biassou.

'Can you doubt, my generous master,

* What can all the demons of seventeen hells bring you?

† A creole ragout.

that I would hesitate a moment, at so distinguished a favor as to serve your person?

At this reply, the diabolical laughter of Biassou burst forth. He folded his arms, rose with an air of triumph, and thrusting with his foot the head of the ignoble white prostrate before him, he exclaimed in a loud voice:

'I am happy to test how far the baseness of the whites can go, after having experienced the extent of their cruelty. Citizen C——, it is to you, that I owe this double example. I know you! How have you been so stupid as not to perceive it? It was you who presided over the punishments of June, July, and August; it was you who planted the sides of your avenue with the heads of fifty blacks; it was you who would have slain the five hundred negroes remaining in irons after the revolt, and who would encompass the city with a cordon of slaves' heads from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol. You would have made, if you could, a trophy of my own head; and now, niggardly wretch, you esteem yourself happy if I would take you for my *valet de chambre*. No! no! I am more careful of your honor, than you are yourself; I will not put this affront on you! Prepare to die!'

He made a signal, and the blacks placed the unfortunate negrophile near me, who, unable to pronounce a word, had fallen to the ground thunderstruck.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

'It is your turn now!' said the chief, turning towards the last of the prisoners, the planter suspected by the whites of being a *sang-mêlé*, who had sent me a challenge for the imputation of his equivocal origin.

A general clamor from the rebels stifled the reply of the planter. 'Muerte! muerte! Mort! Death! Touyé! Touyé!' they shouted, grinding their teeth, and shaking their fists at the unhappy captive.

'General,' said a mulatto, who expressed himself more clearly than the others, 'he is a white; let him die.'

The poor man, by force of signs and cries, at length made himself heard: 'No, no, General! no, brothers; I am not a white! It is an abominable calumny! I am a mulatto, a *sang-mêlé* like yourselves, the son of a negress like your mothers and your sisters!'

'He lies!' said the furious negroes. 'He is a white! He has always detested the blacks and the men of color!'

'Never!' resumed the prisoner. 'It

is the whites I detest. I am one of your class, brothers. I have always said with you, *Nègre cé blan, blan cé nègre!*'*

'No, no!' cried the multitude; *touyé blan, touyé blan!*†

The unhappy captive, bitterly lamenting his fate, continued to repeat, 'I am a mulatto, I am one of your own.'

'The proof?' said Biassou coolly.

'The proof,' replied the other in his bewilderment, 'is that the whites have despised me.'

'That may be true,' answered Biassou; 'but you are an insolent fellow.'

A young *sang-mêlé* quickly addressed the prisoner. 'The whites despise you, it is true; but, in revenge, you affect to despise the *sang-mêlés*, among whom they rank you. I have even been told that you one day provoked to a duel a white, who reproached you with belonging to our caste.'

A universal shout arose from the indignant crowd, and the cries of 'death,' more violent than ever, overcame the stupefaction of the colonist, who, casting upon me an oblique glance of despair and entreaty, said again with weeping, 'It is a calumny! I have no other glory, no other happiness, than to belong to the blacks. I am a mulatto.'

'If you were really a mulatto,' observed Rigand quietly, 'you would not make use of the term.‡'

'Alas! do I know what I say?' resumed the miserable man. 'General, the proof that I am a *sang-mêlé* is the black circle that you can see around my nails.§'

Biassou refused the offered hand. 'I have not the skill of my reverend chaplain, who divines the characters of men by the inspection of their hands. But listen: our soldiers accuse you, some with being white, the others with being a false brother. If it be so you ought to die. You maintain that you belong to our caste and that you have never denied it. There remains but one method of proving what you have asserted, and of saving your life.'

'What, my General, what?' demanded the colonist, with eagerness. 'I am ready.'

'Behold it,' said Biassou coldly. 'Take

* In the popular phrase of the revolted negroes. The literal meaning is, 'the negroes are the whites, the whites are the negroes.' The meaning is, 'the negroes are the masters, the whites are the slaves.'

† Kill the white! kill the white!

‡ It must be remembered that the men of color reject with anger this distinction, invented, as they say, by the contempt of the whites.

§ Many *sang-mêlés* bear this mark at the root of the nails; it is effaced by age, but reappears in their children.

this stiletto and poignard these two white prisoners.'

Thus speaking, with a glance and motion of the hand, he designated myself and Citizen C——. The colonist recoiled with horror at the stiletto that Biassou, with an infernal smile, presented him.

'Well, well!' said the chief, 'you hesitate! It is, however, the only means of proving to me, and also to my army, that you are not a white, and that you are one of us. Hasten; decide; you make me lose time.'

The eyes of the prisoner rolled wildly about. He made a step towards the poignard, then let fall his arms and stopped, turning away his head. A shivering horror made him tremble in every member.

'Make haste, then!' cried Biassou, in an impatient and angry tone. 'I am pressed. Choose whether you will kill them yourself, or die with them.'

The planter remained motionless, as if carved in stone.

'Very well,' said Biassou, turning towards the negroes, 'he does not wish to be the executioner, he shall be the sufferer. I see that he is a white; lead him away. As for the rest——'

The blacks advanced to seize him. This movement decided his choice between a death to be given and death to be received. The excess of cowardice has also its courage. He seized the poniard which Biassou offered him, and without giving himself time to reflect upon his purpose, he cast himself like a tiger upon Citizen C——, who was crouched near me.

Then commenced a horrible struggle. The negrophile, plunged in a sullen and stupid despair since the dénouement of the interrogatories, with which Biassou had tormented him, had witnessed the scene between the chief and the planter with a glazed eye, but so absorbed in the terror of his approaching punishment, that he did not appear to comprehend it; but when he saw the colonist spring upon him, and the iron glisten over his head, the imminence of the danger aroused him from his lethargy. He sprang to his feet, arrested the arm of the assassin, exclaiming, with a mournful voice,

'Mercy, mercy! What would you? What evil have I done you?'

'You must die, sir,' replied the *sang-mêlé*, seeking to disengage his arm, and fastening upon his victim his haggard eyes. 'Offer no resistance, and I will do you no harm.'

'What, to die at your hand?' said the economist. 'Spare me! Would you commit this horrid deed for the charge I once

made of your being a *sang-mêlé*? Spare me my life, and I swear that I will recognize you as a white. Yes, you are a white; I will proclaim it everywhere; but mercy——'

The negrophile had selected a sorry method of defence.

'Hold thy infernal tongue,' cried the furious *sang-mêlé*, fearing lest the negroes might have overheard his supplication. But the other continued his howlings, without listening to his assassin, protesting that he knew him to be a white, and of a noble family. The *sang-mêlé* made a final effort to reduce him to silence, violently thrust aside the two hands which held his uplifted weapon, and plunged the poniard through the clothes of citizen C——. The unfortunate wretch felt the point of the steel, and in a fury gnashed his teeth into the arm that had stabbed him. 'Monster, wretch, thou has assassinated me.' He cast one glance towards Biassou; 'Defend me, thou avenger of humanity!' But the assassin held a strong grasp upon the poniard; a stream of hot blood spirted from the wound upon his hand and into his face. The knees of the unhappy negrophile suddenly relaxed, his arms sank to his side, his eyelids closed, his lips uttered one deep, heavy groan; he rolled to the earth—he was dead.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THIS scene, in which I soon expected to play my part, had chilled my blood with horror. The *avenger of humanity* had viewed the struggle of his victims with an impassible eye. When it was ended, he turned towards his terrified pages; 'Bring me more tobacco,' he said, and began to chew it with the utmost complacency. The obi and Rigaud were immovable, and the negroes themselves appeared frightened at the terrible spectacle which their chief had been furnishing them.

There remained yet another white to poniard—it was myself; my turn had come. I cast a glance at the assassin who was about to be my executioner. He excited my pity. His lips were purple; his teeth chattered; a convulsive movement, under the influence of which, all his members trembled, caused him to stagger; his hand incessantly and mechanically moved across his pallid forehead, as if to wipe away the traces of blood, and he gazed with a senseless air upon the warm corpse extended at his feet. His haggard eyes were riveted on his victim.

I awaited the moment when he should

finish his task by my death. I stood in a singular relation to this man; he had already failed to kill me in a duel, in order to prove that he was a white; he must now assassinate me to prove that he was a mulatto.

'Come,' said Biassou to him, 'you have done well. I am satisfied with you, my friend!' He cast a glance at me and added, 'I will remit you the assassination of the other. Go then; we will declare you a good brother, and we name you the executioner of our army.'

At these words of the chief a negro left the ranks, bowed three times before Biassou, and exclaimed in his jargon, 'And for me, General?'

'Well, what would you?' inquired Biassou.

'I would ask if you would not do something for me, my general?' said the negro. 'See there! you have just given preferment to this dog of a white, who has assassinated another, to be recognized as one of us. Will you not also promote me, who am a good black?'

This unexpected request appeared to embarrass Biassou; he leaned towards Rigaud the chief of the troops from Aux-Cayes, and said to him in French, 'We cannot satisfy him, strive to elude his demand.'

'To promote you?' said Biassou to the good black; 'I could not desire anything better. What grade do you desire?'

'I wish to be an official.'

'An officer!' exclaimed Biassou: 'well, what are your claims to an epaulette?'

'It is I,' replied the black, with emphasis, 'who set fire to the plantation of Lagoscette, in the fore-part of August. It is I who massacred M. Clement, the planter, and carried about the head of his sugar refiner on the end of a pike. I have slain ten white women and seven white children; one of them served for an ensign to the brave blacks of Bouckmann. Lately I burnt four colonists' families, in a chamber of Fort Galifet, that I fastened with a double lock before setting fire to it. My father was broken on the wheel at Cape Haytien, my brother was hung at Rocrou, and I have myself escaped from a sentence to be shot. I have burnt three coffee plantations, six indigo plantations, two hundred fields of sugar-cane; I have killed my master, M. Noë, and his mother, and—'

'Spare us the recital of your services,' said Rigaud, whose feigned mercy concealed a real cruelty; but who was ferocious with decency, and could not suffer the cynisme of highway robbery.

'I could recount many others,' continued

the negro proudly, 'but you will doubtless find these sufficient to merit the rank of official, and to wear a gold epaulette on my waistcoat, like my comrades there.'

He pointed to the aides-de-camp and staff officers of Biassou. The generalissimo appeared to reflect a moment, then gravely addressed the negro in these words:—

'I should be delighted to promote you; I am satisfied with your services, but there is yet another thing—Do you understand Latin?'

The amazed brigand looked perfectly astonished as he said, 'O may it please you, general?'

'Is it so?' resumed Biassou, quickly; 'do you understand Latin?'

'L—a—tin?' repeated the stupefied black. 'Yes, yes, Latin! do you understand Latin?' pursued the wily chief. And unfolding a standard, upon which was written the verse of the Psalms: *In exitu Israël de Ægypto*, he added: 'Explain to us the meaning of these words.'

The black, in the depths of his surprise, remained motionless and mute, and fumbled mechanically the folds of his drawers, while his eyes wandered from the flag to the general, and from the general to the flag.

'Come, will you answer?' said Biassou with impatience.

The black, after scratching his head, opening and shutting his mouth several times, at length let fall a few embarrassed words: 'I do not understand what the general would have.'

The countenance of Biassou assumed a sudden expression of anger and indignation.

'What, miserable dolt! what! you would be an officer, and not understand Latin!'

'But our general'—stammered out the negro, confused and trembling.

'Silence!' interrupted Biassou, whose wrath seemed to increase. 'I do not know what should prevent me from causing you to be shot upon the spot for your presumption. Can you, Rigaud, conceive of a suitable officer who is ignorant of Latin? Well, fool! since you do not comprehend what is written on this flag, I will explain it to you: *In exitu*, all soldiers, *Israël*, who do not understand Latin, *de Ægypto*, cannot be made officers. Is it not so, Mr. Chaplain?'

The little obi made an affirmative sign. Biassou continued.

'This brother, whom I have appointed executioner, and of whom you are jealous, understands Latin.'

'Is it not true, friend? Prove to this blockhead that you know more than he. What signifies—*Dominus vobiscum*?

The unhappy *sang-mêlé*, startled from his gloomy reverie by this dreaded voice, raised his head; and although his mind was still bewildered by the base assassination he had committed, terror determined him to obedience. There was something strange in the manner in which this man sought, among his thoughts of fear and remorse, to burnish up his college reminiscences, and in the doleful accent with which he pronounced the childish explanation: *Dominus vobiscum*—that is to say, 'May the Lord be with you!'

'*Et cum spiritu tuo*!' added the mysterious obi, solemnly. 'Amen,' said Biassou. Then resuming his irritated tone, and mixing, in his pretended anger, some phrases of bad Latin, in the manner of Sganarelle, to convince the blacks of the knowledge of their chief: 'Return to the lowest place in your ranks!' he cried out to the ambitious negro—'*Sursum corda*! never pretend, in future, to aspire to the rank of your leaders, who understand the Latin, *orate fratres*, or I will hang you! *Bonus, bona, bonum*!'

The negro, both wondering and terrified, returned to his post, hanging his head in shame amid the general shouts of all his comrades, who, in indignation at so ill-founded pretensions, raised their eyes in adoration to their learned generalissimo. There was something burlesque in this scene, which inspired me with a high idea of the ability of Biassou: the ridiculous means, which he had just employed with so great success* in disconcerting the ambition of a band of rebels, which is always despotic in its demands, furnished me, at the same time, with a just measure of the stupidity of the negroes, and the address of their chief.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MEANWHILE the hour of Biassou's *almuerzo*† had arrived; they brought out in the presence of the *mariscal de campo de su majestad catolica*, an enormous turtle-shell in which was fuming up the ingredients of an *ollo-podrida*, abundantly seasoned with huge slices of bacon, in which the turtle flesh replaced the *carnero*,‡ and

the potato, the *garganzas*;* an enormous cabbage floated upon the surface of this *puchero*; on either side of the shell, which served in the double capacity of stew-pot and soup-dish were two cups constructed of the cocoa-nut, filled with dried raisins, sandias,† bananas, and figs: it was the *postra*.‡ A loaf of Indian corn-bread, a leathern-bottle of wine, well pitched, completed the courses of the feast. Biassou drew a few cloves from his pocket, and rubbed them over the bread: and then, without even ordering the corpse, which was still warm and palpitating under his very eyes, he commenced his repast, and invited Rigaud to partake of the feast. The appetite of Biassou was truly frightful to behold.

The obi shared not in the meal. I conceived, that, in common with the kin of his profession, he never ate in public, in order to make the blacks believe he was of some supernatural essence and could live without nourishment.

While he was still devouring the breakfast, Biassou ordered the review to commence, and the various bands began to file off in good order before the grotto. The blacks of Morne-Rouge first passed by: in number they were about four thousand, divided into small, solid platoons, led by chiefs, equipped, as I have already said, in scarlet drawers or sashes. These blacks, most of them of a gigantic stature, bore muskets, hatchets and sabres: a large number of them had bows and arrows, or long javelins, which they used in default of other arms. They carried no standard, and their silent march was attended with an air of dismay.

On observing this horde file off Biassou turned toward Rigaud and whispered in his ear in French. 'When will the canister-shot of Blanchelande and De Rouvray rid me of these bandits of Morne-Rouge. I hate them: they are almost all Congoes! They know not how to kill but in battle. They follow the example of their imbecile chief, their idol Bug-Jargal, the young fool, who is eager only to display his generosity and magnanimity. You do not know him, I think, Rigaud? I hope you will never know him. The whites have made him their prisoner; they will rid me of him, as they have already rid me of Bouckmann.'

'*Apropos* of Bouckmann,' replied Rigaud, 'the black maroons of Macaya are passing, and I discover in their ranks the

* Toussain Louverture has more recently employed the same expedient with similar success.

† The breakfast.

‡ The lamb.

* Chick-pease.

† Watermelons.

‡ Dessert.

negro, whom Jean François despatched to you announcing the death of Bouckmann. Know you, that this man is able to destroy all the obi's prophecies concerning the fate of that chief? Should he disclose that he was detained for a half hour at the advanced post, and that he trusted his secret to my ear the moment before you summoned him to your presence?

'Diabolo,' said Biassou, 'you are right, my trusty friend, we must stop the fellow's mouth. Attend.'

Then raising his voice, 'Macaya!' he cried.

The chief of the maroon negroes approached, and presented his sword to his naked throat in token of reverence. 'Produce from your ranks the black whom I see yonder, and who should not form a part of your noble band.'

It was the messenger of Jean François. Macaya led him to the generalissimo, whose countenance suddenly assumed that expression of rage he was so expert in feigning.

'Who are you?' demanded he of the doomed negro.

'Our general, I am a black.'

'Caramba! That's plain enough. But your name?'

'My nickname is Vavelan. My patron among the blessed is St. Sabas, deacon and martyr, whose festival falls on the twentieth day before the Nativity of our Lord.'

Biassou interrupted him.

'With what front dare you present yourself on parade among the glossy Espignoles, and white belts, your sabre without a scabbard, yours drawers torn, and your feet covered with mud?'

'General,' replied the black, 'it is not my fault. I was charged by the grand admiral Jean François to bear you the news of the death of the chief of the English maroons Bouckmann; and if my clothes were torn and my feet dirty, it is because I ran myself out of breath to bring you the earliest news. But they detained me in the camp, and—'

Biassou frowned.

'That's not the point, *gavacho*! But your boldness in appearing in the review in such a plight. Commend your soul to St. Sabas, deacon and martyr; prepare to be shot.'

Here I had another proof of the moral power of Biassou over the rebels. The unfortunate wretch, condemned to prepare for execution, uttered not a murmur: he bowed his head, crossed his arms upon his breast, thrice saluted his pitiless judge, and after kneeling before the obi, who

gravely bestowed on him a summary absolution, left the grotto. Some minutes after the discharge of musketry announced to Biassou that the negro had obeyed, and was no more.

The chief, freed from all embarrassment, turned towards Rigaud, his eyes sparkling with pleasure, and with a giggle of triumph, which seemed to say, 'Admire.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The review, however, proceeded. The whole army, the disorder of which a few hours before had presented so extraordinary a tableau to my view, lost none of its grotesque characteristics when under arms. They were negroes, entirely naked, armed with clubs, tomahawks, headnettings, marching along at the sound of a hoarse ram's horn, like so many savages, they were followed by battalions of mulattoes, equipped in the Spanish or English costume, well armed and under excellent discipline, regulating their pace by the roll of a drum: then came hords of negresses, and little negroes, loaded with forks and spits; *fatras*, bending beneath a mass of old muskets without lock or barrel: female griotes in their variegated ornaments, and male griots revolting to a human eye by reason of their grimaces and contortions, chanting incoherent airs upon the guitar, tamtam, and balafo. The singular procession was from time to time intercepted transversely by heterogeneous detachments of griffes, marabouts, sacatras, mamelouks, quadroons, and free *sang-mêlés*, or again

* Toussaint Louverture, who was educated in the school of Biassou, and who, if not his superior in ability, was at least very far from being his equal in perfidy and ferocity; this Toussaint Louverture has given, though in a far less lively form, the spectacle of the same power over negro fancies. This chief descended, as it is said, of a royal African family, had like Biassou received some rude instruction, to which he added the gifts of a mighty genius. He was erecting a kind of republican throne in St. Domingo at the same time that Bonaparte was establishing in France a monarchy upon the successes of arms. Toussaint was a great admirer of the First Consul; but the First Consul, looking upon Toussaint only as a parodist in the way of his own fortunes, always flung away with an air of disdain every document of correspondence from an enfranchised slave, who had the temerity to write to him in such terms as these, 'the First of the Blacks to the First of the Whites.'

by nomadic hordes of maroon blacks of a haughty bearing, dragging along in their ranks their loaded mortars, and occasionally a cannon, which had been taken from the whites, and served the victors less in the capacity of a formidable engine than of an ennobling trophy—all these were howling at the top of their voice the hymns and songs of the Camp de Grand Pré, and of Ouassa-Né.

Above this sea of heads floated banners of every colour and device, white, red, tricoloured, the fleur-de-lis, and others surmounted with the liberty-cap, and bearing such inscriptions as these. *Death to the priests and aristocrats.—Long live our religion.—Liberty and equality.—Long live the King.—Down with the metropolis.—Viva Espana.—Down with the tyrants.*—This striking confusion indicated, that all the rebel forces were but a mass of means without aim or end, and that in the army there reigned no less disorder in their ideas, than in the men, who entertained them.

As they slowly defiled in front of the grotto the several bands inclined their banners, while Biassou returned the salutation. To each troop he addressed a few sentences either of reprimand or eulogy: and every word that escaped his lips, whether of severity or flattery, was received by his followers with a fanatical reverence, and a species of superstitious fear.

The waves of barbarians and savages at length ceased to stream by. I confess, that the sight of such formidable numbers of brigands, which at first distracted my ideas ended at last in completely unnerving my courage. The shades of night, however, were falling around, and at the moment, that the last rank defiled, the sinking sun was casting only a few faint copper colored tints upon the granite surface of the mountains, which skirted our eastern horizon.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BIASSOU seemed to have been engaged in the review of his troops. When it was ended—when he had given his last orders and all the rebels had returned beneath their *ajoupas* he turned and addressed me.

‘Young man,’ said he, ‘you have been able at your leisure to form a notion of my genius and power. The hour is now come for you to deliver my message to Léogri.’

‘It was no fault of mine, that the hour did not arrive sooner,’ replied I coldly.

‘You are right,’ replied Biassou. He hesitated a moment to try the effect, his

words might have produced upon me, and then continued: ‘But it depends on yourself whether it ever comes or not.’

‘How?’ cried I in astonishment—‘What say you?’

‘Yes,’ continued Biassou, ‘your life depends on yourself, you can save it if you choose.’

The fit of clemency, the first and doubtless the last, which ever touched the breast of Biassou, appeared in my eyes, a perfect miracle. The Obi, no less surprised than myself, started from the chair, upon which he had for a long time been preserving the same fixed attitude of ecstasy after the fashion of the Hindoo fakirs, and placing himself in front of the generalissimo, raised his voice in the trembling accents of anger.

‘*Que dice el excelentísimo señor mariscal-de-campo?*’* Does he recollect his promise? Neither he nor the *Bon Giu* can dispose of that life: it belongs to me.’

At that moment again I thought I recognised the irritated accents of the cursed little man: but the moment was inopportune for reflection, and the light did not burst upon me.

Without exhibiting the slightest discomposure Biassou arose from his throne, addressed the obi in a low tone and pointed to the black flag I had already observed; after exchanging a few words the sorcerer raised his eyes from the ground to the sky and again dropped them from the sky to the ground in token of submission. Each resumed his former seat and attitude.

‘Listen,’ said the generalissimo to me, producing from his vest pocket the second despatch of Jean François, which had been deposited in that *escrutoire*. ‘Our fortunes are adverse, Bouckmann has perished in battle. The whites have exterminated two thousand revolted blacks in the district of Cul-de-sac. The colonists are pushing their fortifications, and the plain is bristling up with military posts. By our own fault we have lost the opportunity of taking the Cape: it will not again return these many days. Upon our eastern quarter the principal route is intercepted by a river: the whites for the purpose of defending the passage have established upon it a battery of pontons, and upon each bank have pitched two temporary camps. On the south there is a highway, which traverses the mountainous region called the Haut-du-Cap: our enemies have covered it with troops and artillery. Their position on the land side is equally well fortified by a good palisade,

* What means my most excellent lord Field Marshal?

upon which all the inhabitants have been laboring, and have added to it several formidable chevaux-de-frise. Cape Haytien, therefore, is closed against our arms. Our ambuscade at Dompierre-Mulâtre has failed. To all these disasters is added the Sian fever, which is depopulating the Camp of Jean François. In consideration of these facts the grand Admiral of France has resolved, and we coincide in his resolution, to treat with Governor Blanchelande, and the Colonial Assembly. Here is the letter we have addressed them upon this subject, listen!

‘MESSRS. DEPUTIES:

‘Serious evils are afflicting this rich and important colony: we have been involved in them, and this is all we have to urge for our justification. You will one day render us all the justice, our position merits. We deserve to be comprised within that general amnesty, which the King Louis XVI. has pronounced indefinitely for all of us.

‘If not, as the King of Spain is a good King, treats us well, and is a witness of our recompenses, we shall continue to serve him with all zeal and devotion.

‘By the law of Sept. 28th, 1791, we perceive the National Assembly and the King coincide with you in publishing a definite decree upon the condition of free persons, and the political rights, of the colored population. We vindicate the decrees of the National Assembly as well as your own, clothed with the requisite formalities and shall continue to vindicate them with the last drop of our blood. It would be a matter of interest for you to *decree*, by a formal arrest of the general, that it is your intention immediately to consider the condition of the slaves. Knowing, that they are the object of your solicitude, they will, through their leaders, with whom you will conduct any negotiation, be satisfied, and the interrupted equilibrium of the colony will in a short time be restored.

‘Do not, however, flatter yourselves, Messrs. Representatives, that we will consent to take up arms as volunteers of the revolutionary Assemblies. We are the subjects of three Kings: the King of Congo, the hereditary lord of all the blacks: the King of France, who represents our fathers; and the King of Spain, who represents our mothers. These three Kings are the descendants of those, who under the conduct of destiny have always adored the Man-God. If we are subjects to the Assemblies, we shall perhaps be compelled to bear arms against our brethren, the subjects of the three Kings, to whom we have sworn everlasting fidelity.

‘And moreover, ignorant as we are of what is meant by the will of the nation, you can perceive, that ever since the people have become sovereign we have only executed the will of the King. The prince of France loves us, and that of Spain will not fail to succor us. We aid them, they aid us; it is the common cause of humanity. Besides, if their majesties hesitate or delay their assistance, we shall shortly have established a permanent regal throne.

‘Such are our intentions; meanwhile we will consent to negotiate for a peace.*

Signed—

Jean François, General.

Biassou, Field-Marshal.

Desprez,

Manzeau,

Toussaint,

Aubert,

Commissioners
ad hoc.

‘You perceive,’ added Biassou after the reading of this specimen of negro diplomacy, the remembrance of which is fixed word for word in my mind, ‘you perceive, we are pacific. Well, this is what I wish of you. Neither Jean François, nor myself, have been educated in such schools as the whites, where you are taught the elegancies of language. We know how to use our swords better than our pens. Nevertheless we are anxious that in our letter to the Assembly, there remain nothing that may excite the haughty, scoffing *burlesques* of our old masters. You appear to have learned that frivolous science, of which we are ignorant. Correct the faults, that are apparent in our despatch, which might excite the laughter of the whites: at that price you shall have your life.’

There was something in this office of corrector of orthographical errors in the diplomatic despatches of Biassou, so repugnant to my pride, that I did not hesitate a moment. And moreover what had I to live for? I refused his offer.

He started with surprise. ‘What?’ he cried, ‘Do you prefer death rather than correct a few mis-strokes of the pen upon a scrap of parchment?’

‘Yes,’ I replied.

My resolution seemed to give him some embarrassment. After a moment of reverie he turned to me and said.

‘Listen, young fool; I am less obstinate than yourself. I give you till to-morrow evening to decide upon obeying me: to-morrow at the setting of the sun you shall be again brought before me. Resolve then

* This letter with all its ridiculous characteristics was actually sent to the Assembly.

to satisfy my demand. Adieu; the shades of night are fruitful in counsel. Dream of this, that in our hands *death, is not simply death.*

The import of these closing words accompanied as they were by 'one of his horrid fiendish giggles, was by no means equivocal, for the torments which Biassou was accustomed to invent for his victims gave a ready solution to his menaces.

'Candi, remove the prisoner,' continued Biassou. 'Confide him to a guard of the blacks of Morne-Rouge. It is my pleasure that he live for one more course of the sun, and all my other soldiers have not that patience, which can withstand the drainage of twenty-four hours.'

The mulatto Candi, who was the chief of his guard, fettered my arms behind my back. A private seized the extremity of the cord, and we left the grotto.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WHEN extraordinary events, anguish and sudden catastrophe pour down in one huge wave upon a life, that has been uniformly happy and entrancing, then those unforeseen emotions, those reverses of fortune suddenly interrupt the dream of the soul, that was reposing in the monotony of prosperity. The misfortune, however, which presents itself under this form, does not seem to be an awakening but only a dream. Upon the man, who has always been happy, despair comes like a stupor. Adversity to him resembles the torpedo; it agitates, but it benumbs; and the fearful light, which suddenly flashes across his vision, is not the certain beams of the day—Men, things, deeds, pass before us with a physiognomy in some degree fantastic, and move by like a nightmare. The atmosphere the perspective, everything in the horizon of our life is changed, but it must come flooding and pouring down upon us a long time before our eyes have lost that kind of luminous image of past happiness, which ever attends them, and which incessantly interposing itself between them and the sombre present, changes their complexion, and lends to the reality an inexplicable coloring of falsity. Everything then appears impossible and absurd: we scarcely believe in our own existence, because in failing to discover about us anything that actually composes our being, we do not imagine that all has disappeared without dragging us in its wake, and that all of life, that is left us, is ourself. When such a violent condition of the soul is prolonged, it disarranges the equilibrium of thought—insanity succeeds,

a state it may be of happiness, in which life is to the wretched being only a vision of which he himself is a mere phantom.

CHAPTER XL.

I KNOW not, comrades, what reason I have for uncovering to you these old sensations of mine. They are not sensations which you can comprehend, or I can explain. You must have felt them. I have experienced their action. It was the state of my soul at the moment, that the guard of Biassou handed me over to the negroes of Morne Rouge. It seemed as if spectres were delivering me up to spectres, and without offering the least resistance, I suffered them to bind me by the girdle to the trunk of a tree. They brought me a few boiled potatoes, which I devoured with that kind of animal instinct, which the goodness of God leaves to man even in the midst of the absorbing pre-occupations of his mind.

Night, however; had come, my guards retired beneath their *ajoupas*, only six of them remaining near me, seated or reclining before a large fire, which they had kindled for protection against the nocturnal cold. At the end of a few moments all were wrapped in the deepest sleep.

The physical exhaustion of my frame only contributed to the vague reveries, which disturbed my thoughts. I recalled the days of uniform serenity, which a few weeks previous I had passed at the side of Marie without the glimpse of a thought of any other possible change, than that of our endless happiness. I compared those days with the fearful scenes, I had passed; scenes where so many strange phantoms had flittered before me, as if to make me doubt their existence, even though amid them, my life had thrice been condemned and thrice saved. I thought of my present fortunes, which must be closed up with the morrow's light, and which offered no other certainty than that of misery and death—happily they were at hand. It seemed as if I was struggling with some hideous nightmare. I asked myself, if it was possible, that what had passed, had passed, and that what surrounded me was the camp of the sanguinary Biassou? Was it possible, that Marie was for ever lost to me, and that the prisoner guarded by six barbarous blacks, bound with cords, and devoted to a certain death, that that prisoner which the blaze of a brigand night-fire discovered to me, was really myself? Notwithstanding all my efforts to escape the oppressive weight of a thought, which

was even more distracting than the preceding, my mind reverted to Marie. With insuppressible anguish I asked myself as to her fate: I struggled with my cords to fly to her rescue, constantly hoping that the horrible dream would vanish, and that God had not decreed to make all these horrors enter into the destiny of the angel, to whom I had given my vow of affiance. The gloomy concatenation of my ideas recalled Pierrot to my memory, and rage for a moment rendered me insensible: the veins upon my forehead seemed ready to burst; I despised, I hated myself. I condemned myself for having one moment conjoined a friendship for Pierrot with my love for Marie, and without finding myself able to assign any motive for his casting himself singly and alone into the waters of the Grande Riviere. I wept at not having been able to cleave him down. He was dead, I too must soon die, and the only matter of regret in his death and mine, was the failure of my hopes of personal revenge.

All these emotions were flitting through my mind in the midst of a half dream, which my exhaustion contributed to prolong. How long it continued I cannot tell; but I was suddenly arrested in my dream by the echoing of an ill-omened voice, which was chanting distinctly, though at some distance the well known refrain, *Yo que soy contrabandista*. I opened my eyes, as I made a convulsive effort to rise. Darkness reigned about me, the negroes were asleep, and the night-fire was fast dying away. I listened, but heard no more: the voice, thought I was an illusion of the dream, and my heavy eyelids closed again. But I soon opened them with increased surprise, the voice had recommenced, and in the saddest tones was chanting the stanzas of the Spanish romance.

En los Campos de Ocana
Prisionero cai;
Me uevan à Cotadilla,
Desdichado fui.*

The voice, then, was not a dream. It was the voice of Pierrot. A moment afterwards it rose again over the darkness and silence of the night, and I heard for the second time near my ear the well known refrain, *Yo que soy contrabandista*. A dog came bounding joyously to my feet; it was Rask. I raised my eyes. A black

* In the fair fields of Ocana
A prisoner I fell;
They bore me far to Cotadilla
And wretched was my cell.

stood before me, and the blaze of the dying embers cast by the side of the dog a colossal shadow: it was Pierrot. Vengeance transported me with fury, but surprise rendered me immovable and dumb. I slept no more. The dead had arisen from his grave. It was not a dream, then; it was an apparition? I turned away my eyes in horror: as he observed my movement his head fell upon his breast.

'Brother,' murmured he in a low voice, 'you gave me the promise never to distrust me, when you heard me chant that refrain. Brother have you forgotten the promise?'

Anger cut loose my tongue.

'Monster,' I cried, 'I have found you then at last. Butcherer! assassin of my uncle! ravisher of my Marie! dare you call me brother? Away! touch me not.'

I forgot the cords and fetters which impeded all my movements. Involuntarily I turned my eyes to my side to find my sword, the motion struck him. He assumed an excited but tender air.

'No,' said he, 'no, I will not approach you. You are wretched, I pity you: while you have no pity for me, who have far more need of it at your hands.'

I shrugged my shoulders. He apprehended the silent reproach of the gesture, and gazed at me in a sort of revery.

'Yes, you have lost much: but, believe me, I have lost more than yourself.'

The confusion of voices had by this time awakened the six guards who attended me. Observing the stranger in their midst they hastily started up and seized their arms; but as soon as their eyes fell upon Pierrot they raised a loud shout of surprise and joy, and fell prostrate, repeatedly striking their foreheads against the earth.

The reverence which the negroes rendered to Pierrot, and the caresses which Rask offered alternately to his master and myself, looking at me with some disquietude as if astonished at my cold demeanor, made no impression upon me at the moment. I was bewildered in my emotions of rage, and rendered powerless by the cords that bound me.

'Oh!' cried I at length, weeping with rage at the shackles that fettered my movements, 'oh, how wretched I am! I regret that you wretch has not yet atoned for his deeds: I thought him dead, and myself despoiled of the consolations of vengeance. But now he is come to mock me: there he is, alive and under my very eyes, and I am denied the pleasure of plunging the poniard into his heart. Oh, who will deliver me from these execrable fetters?'

Pierrot turned towards the negroes, who were still paying their adoration to him.

'Comrades,' said he, 'unbind the prisoner.'

CHAPTER XLI.

He was promptly obeyed. My six guards, with great enthusiasm, cut asunder the cords which encircled my arms. I raised myself erect and free, but remained immovable—astonishment in its turn riveted me to the earth.

'This is not all,' added Pierrot, as he snatched a poniard from one of the negroes and presented me the hilt with these words, 'you may now satisfy yourself. It does not please Heaven, that I dispute with you the right to dispose of my life. Thrice have you saved it: it depends on you alone; strike, if you will.'

There was neither reproach nor bitterness in the tone of his voice; it was that of sadness and resignation. The way unexpectedly opened for the action of vengeance upon the man I burned to strike, startled me by its singular facility. I found that all my hatred of Pierrot and all my affection for Marie were not sufficient to make me an assassin. Besides, however appearances might read, a voice was crying out from the depths of my heart, that an enemy and a guilty wretch seldom thus presents his bosom to the shafts of vengeance and punishment. I must, in fine, acknowledge, that in the imperious prestige, with which this singular being was surrounded, there was something which in spite of myself made me at the moment bow to its influence. I thrust away the proffered poniard.

'Wretch,' I exclaimed, 'I would slay you in combat, not as an assassin. Defend yourself!'

'Why defend myself?' replied he in surprise. 'Against whom?'

'Against me.'

He started back with a gesture of stupor.

'Against you! It is the only thing in which I would refuse to obey you. Look upon Rask! I could cut his throat: he would not move a limb against the knife; but I could not force him to struggle against me. He would not understand that. I do not understand you. I am a Rask to yourself.'

After a short silence he resumed:

'I read hatred in your eyes, as you one day read it in mine. I know you have experienced many misfortunes, your uncle has been massacred, your fields burnt over, and your friends butchered: they have sacked your houses, and devastated your heritage; but it was not I, it was

mine. Listen; I told you one day that yours had done me much ill: you answered, it was not you, but yours. What have I done more?'

His countenance brightened up: he expected to see me fall into his arms, but I returned his overture with the scorn of a savage.

'You disavow all that yours have done,' replied I, in accents of terror, 'but you say nothing of what you have done to me yourself.'

'What?' he demanded.

I approached at a violent step, and my voice became like the deep notes of thunder.

'Where is Marie? What have you done with Marie?'

At the repetition of that name a cloud overspread his brow; for a moment he appeared embarrassed. At length, breaking the silence, he answered,

'Marie! Yes—you have cause—but there are too many ears open here.'

His embarrassment and the words '*you have cause*,' kindled up a flame in my heart. I thought I discovered an effort to evade my question; but at the same instant he gazed at me with an open brow, and addressed me with the deepest emotion;

'I conjure you, do not suspect me. I will disclose all elsewhere. Hold; love me, as I love you, with confidence.'

He hesitated a moment to observe the effect of his words, and added with a tender air,

'Can I call you brother?'

But jealousy and anger had again seized me with all their violence, and those tender words, the words in my eyes of a profound hypocrite, only exasperated my feelings the more.

'Dare you thus address me, miserable ingrate?'

He interrupted me. The big tears began to gather in his dark eyes—

'It is not I that am the ingrate.'

'Speak, then,' cried I with emotion. 'What have you done with Marie?'

'Elsewhere, elsewhere,' he answered.

'There are more ears, than our own, now listening. Moreover you would not believe me merely upon my own word, and time presses. See, the day breaks, and I must take you hence. Listen then; all is over, since you distrust me, and seek only to thrust the poniard into this heart. But attend awhile, before you execute what you call your vengeance: I must speedily deliver you. Come with me to Biassou.'

The manner both of his gesture and his

words concealed a mystery I could not then comprehend. Notwithstanding all my prejudices against the man, his voice made a happy chord vibrate in my heart. As I listened a mysterious power seemed to sway my motives. I was surprised to find myself hesitating between vengeance and pity, defiance and a blind abandonment to fate. I followed him.

CHAPTER XLII.

WE left the quarter of the negroes of Morne-Rouge. I was surprised to find myself moving at my freedom through the motley camp of the barbarous hordes, where at early daybreak each brigand was gazing upon me as if thirsting for my blood. Far from seeking to arrest our progress, the blacks and mulattoes prostrated themselves along our path with many exclamations of surprise, joy, and reverence. I was ignorant of the rank Pierrot held in the army of the rebels; but I recalled the prerogative which he exercised over his companions in slavery, and without difficulty I explained the authority which he seemed to enjoy among his comrades in the rebellion.

Arrived at the line of guards which covered the front of the grotto of Biassou, Candi, their mulatto chief, advanced towards us, and with many menaces demanded of us, while yet at a distance, why we ventured so near the general's quarters; but as soon as he obtained a distinct view of the features of Pierrot, he suddenly removed his gold-broidered Spanish cap, and, as if terrified by his own audacity, bent his body to the earth. He introduced us to Biassou, stammering out a thousand excuses, to which Pierrot responded only with a gesture of disdain.

The respect of the private soldiers for Pierrot had given me some causes of astonishment, but upon observing Candi, one of their principal officers, humbling himself thus before the slave of my uncle, I began to ask myself, what the rank of the man could be, whose authority seemed so extensive. But my astonishment passed into wonder and bewilderment, upon observing the generalissimo, who was alone at the moment we entered, quietly partaking of his *calalou*, suddenly start up at the appearance of Pierrot, and dissembling an uneasy surprise and violent anger under the externals of profound respect, humbly bend before my companion, and offer him his own throne of mahogany. Pierrot refused the seat.

'Jean Biassou,' said he, 'I am not come

to assume your throne, but simply to beg a favor.'

'*Alteza*,' replied Biassou, renewing his salutations, 'you know that you can dispose of all that belongs to Jean Biassou, of all that depends on Jean Biassou, and of Jean Biassou himself.'

The title of *Alteza*, which is equivalent to that of our Highness or Majesty, ascribed to Pierrot by Biassou, only increased my former bewilderment.

'My demand is not so great,' replied Pierrot in a lively tone; 'I ask only the life and liberty of this prisoner.'

He pointed to me with his hand: Biassou was for a moment undecided, but his embarrassment was short.

'You ruin your servant, *Alteza*; you exact, I regret to say, more than he can pay. The prisoner is not Jean Biassou's, does not pertain to Jean Biassou, and does not belong to Jean Biassou.'

'What mean you?' demanded Pierrot, with an air of severity. 'On whom then does he depend? Does any power other than your own here exist?'

'Alas, yes, *Alteza*.'

'What is it?'

'My army.'

The air of caress and artful ruse, with which Biassou evaded the proud and frank questions of Pierrot, foretold that he was determined to yield no farther reverence than necessity forced from him.

'What,' cried Pierrot, 'your army? And do you not command it?'

Biassou, preserving his advantage without however, transcending his grade of inferiority, replied with an appearance of sincerity,

'*Su Alteza*, think you we can really command men, who have only revolted in order to escape obedience?'

I attached too worthless a value upon life to interrupt the silence: but what I had seen in the morning of the unlimited authority of Biassou over those bands, had furnished me with evidence enough to refute the assertion, and uncover the hypocrite's duplicity. Pierrot replied:

'Well, if you cannot command your army, and if your soldiers are all generals, what motives of hatred can they have against the prisoner?'

'Bouckmann,' replied Biassou, as he gave to his ferocious and railing countenance an aspect of serious sadness, 'has been slain by the government troops; mine have resolved to avenge upon this white the death of the maroon negroes of Jamaica. They burn to oppose trophy to trophy, and the head of this young officer must serve as a counterpoise to the

head of Bouckmann in that balance in which the *Bon Gou* weighs the two spirits.'

'Why,' said Pierrot, 'have you constantly adhered to this system of retaliation? Listen to me, Jean Biassou: these cruelties are what will ruin our just cause. A prisoner in the camp of the whites, from which I have just succeeded in escaping, I was ignorant of the death of Bouckmann, until you apprised me. It is a just chastisement from Heaven for his crimes. I will apprise you of other news. Jeannot, the same chief of the blacks, who served as guide to the whites when he betrayed them into the ambushade of Domphe-Mulâtre, Jeannot is also dead. You are aware—do not interrupt me, Biassou—that in atrocity he was the rival of Bouckmann and yourself: but mark this: it was not the bolt of Heaven, it was not the whites, who struck him down. It was Jean François himself who has done that act of justice to humanity.'

Biassou, who had listened with a sad reverence, gave an exclamation of surprise. At that moment Rigaud entered, saluted Pierrot with profound respect, and addressed a few words in a low tone to the ear of the generalissimo. In the camp without, a tumultuous commotion was in progress. Pierrot continued:

'Yes; Jean François, who has no other defect than an unfortunate habit of luxury, and the ridiculous equipage of that carriage and six, which every day must bear him away from the camp to the Mass of the Curé of Grande Riviere, even Jean François has stayed the delirious fury of Jeannot. Notwithstanding the loose prayers of the brigand, although at his last moment he would be linked to the curé of Marmelade, who is charged with the office of exhorting him to penitence, possessed of all the terror one requires in violent measures, the monster was shot yesterday at the foot of that very tree, that is armed with the iron hooks, to which he suspended his living victims. Why all these massacres, which drive the whites to ferocity? Why still employ juggleries for the purpose of exciting the fury of our unhappy comrades, already, alas, too highly inflamed? There is at Trou Coffi a mulatto charlatan, named Romaine the Prophetess, who is rendering a band of blacks so many fanatics: he profanes the holy Mass: he is persuading them that he is in communication with the Virgin, whose oracles he pretends to hear when he places his ear to the holy tabernacle: and he is urging his comrades to

murder and pillage in the name of MARIÉ!'

There was an expression, perhaps somewhat more tender than religious in the manner, with which Pierrot pronounced the last term. I cannot explain the cause, but it was offensive and irritating to my feelings.

'In fine,' pursued the slave, 'you have within your camp a mysterious obi, an unknown juggler, like that Romaine the Prophetess! I am not ignorant, that in having to conduct an army composed of men of every extraction, all families and all colors, you need some common bond of union: but could you not find it elsewhere than in a ferocious fanaticism and in a ridiculous superstition? Believe me, Biassou, the whites are less cruel than ourselves. I have seen many of the planters defend the lives of their slaves. I am aware that with many of them it was not so much to save the life of a man, as a few pitiful pounds of silver, but at least their interests lent them a virtue. Let us not be found less clement than they. Will our cause become more sacred and just, when we have exterminated women, butchered children, tortured old men, and burnt up colonists in their own houses? And yet these are the every-day exploits of your bands. Answer me, Biassou, is it necessary, that the only vestige of our passage ever be the traces of blood or the traces of the firebrand?'

He ceased. The majesty of his countenance and the tones of his voice gave to his words a force of conviction and authority it is impossible to re-produce in a recital. Like a fox, taken by a lion, the obliquely fallen eye of Biassou seemed to be searching some avenue of escape from such fearful power. While he was still meditating his course, the leader of the band from Aux Cayes, the same Rigaud, who, on the previous morning had gazed with so unruffled a brow upon all the horrors committed before his eyes, seemed to grow indignant with the rebukes, of which Pierrot was tracing out the tableau, and exclaimed in true hypocritical alarm and disgust—'Ah, my good God, what is there like a whole nation run mad?'

CHAPTER XLIII.

MEANWHILE the extraordinary tumult without in the camp was increasing, and gave Biassou no little distress. I was subsequently informed that the tumult sprang from the negroes of Morne-Rouge,

who were running through the camp announcing the return of my liberator, and expressing their determination to second him, whatever might be the motive of his visit to Biassou. Rigaud entered to inform the generalissimo of the state of affairs; and it was the fear of a lamentable schism, which determined the artful leader to some degree of concession to the desires of Pierrot.

'*Alteza*,' he exclaimed, with an air of disdain, 'if we are severe against the whites, you are certainly severe against us. You have been hasty to accuse me of the violence of the torrent that has impelled me along. But in fact, *que podria hacer a hora*,* which would please you.'

'I have already named it, *Senor Biassou*,' replied Pierrot. 'Release me the prisoner.'

Biassou remained for a moment pensive, and then cried out, as he gave to the expression of his features all the frankness of which they were capable:

'Come then, *Alteza*, I will prove to you how great my desire is to please you. Only permit me to speak two words in private with the prisoner; he shall then be free to follow you.'

'Certainly, nothing forbids it,' replied Pierrot, as his countenance, hitherto proud and disquieted, was animated with the lustre of joy. He retired a few paces from our position. Biassou drew me to an angle of the grotto, and addressed me in a low voice:

'I can yield you your life, only upon one condition. You know it: will you subscribe?'

He drew forth the despatch of Jean François, but concession seemed in my eyes the darkest stain of baseness.

'Never,' I replied.

'Ah,' exclaimed he, with a fiendish giggle. 'Still so decided! You count much then, upon your protector. Know you, who he is?'

'Yes,' I replied, with vehemence. 'A monster like yourself, only a still deeper hypocrite than you ever can be.'

He gazed at me in amazement, seeking to divine from the expression of my eyes, whether my words were my serious thoughts.

'What?' said he. 'You do not, then, know him?'

'I recognise in him,' replied I, with disdain, 'only a slave of my uncle, by name, Pierrot.'

Biassou renewed his characteristic laugh.

'Ha! ha! something singular in that. He claims your life and liberty, and you call him a monster like myself.'

'What matters it?' replied I. 'If I but gain one moment's liberty, it will not be to ask him for my life, but for his own.'

'What means all this?' said Biassou. 'You appear to speak as you think, and I cannot suppose you feel inclined to trifle with your own life. There is behind all this veil something I cannot comprehend. You are protected by a man you hate: he pleads for your life, and you are seeking his death! Well, well; it is all one to me. You ask for a moment's liberty; that is all I yield you. Only give me your word of honor you will return and place yourself in my hands two hours before sunset. You are a Frenchman, are you not?'

Need I confess it, comrades? Life had become a burthen to me. I disdained to receive it at the hands of that Pierrot, whom so many circumstances held up to my scorn. I cannot affirm, that the certainty, that Biassou, who never loosened his grasp of his prey, would not consent to my deliverance, did not also enter into the components of my resolution. A few short hours of liberty before my death I eagerly desired, in order to inform myself of the fate of my beloved Marie, as well as my own. The word, which Biassou, trusting in French honor, demanded from my lips, was a sure and ready means of obtaining yet one day more: I promised.

After having exacted this word of honor, the chief again approached Pierrot.

'*Alteza*,' said he, in an obsequious tone of voice, 'the white prisoner is at your command. You can lead him away: he is free to accompany you.'

Never before had I beheld so much kindness in the dark eyes of Pierrot.

'Thanks, Biassou!' he exclaimed, extending his hand, 'thanks. You have rendered me a service, which henceforth gives you the power of exacting anything of me. Continue to dispose of my brethren of Morne-Rouge until my return.' Then turning towards myself, he continued, 'now that you are free, follow me,' and he drew me along after him with that singular physical energy, of which he was so remarkably possessed.

Biassou watched us as we retired, with an air of amazement, which was apparent even beneath those demonstrations of respect, with which he accompanied the departure of my companion.

* What could I do?

CHAPTER XLIV.

I was impatient to be alone with Pierrot. His discomposure, when I had questioned him upon the fate of Marie, and the insolent tenderness with which he dared to pronounce her name, had still more deeply inrooted the feelings of execration and of jealousy, which germinated in my heart the moment when I saw him raise up and carry across the conflagration of Fort Galifer, a being whom I could now hardly venture to call my wife. After such a scene what availed with me all the generous reproaches he had addressed even in my presence to the sanguinary Biassou, the care he had exercised for my life, and even the extraordinary impress, which marked all his words and all his actions? What availed the mystery, which seemed to envelope his fortunes; a mystery, which reproduced him alive before my eyes, when I thought I had assisted in his death; which showed him to have been a captive in the hands of the whites, when I thought him rotting beneath the waters of the Grande Riviere; which transformed a slave into an *Alteza*, and a prisoner into a liberator? Of all these matters, the only one that was clear to my eyes, was the odious ravishment of Marie, a deed to avenge, a crime to punish. The strange scenes which had already passed before my view, could hardly suffice to make me suspend my judgment, and I awaited with impatience the instant when I could force my rival to an explanation. That moment at last arrived.

We had traversed the triple lines of blacks prostrate along our path crying out in their surprise: *Miraculo! ya no esta prisionero*.* I was doubtful whether they spoke of myself or Pierrot. We had escaped the last limits of the camp: we had lost from view the trees, the dock, and the last vedettes of Biassou. Rask in his joy was leaping along in front, occasionally returning to exchange caresses with us: Pierrot moved along at a rapid pace: suddenly I arrested his steps.

'Hear me,' said I, 'it is useless to proceed farther. The ears you feared cannot hear now. Speak! what have you done with Marie?'

The violence and multiplicity of my thronging emotions cut short my words. He gave me a look of the kindest regard.

'Always thus?' replied he.

'Yes, always,' cried I, in a rage, 'al-

ways. I will put that question in my latest breath; where is Marie?'

'Can nothing dissipate your doubts of my fidelity? You shall know soon.'

'Soon, monster,' I replied. 'I would know now. Where is Marie? Where is Marie? Dost thou know? Answer, or exchange thy life for mine. Defend thyself.'

'I have already said,' replied he, with a sorrowful air, 'that that cannot be. The torrent never struggles against its source; my life, which thou hast thrice saved me cannot contend against thine. Besides the thing is impossible. We have but one poniard between us.'

Thus speaking, he drew a poniard from his girdle and presented me the hilt. 'Take it,' said he.

I was beside myself with rage. I seized the poniard and planted the steel against his naked breast. He stirred not a muscle to withdraw.

'Wretch,' I exclaimed, 'force me not to become an assassin. I will plunge this blade into your heart, unless you this instant tell me, where my wife is.'

'You are the master,' replied he, without anger. 'But with these uplifted hands I beseech you, grant me but one hour of life, and follow me. You distrust him who owes you three lives, him you once called brother. But listen: if, at the end of an hour you distrust me still, you shall be free to slay me. It will then be still in time. You see, I seek to offer no resistance. I conjure you, by the name of Marie,' he added, with painful emotion, 'your wife—but one hour: and if I then supplicate still, it will not be for myself, it will be for you.'

His accents assumed an inexpressible character of persuasion and grief. Everything seemed to assure me of the probable truth of his words, because the single interest of his life could not suffice to impart to his voice that penetrating tenderness and suppliant sweetness with which it was characterized: he seemed to be pleading for something more than himself. I yielded once more to that ascendant mystery which he exercised over me, and which at that moment I blushed to acknowledge.

'Proceed,' said I. 'I grant you the respite of an hour. I will follow.'

I offered to return him the poniard.

'No,' replied he: 'keep it: you have defied me. But, come, let us lose no time.'

* A miracle! He is not yet a prisoner.

CHAPTER XLV.

HE resumed his office of guide. Rask, who during our conference had frequently endeavored to renew the march, and as frequently returned to us as if in his looks to ask why we delayed, gladly again bounded along before us. We were soon buried beneath a virgin forest. At the end of a half hour we opened upon a beautiful verdant savannah, traversed by a stream of water that issued from a neighboring rock, and bordered by a fresh and deep fringe of the forest century plants. A cavern, the greyish front of which was overhung by a multiplicity of creeping plants, the clematis, the liane, and the jasmine, opened upon the savannah. Rask leapt towards it with a loud bark; Pierrot gave him a signal to cease, and without uttering a word drew me along after him into the cavern.

A female with her back turned to the light was seated in that grotto upon a carpet of rushes. At the rustling of our steps she turned her head.—Comrades, it was Marie!

She was clad in a white robe, as upon the day of our marriage, and still wore in her locks the wreath of orange flowers, the last virginal appendage of the young wife, which my hands had not yet detached from her forehead. She perceived me—she recognized me—uttered a loud shriek, and fell into my arms fainting with joy and surprise. My brain reeled, I was distracted.

At the echo of the shriek an aged female, carrying an infant in her arms, ran from a rear chamber, that was formed by a depression of the cavern. It was the nurse of Marie, and the last child of my unfortunate uncle. Pierrot ran to bring water from the neighboring rivulet. He cast a few drops upon the forehead of Marie; their coolness recalled her vital sensations; she opened her eyes.

'Leopold,' said she—'my Leopold!'

'Marie,' I replied: but the rest of our words were spoken in a burning kiss.

'Not before these eyes,' cried a piercing voice. We raised our eyes: it was Pierrot. There he stood, an assistant and witness in our caresses, as if being broken upon the wheel. His swelling bosom heaved, and an icy perspiration fell in large drops from his forehead. He trembled in every limb. Suddenly he hid his face in his hands, and darted out of the grotto, repeating with a terrible accent, 'Not before these eyes!'

Marie half raised her form by leaning

upon my arm, and exclaimed, as her eyes followed the retreating black, 'Gracious Heaven! Leopold; our love seems to torture him. Is it he that has loved me?'

The exclamation of the slave had demonstrated that he was my rival: and the cry of Marie also demonstrated that he was still only my friend.

'Marie,' replied I, and an unwonted felicity pierced my heart at the same instant with a pang of unutterable regret, 'Marie, has he not then known you?'

'I know him not,' she rejoined, as a chaste blush suffused her cheek. 'What? He loves me! I never caught a glimpse of his affection.'

I pressed her to my intoxicated heart.

'I have refound my wife and my friend. How happy I am, and yet how guilty! I distrusted him.'

'What?' exclaimed Marie, 'him! Pierrot! Yes, you were guilty. Twice have you owed him my life, and perhaps more still,' added she as her maiden eyes fell to the earth. 'Without his aid the crocodile at the river would have devoured me; without him the negroes— It was Pierrot who seized me in his arms at the very moment they would have sent me to rejoin my unhappy father.'

Her bursting tears interrupted her words. 'But why,' I demanded, 'why did not Pierrot send you to the Cape, to your husband?'

'He endeavored,' said she, 'but he failed. Obligated to guard himself equally against the whites and the blacks, it was a very difficult matter to effect. And then we were ignorant whither you had gone. Some said you had fallen in battle, but Pierrot assured me that could not be, and I was certain of the contrary, for some presentiment would have warned me of your fate: if you had died, I could not have survived you another hour.'

'Pierrot, then,' I replied, 'brought you hither.'

'Yes, my Leopold: this isolated grotto is known to himself alone. Along with me he also saved all that remained of our family, my good nurse and my little brother: here he concealed us all. I assure you it is a very commodious retreat, and if war was not devastating the country and laying our plantations in ruins, I should delight to inhabit it with you. Pierrot has supplied all our wants. He came often, and always wore a red plume upon his head. He consoled me, spoke frequently of you, and assured me I should soon be restored to your arms. But not having seen him for the last three days, I began to grow alarmed, when suddenly he

has returned with you. My unfortunate friend must have been in search of you.'

'Yes,' I replied.

'But why should he thus act, if he were my suitor? Are you sure?'

'Quite sure,' I replied. 'It was he, who upon the point of driving the poniard into my breast, stayed his arm for fear of afflicting you: it was he, who chanted those songs of love in the pavilion upon the river-side.'

'True,' replied Marie, with a naïve surprise, 'he was your rival. The wretched gatherer of the wild marigolds was the noble Pierrot. I could not have believed it. He has been so humble and respectful towards me, even more than while he was our slave. It is true he sometimes watched me with a very singular air, but it was only an expression of sadness, which I attributed to some mental malady. Oh, could you but know with what passionate devotion he spoke to me of Leopold! His friendship spoke as tenderly of your memory as my love could have done.'

These explanations from the lips of Marie enchanted and ruined me at the same moment. I recalled the cruelty which I had exhibited towards the generous Pierrot, and I perceived the whole force of his tender and resigned reproach, 'It is not I that am the ingrate!'

At this moment Pierrot entered. His physiognomy was tender, but full of suffering. He would have been pronounced a criminal fresh from the rack, but with the marks of triumph on his brow. He advanced a few steps towards me, and said in a deep tone of voice, pointing at the poniard I had placed in my girdle,

'The hour is passed.'

'The hour! what hour?' I exclaimed.

'The hour you granted me: it was necessary to conduct you hither. Then I asked you to spare my life; now I conjure you—take it.'

The sweetest sentiments of the heart, love, friendship, and gratitude, combined at the same instant to distract my thoughts. I fell at the feet of the slave without the ability to utter a word, and sobbed bitterly. He raised me speedily from the ground.

'What would you?' said he.

'I would render you the homage your due: I am no longer worthy a friendship like yours. Your gratitude cannot extend so far as to pardon me my unthankfulness.'

His figure still wore an expression of rudeness: he seemed to be struggling with violent and conflicting emotions; he advanced a step towards me, and then recoiled; he opened his lips, but they closed

again without uttering a word. The struggle was of short duration: he opened his arms as he exclaimed,

'Can I now call you *brother*?'

My only answer was that of casting myself upon his heart. After a short pause he added,

'You are noble, but misfortune has rendered you unjust.'

'I have regained my brother,' I replied; 'I am no longer unhappy, but I am guilty.'

'Guilty, brother? I have been more so than yourself. You are no longer wretched; but I shall ever be so.'

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE joy which the first transports of friendship had lit up over his frank and open features, vanished: his countenance assumed an expression of sadness, no less remarkable for its singularity than its energy.

'Listen,' said he in a frigid tone of anguish. 'My father was king of the country of Kakongo. He administered justice to his subjects before his gate, and at every sentence he pronounced he quaffed off, according to the usage of kings, a full bowl of palm wine. We lived happy and powerful. The Europeans came: they taught us some useless arts, such as have struck your imagination. Their leader was a Spanish captain: he promised my father countries of a wider extent than his own, and white females for wives. My father listened, and followed with all his family.—Brother, *they sold us*.'

The bosom of the black heaved, his eyes flashed; he broke with a half-mechanical convulsion a young medlar tree that was standing near him; then he resumed without seeming to address me:

'The master of the country of Kakongo was a master, and his son bent himself down a slave over the furrows of St. Domingo.—They separated the young lion from his aged sire in order the more easily to subdue their spirits.—They snatched the young wife from her young husband to gather greater wages by prostituting her beauty to others.—The little infants cried for the mother, who gave them nourishment, and for the father, who bathed them in the flowing stream; they found only barbarous tyrants, and they couched their young limbs by the side of dogs.'

He ceased: his lips opened again, but no sound escaped them; his look was now fixed and now wandering. Suddenly he seized my arm.

'Brother, do you understand now? I

have been sold to various masters like a beast of the field. You recollect the punishment of Ogé: that day I again saw my father—it was he, stretched upon that cursed rack!

My heart throbbed violently. He resumed—

‘My wife was prostituted among the whites. Listen, brother: she is now dead, but she calls aloud for vengeance. Shall I confess it?’ he continued, hesitating and dropping his eyes, ‘I am guilty: I loved another.—But let it pass.—All my followers urged me to their delivery and revenge. Rask brought me their messages. I could not satisfy them; I was myself immured within the prison walls of your uncle. The day you obtained my pardon, I set out to snatch my little children from the hands of a ferocious master: I arrived.—Brother, the last of the sons of the King of Kakongo expired under the lash of a white! The others had gone before him to their long home.’

He ceased, as he coldly asked,

‘Brother, what would you have done?’

The sad recital had frozen my blood with horror. I replied to his question with a gesture of defiance.—He understood it, heaved a bitter sigh, and pursued his narrative:

‘The slaves revolted against their master, and punished him for the murder of my children. They elected me their chief. You know the evils which hastened on the rebellion. I was apprised that the negroes of your uncle were preparing to follow our example. I arrived at Acul upon the night of the insurrection.—You were absent.—Your uncle was assassinated in his bed. The blacks were already firing the plantations. Unable to calm their fury, because they thought to avenge my wrongs by burning the estates of your uncle, I determined to save the survivors of your family. I penetrated the Fort by a passage I had frequently proved. I confided the nurse of the family to a faithful black; my greatest difficulty was to save *Marie*. She had hastened towards the burning quarter of the Fort to rescue from it the youngest of her brothers, who alone had survived the massacre. The blacks had surrounded her: they had lifted their axes to cleave her asunder, when I suddenly appeared and bade them leave the revenge to myself. They retired. I caught the female in my arms, confided the child to Rask, and safely conveyed both to this cavern, the existence of and access to which I alone was aware of.—Brother, *this is all my crime!*’

Still more deeply penetrated with re-

morse and gratitude, I would have again cast myself at the feet of Pierrot; but he stayed my movement even with an offended air.

‘Come,’ said he a moment after, as he grasped my hand, ‘let us depart: lead away your wife, and let us five leave the cavern together.’

I asked in amazement, whither he would conduct us.

‘To the camp of the whites,’ he replied. ‘This retreat is no longer safe. To-morrow at daybreak the whites intend to attack the camp of Biassou: this forest will certainly be burned. And, moreover, we have not a moment to lose; ten heads are now standing hostages for mine. We can now make haste, for you are free: and we ought to make haste, for I am not.’

These words increased my surprise, and I besought him to explain their import.

‘Have you not heard the report that Bug-Jargal is a prisoner?’ said he impatiently.

‘Yes: but what have you in common with Bug-Jargal?’

The astonishment in turn passed over to him, as he answered in a deep and earnest voice,

‘I am BUG-JARGAL.’

CHAPTER XLVII.

It had grown into a habit to meet with surprises in the character of this man. A moment before to my astonishment I beheld the slave Pierrot transformed into an African king. My admiration, however, was at its height, when I recognized in him the formidable and magnanimous Bug-Jargal, chief of the blacks of Morne-Rouge. I understood, at last, whence arose the respect paid by all the rebels, and even by Biassou, to the prince Bug-Jargal, King of Kakongo. He did not appear to observe the impression his last word had produced upon my thoughts.

‘It was told me,’ said he, ‘that you were a prisoner in the camp of Biassou: I came to deliver you.’

‘Why, then, did you not immediately tell me you were not free?’

He gave me a piercing look, as if to divine the purpose of so natural a question.

‘Listen,’ said he: ‘this morning I was a prisoner among your friends. I heard it announced in the camp that Biassou had declared his intention of putting to death before the setting of the sun a young captive, by name Leopold D’Auverney. The guards about my person were doubled. I was apprised that my execution would

follow yours, and that in case of escape ten of my comrades must atone in my stead.—You perceive I am in haste.—I retained his step. ‘Did you then escape?’ said I.

‘How came I here, then? Was it not necessary to save you? Do I not owe you my life? Let us hasten: follow me. We are but one hour’s journey from the camp of the whites, the same as from that of the blacks. See, the shadows of those cocoatrees are extending fast, and their circular heads are lengthening upon the grass like the enormous egg of the condor. Within three hours the sun will have set. Come, brother, time presses.’ *Within three hours the sun will have set!* Those few and simple words congealed my blood like an apparition of death. They recalled the fatal promise I had made Biassou. Alas! in recovering Marie not a thought of the approaching eternal separation had crossed my intoxication of joy. I had been ravished, infatuated: the tide of emotions had overwhelmed my memory, and I forgot my death in my present felicity. The words of my friend in an instant threw the whole misfortune upon me. *Within three hours the sun will have set!* It wanted but one hour of my return to the camp of Biassou. My duty was imperiously prescribed: the brigand had my word of honor, and it were better to die than give the barbarous mulatto cause for despising the only thing he seemed yet to admire, *the honor of a Frenchman.*

The alternative was fearful: I chose what I ought to have chosen: but I must confess, comrades, I hesitated for a moment—and but one. Was I guilty?

CHAPTER XLVIII.

At length breaking away from my sighs I seized in one hand that of Bug-Jargal and in the other that of Marie, who had watched with great anxiety the ill-omened cloud, that spread over my features.

‘Bug-Jargal,’ I exclaimed with great effort, ‘I confide to your guidance the only being in the world I love more than yourself—Marie.—Return to the camp without me—I cannot follow you.—’

‘Gracious God,’ said Marie, gasping for breath, ‘what new calamity is this?’

Bug-Jargal had started back. The surprise of wretchedness and despair was painted upon his brow.

‘Brother, what say you?’

The alarm, which oppressed Marie at the idea of a reverse of fortune, which her too divining tenderness seemed almost to

anticipate, made it obligatory on me to conceal from her the reality, and spare the pangs of a final adieu. I bent towards the ear of Bug-Jargal, whispering in a low voice,

‘I am a captive. I have sworn to Biassou to return and place myself in his power two hours before the close of this day: I have promised to die.’

He literally bounded with rage, as his voice burst forth in the fullest torrents of execration:

‘The monster! The savage! That, then, was the burthen of his secret conference: to wring from you that promise. I ought to have defied that wretch, Biassou. Why did I not prevent his perfidy? He is not a black; he is a mulatto.’

‘What wretch? What perfidy? What promise?’ exclaimed the terrified Marie. ‘Who is Biassou?’

‘Hold! hold!’ I exclaimed to Bug-Jargal. ‘Do not alarm Marie.’

‘Well,’ he replied in a sombre tone; ‘but why did you consent to the promise? why did you give it?’

‘I thought you an ingrate, and Marie lost. What charms had life for me?’

‘But a mere promise with the lips is not binding with a brigand.’

‘I gave him my word of honor.’

He seemed to be essaying to discern my meaning.

‘Your word of honor? What is that, pray? You did not drink from the same cup? You broke no ring, nor no maple branch with its fresh red flowers?’

‘No.’

‘Well! what then do you mean? what binds you?’

‘My honor,’ I replied.

‘I know not what that means. Nothing binds you with Biassou. Come with us.’

‘I cannot, brother. My promise has been given.’

‘No! you gave no promise,’ cried he earnestly, and then elevating his voice, he addressed Marie.—‘Sister, help me. He would return to the camp of the negroes, whence I brought him, under the pretext that he has promised his death at the hands of Biassou.—Sister help.’

‘What have you done?’ cried I. It was too late to prevent the effect of that generous movement, which made him in imploring for the life of his rival call in the aid of her he once loved. Marie was fallen in my arms with a shriek of despair: with her arms about my neck she hung upon my heart; her feelings choked her utterance.

‘Oh,’ murmured she in anguish, ‘what

say you, my dear Leopold! would you run in me and at the moment of our re-union would you abandon my side for death? Answer me speedily, I am dying with suspense. You have no right to surrender your life, because you ought not to surrender mine. You would tear yourself from my arms never to return.'

'Marie,' I replied, fear not: I must really leave you. Necessity compels me. But we shall meet again, elsewhere.'

'Elsewhere!' replied she with a shudder, 'Elsewhere! Where?'

'In heaven,' I replied, not daring to lie to an angel.

She fainted again, but it was in anguish. The hour pressed, my resolution was taken. I laid her in the arms of Bug-Jargal, whose eyes were suffused with tears.

'Can nothing detain you?' said he. 'Nothing,' I added. 'Can you resist *Maria*? For one of the words she has spoken to you, I would sacrifice a world, while you are not willing to sacrifice even your death.'

'Honor!' replied I. 'Adieu, Bug-Jargal; adieu, brother; I bequeath you her hand.'

He seized me by the hand, was silent for a moment, and hardly seemed to comprehend my meaning.

'Brother, in the camp of the whites is one of your parents, with him I shall deposit *Maria*: I cannot accept your legacy.'

He pointed to a peak, the summit of which commanded the surrounding country.

'Observe you yon rocky eminence? When the signal of your death appears there, the shouts that will attend mine will not tarry.—Adieu.'

Without catching the import of these last words I embraced him for the last time, imprinted a kiss upon the cold pallid forehead of Marie, whom the attentions of the nurse began to revive, and plunged headlong from the cavern, fearing lest her first complaint might rob me of all my energy and resolution.

Honor!

CHAPTER XLIX.

I FLED along, plunged into the depths of the forest, following the trees Bug-Jargal and myself had just left in our passage, without daring to cast one glance behind me. To banish the reflections that crowded upon my mind I ran without cessation across thickets, savannahs and hills, until at last upon the crest of a rock the camp of Biassou with its lines of advance guards,

its rows of *ajoupas*, and its hordes of blacks, appeared before my eyes. There I halted. I had reached the limit of my course—and of my existence. Fatigue and emotion had exhausted my physical strength: I leaned against the trunk of a tree to preserve myself from falling, and allowed my eyes to wander over the tableau, which was spread out beneath my feet upon the fatal savannah.

At that moment I thought I had tasted the last dregs of bitterness and despair. I had not yet experienced the last and most cruel of all misfortunes,—to be constrained by a moral force, more powerful than that of circumstances to make a voluntary renunciation of felicity in the midst of happiness, and of life, when all was alive within and about me. A few short hours before what was the world to me? I lived not: the extremity of despair was a kind of death, which rendered the actual a matter of desire.

But from that despair I had been rescued. Marie had been recovered: my departed felicity had been resuscitated from the tomb. The past had restored my fortunes, and all my eclipsed dreams had reappeared more dazzling than ever: life in fine, a life of youth, of love and enchantment was again spread out before me casting its red rays over my vast and distant horizon. Such a life I could now begin to live: everything within and around me invited to enjoyment. Not an obstacle intervened, not a shackle was visible. I was free, I was happy,—and yet I must die. I had taken but one step in this Eden, and a mysterious duty, still more enchanting than all else, impelled me to recoil and meet my punishment.

Death is a small matter for a soul in disgrace, and already iced over with the cold winds of adversity: but ah, its hand is poignant, it chills to the inmost soul, when it falls upon a heart just expanding into bloom, and as it were reanimated with the joys of existence. I have experienced such hours. For a moment I had been raised from the sepulchre: in that fleeting moment I had been intoxicated with all that was heavenly upon earth, love, devotion and liberty: now, while yet the fumes were hot about my head, fate was bidding me redescend into the tomb, a living corpse!

CHAPTER L.

As the pressure of regret passed away the convulsions of rage seized my breast: with rapid strides I traversed the valley, I

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even prayed its latitude were narrower. Is presented myself at the advance posts of the negroes. They were surprised at my approach, and refused me admittance. Strange necessity! I was compelled to beseech them. Two at last of their number came forth and took upon themselves the office of my guidance to Biassou.

I entered the cavern of the Chief. He was engaged in amusing his leisure with testing various instruments of torture, which were spread around his throne. At the noise made by the guards, who introduced me, he turned his head: my reappearance seemed to astonish him.

'Do you see these?' said he, pointing at the terrific machinery, with which he was surrounded.

I remained calm. I was aware of the cruelty of the *hero of humanity*, and had resolved to endure every torture without one exhibition of pain.

'Is it not so,' continued he with one of his fiendish smiles, 'is it not so, that Léogri was thrice happy in escaping with simple hanging?'

Without deigning a reply I gave him a look of cold disdain.

'Inform Mr. Chaplain of his return,' said he to an aide-de-camp. We remained for a moment without uttering a word gazing each other full in the face. I observed him, while he also espied my movement. At the same moment Rigaud entered: he was agitated, and addressed the generalissimo in a low voice.

'Assemble all the chiefs of the army,' said Biassou with a tranquil air. A quarter of an hour afterwards all the chiefs, habited in their various fantastical costumes were assembled in front of the grotto. Biassou rose from his throne.

'Listen, *Amigos*; the whites count upon attacking us to-morrow at the break of day. Our position is untenable; we must abandon it. Let all be put in motion by the setting of the sun; we must gain the Spanish frontier. Macaya, form the vanguard with your maroon blacks. Padrejan, spike the pieces of artillery taken from Praloto; they can be of no use in these mountains. The braves of Croix-des Bouquets may follow in the rear of Macaya. Toussaint shall succeed him with the blacks of Léogane and Trou. If a griot, male or female, creates the slightest noise, I constitute you executioner of the army. Enough.—Lieutenant Colonel Cloud will distribute the English muskets that were disembarked at Cape Haytien, and will conduct the once free *sang-mêlés* along the by-paths of La Vista.—Cut the throat of every prisoner that remains; get your bul-

lets ready; poison the streams. It will be necessary to cast three tons of arsenic into the fountain whence you bring the camp-water: the colonists will mistake it for sugar, and will drink without distrust. The troops of Limbé, Dondon, and Acul, will march in the rear of Cloud and Toussaint. Obstruct with fragments of rocks, all the avenues to the savannah; massacre along every path; burn every forest. Rigaud, remain near our person. Candi, muster my faithful guard about me. The blacks of Morne-Rogue shall form the rear guard, and shall not evacuate the savannah before the rising of the morrow's sun.'

He turned towards Rigaud, as he added in a low voice, 'They are the blacks of Bug-Jargal; would they might all be crushed here! *Muerta la tropa, muerte el gefé!*'*

'Go, *hermanos*,' said he, again addressing them, 'Candi will bring you your several orders.'

The chiefs bowed and withdrew.

'General,' said Rigaud, 'we must despatch this message of Jean François. Our affairs are threatening; it will have the effect to stay the advance of the whites.'

Biassou suddenly drew it from his pocket.

'It is well you reminded me. But there are many grammatical errors, as they call them, in it, at which the whites will laugh.' He presented me the parchment. 'Listen! have you one lingering wish to save your life? My kindness once more condescends to ask of your obstinacy; aid me in correcting this letter; I will dictate the ideas; you shall write them out in the style of the whites.'

I shook my head in refusal. He grew impatient.

'Will you?'

'No,' I replied.

He urged me again.

'Weigh it well.' And his eye passed from me to the instruments of torture, with which he had been amusing himself.

'It is because I have weighed it well,' replied I, 'that I refuse. You seem to tremble for yourself and your army; you count upon your despatch to the Assembly to retard the march and vengeance of the whites. I do not desire a life which may perhaps serve to save yours. Begin your torture.'

'Ah! ah! *muchaco!*' replied Biassou, thrusting aside the instruments of torture with his foot, 'it seems you have become familiarized with this machinery. I am

* A dead band makes a dead chief.

sorry for it, but I have no time to make a test of them upon your obstinacy. Our position is a dangerous one; we must hasten away. Ah! you refuse to serve me as secretary! Well, well; you have good cause, for I should none the less have put you to death afterwards. No one can live who owns a secret of Biassou; and moreover, my dear friend, I have promised your head to our chaplain.'

He turned towards the obi, who at that moment entered the grotto.

'*Bon per*, is your band ready?'

The latter assented with a silent nod.

'Have you chosen the blacks of Morne-Rouge? They are the only ones in the army who are not ordered to attend to the immediate preparations for departure.'

The obi gave another affirmative sign. Biassou then directed my eye to the large black flag I had previously remarked, hanging in a corner of the grotto.

'That will inform your friends of the moment when they can transfer your epaulette to your lieutenant; at that moment we shall be upon our march. *Apropos*, you have been promenading up and down the country, how did you find the neighboring scenery?'

'I remarked,' replied I coldly, 'still trees enough to hold yourself and all your band.'

'Well, well,' replied he with a forced smile, 'there is a spot you have not yet observed, to which the *bon per* will soon introduce you. Adieu, young captain; a "good night" to *Léogri*.'

He saluted me again with a laugh, which recalled to my imagination the hissing tones of that musical instrument, the *serpent*, made a silent gesture, and turned his back upon me, while the negroes hurried me away. The obi attended us, telling his beads as he went.

CHAPTER LI.

I MARCHED in the midst of the troop without offering any resistance; every struggle would certainly have proved futile. We ascended the ridge of the mountain that was situated upon the east of the savannah, where for a moment we rested from our fatigue; from that spot I cast a last look upon the setting sun, never again to rise over my head. My guides rose up; I followed. We descended into a narrow valley which, at any other moment, would have enchanted me with the beauty of its scenery. A mountain torrent traversed its entire length, and communicated to the rays of the sun a fertile humidity. At

the farther extremity, the torrent plunged into one of those beautiful azure lakes, which abound in the interior mountains of St. Domingo. How often in the days of my felicity had I been wrapped in dreams upon the borders of those beautiful lakes, at the hour of twilight, when their azure hues were changing into a sheet of silver, and when the reflection of the first bright stars of evening sowed the glassy surface with spangles of gold! The hour soon came, but it must soon pass! How beautiful the valley seemed to my eye! There were plane trees of enormous trunk and height; thick bouquets of *mauritis*, a kind of palm, which excludes all other vegetation from beneath its shade; date-trees; magnolias, with their large calices; enormous catalpas, displaying their polished and carved leaves amid the golden clusters of the false ebony; the odier of Canada there mingled its pale yellow leaves with the blue aureoles which attend that species of wild honey-suckle, called by the negroes *coali*. The verdant tresses of vines concealed from view the brown sides of the neighboring rocks. From every quarter of the virgin soil arose a primitive perfume, such as our first parent might have inspired when first he moved amid the young roses of Eden.

We proceeded along a by-path which was traced upon the edge of the torrent. I started with surprise upon beholding the path suddenly cease at the foot of a pointed rock, from the base of which I observed an opening in the form of an arch, through which the waters of the torrent escaped. A low, deafening noise, and a strong rushing wind, proceeded from that natural arch. The negroes took a road to the left, winding unequally along, which seemed to have been hollowed out by the waters of some mountain torrent that had long since dried up. An archway presented itself, half-closed with brambles, hollyhocks, and wild-thorns, that grew within its mouth; a noise like that from the arch at the end of the valley, was audible in that opening. The blacks hurried me along towards it. At the moment I was taking my first steps in this subterranean cavity, the obi approached and addressed me in a disguised voice:

'Hear what I have to predict for you: but one of us two shall ever leave this arch and retrace yonder path.'

I disdained an answer. We advanced along beneath the dark vault; the noise grew louder and deeper; we no longer could distinguish our footsteps. I judged the noise proceeded from a waterfall, and I was not mistaken.

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After ten minutes march along this dark passage, we reached a kind of interior table-rock, constructed by nature in the very centre of the mountain. The larger portion of this semicircular platform was inundated by a torrent which leaped out from the veins of the mountain with a deafening roar. In the rear of this subterranean saloon, the archway formed a sort of dome, which was hung with a yellowish colored ivy. The vault was traversed almost its entire length by a crevice, through which the beams of day penetrated, and the edges of which were crowned with verdant shrubs, gilded at that moment with the rays of the setting sun. At the northern extremity of the platform the torrent lost itself with a deep echoing roar, in a whirlpool, at the bottom of which the wandering rays of light that streamed down through the crevice, seemed to flit and tremble without being able to penetrate. Over the abyss hung an aged tree, whose highest branches were dipped in the foam of the cascade, and the gnarly trunk of which pierced the rock one or two feet beyond its edge. The tree, thus dipping at the same time in the rushing flood its head and roots, which projected their withered arms over the whirlpool, was so despoiled of verdure that you could not distinguish its species. It presented a singular phenomenon—the humidity which impregnated its roots kept it from dying, while the violence of the cataract tore off in succession its new branches as fast as they put forth, and forced it to preserve its arms eternally the same.

CHAPTER LII.

At this terrific spot the blacks halted. I perceived that my death was near. But at that moment, standing near that whirlpool into which I had in some sense voluntarily precipitated myself, the image of that felicity I had a few short hours before rejected, occurred to me, and awakened a regret that bore some resemblance to remorse. Any entreaty with my conductors would have been unworthy of me. A murmur escaped my lips:

'Friends,' said I to the blacks who surrounded me, 'know you how sad it is to perish at twenty, when the heart is full of energy and life, when the soul is loved by her who loves again, and when one leaves behind him eyes that will weep even at that, against which they would shut out the light?'

A fiendish laugh answered my murmur.

It proceeded from the little obi: that malignant spirit, that impenetrable being suddenly approached me.

'Ha! ha! ha! You are mourning for life. *Labado sea Dios*. My only distress was you would have no fear of death.'

It was the same voice and the same laugh which had already wearied out my conjectures.

'Wretch!' said I, 'who are you?'

'You shall soon know,' replied he in a terrible accent, and removing the silver sun which covered his breast, 'Read.'

I bent towards him. Two names were engraved upon the hairy bosom of the obi in whitish letters, hideous and ineffaceable traces impressed by a red-hot iron upon the breasts of the slaves. One of the names was *Effingham*, the other was that of my uncle *D'Auverney*. I was struck dumb with surprise.

'Well, Leopold D'Auverney,' asked the obi, 'does your name call you mine?'

'No,' replied I, astonished to hear myself saluted by my name, and seeking to rally my recollections. Those two names could never have been united upon any other breast than that of the buffoon. But he was dead, the poor dwarf, and besides he was always attached to our family. 'You cannot be Habibrah!'

'The same,' cried he in a voice that pierced my very soul, and removing his bloody *gorra* he loosened his mystic veil. The deformed features of the dwarf were then fully exposed to my eyes; but to the air of foolish gaiety, which I had always recognised in him, had succeeded an expression of defiance and death.

'Great God!' I exclaimed, struck with stupor at the sight, 'are all the dead coming to life? It is Habibrah, my uncle's buffoon.'

The dwarf placed his hand upon his poniard, and exclaimed with a scornful voice, 'His buffoon and his murderer.'

I recoiled with horror.

'His murderer! Emissary of hell! Is it thus you repay his favors?'

'His favors,' he interrupted. 'Say rather his outrages.'

'And did your hand strike him, wretch?'

'My own!' replied he with an expression of chilling horror. 'I buried the keen knife so deeply in his heart that he had not time to awaken from his slumber when he entered upon his death. He raised a feeble cry, "*Help, Habribah!*" I was at hand to help.'

The atrocity of the recital, as well as that of his sang-froid, revolted my sensibilities. 'Wretch! Base assassin! Have you then forgotten the favors he exhibited

towards you? You ate from his table, you slept near his bed——'

'Like a dog. *Como un perro*. Away! I know too much already of favors which were but affronts. I have avenged my wrongs upon him, I shall soon be avenged of you. Listen. Think you that in being a mulatto, a dwarf and deformed, I could not also be a man? Ah! I have a soul, and a soul deeper and stronger than that which I shall soon separate from the body of his young son-in-law. I was given to your uncle as a marmoset. I catered to his pleasures—I amused his spleen. He loved me, you say. I had a place in his heart. Yes, a place intermediate between his monkey and his parrot. I chose to have another, and my poniard opened it.'

A shudder pervaded my limbs.

'Yes,' resumed the dwarf, 'it is I, it is really I; look me in the eye, Leopold D'Auverney. You have laughed at me; now you can tremble before my power and vengeance. But tell me, you recall the proud predilection of your uncle for him, who was called his buffoon! What predilection, *Bon Giu*. As I entered your halls a thousand disdainful smiles saluted me; my stature, my deformities, my features, my ludicrous costume, even the lamentable infirmities of my nature, everything in me and about me was made the subject of the raillery of your execrable and his execrable friends. And for myself, I could not scorn or retire; necessity, *O rabia!* necessity made me mingle my laugh with those I had excited! Answer me; do you believe that similar humiliations would be the proper title for the recognition of a human creature? Do you believe, that they counterbalanced the miseries of the other slaves? Their toils unrelaxed, the scorching rays of the noonday sun, the iron collars, and the scourges of the overseers? Think you, that they were not sufficient to cause a burning, implacable, eternal hatred to germinate in the heart of a man, like the cicatrized stigma of infamy, which brands my breast? Alas, that for such lengthened sufferings my revenge should have been so short! Alas, that I could not have made my odious tyrant feel day by day, and hour by hour, all the torments which were continually springing up for my person! Alas, that he could not, before his death, have known the bitterness of the injured pride, and felt what searing traces of their presence the tears of infamy and rage had left upon a countenance, which had been condemned to one eternal grimace! Alas! it is hard, very hard, to have so long awaited the hour of venge-

ance, and to finish it by one strong stroke of the poniard! Oh, would that he might but have known the hand, that struck him! But I was too impatient to await his last rail! Too soon did the knife pierce him to its haft. He was dead before he could recognise me, and my fury spoiled my revenge! But this time at least it shall be more complete! Look at me; do you not think it will be so? It is true that you could hardly recognise me under the new office I bear. You have never seen me but in an air of laughter and joy; but as nothing forbade my soul from reappearing in my eyes, the visage I wore never resembled myself. You have known only my mask: there, look upon my face.'

It was too frightful to paint.

'Monster,' I cried, 'you deceive yourself. There is the buffoon even in the atrocity of your features and your heart.'

'Speak not of atrocity,' interrupted Habibrah. 'Dream once of the cruelties of your uncle——'

'Wretch,' I replied, 'ingrate, if he was cruel, it was at your instigation! You lament the fate of the unfortunate slaves: but why did you then turn against your brothers the credit which the feebleness of your master always placed in you? Why did you never attempt to mitigate his anger for their mercy?'

'I would have been very sorry to have done so! What? I beseech a white to lessen his atrocity? No! no! I urged him on the contrary to redouble his severe measures towards his slaves in order to hasten the hour of the revolt, that the excesses of the oppression might bring nigh the day of vengeance! I seemed to injure my brethren, but I only served their cause.'

I stood rooted with horror and distraction at so deep a plot of hatred and revenge.'

'Well, well,' continued the dwarf, 'do you yet learn whether I am capacious of a plan and an execution? What say you now of the buffoon, Habibrah? What say you now of your uncle's fool?'

'Accomplish your revenge,' I replied. 'Put me to death; hasten your work.'

He began to move silently back and forth upon the platform, rubbing his little hands for joy.

'But, what if it do not please me to make haste? What if I would enjoy your anguish at my leisure? Attend: Biassou owed me my portion in the booty of the last pillage. As soon as I entered the camp I demanded your life as my share. He readily granted the request—'

and now it is mine! I am amusing myself with it. You shall soon follow that cascade down that whirlpool. Be calm. But I ought to tell you beforehand, that having discovered the retreat where your wife is concealed, I have this day urged Biassou to burn over the forest,—the work will soon be begun. Thus perishes your cursed race. Your uncle fell by the cold steel; you shall perish by this roaring water; and Marie shall perish by fire!

'Wretch! wretch!' I exclaimed, making a motion to cast myself upon him. He turned towards his band of negroes:

'Make haste: bind him. His hour is nigh.'

The negroes in silence began to encircle me with the cords they had brought with them. All at once I thought I heard the distant barkings of a dog; but I took the noise for an illusion caused by the roaring and moaning of the cascade. The negroes soon finished their fettering, and drew me near the bellowing whirlpool which was to engulf me. The dwarf, crossing his arms, gave me a look of triumphant joy. I raised my eyes towards the crevice to escape his odious sight and take one last look of heaven. At that moment a bark, still deeper and clearer than before, arose. The enormous head of Rask appeared hanging over the aperture. I started up. The dwarf cried out, 'Hasten!' The blacks, who had not overheard the barking, were preparing to launch me forth in the middle of the abyss—

CHAPTER LIII.

'COMRADES!' cried a voice of thunder.

All turned about; it was Bug-Jargal, He was hanging over the edge of the crevice; a red plume was waving upon his head.

'Comrades,' he repeated, 'hold!'

The blacks fell prostrate to the earth. He continued;

'I am Bug-Jargal.'

The blacks beat their foreheads against the hard rock, raising cries the import of which it was difficult to distinguish.

'Release the prisoner,' cried the chief.

At this moment the dwarf seemed to have recovered from the stupor into which the unforeseen apparition had thrown him. He suddenly seized the hands of the blacks who were ready to cut my cords.

'How! What is this?' he cried. *Que quiere decir eso?* Then raising his head towards the crevice where Bug-Jargal stood, 'Chief of Morne-Rouge, what would you here?'

'I come,' replied Bug-Jargal, 'to command my brothers.'

'To be sure,' replied the dwarf, choking with rage, 'they are the blacks of Morne-Rouge. But by what right,' added he, raising his voice, 'do you dispose of my prisoner?'

'I am Bug-Jargal,' replied the chief.

The blacks again beat their foreheads against the earth.

'Bug-Jargal,' replied Habibrah, 'cannot undo what Biassou has once done. The white was given me by Biassou. I will that he die: he shall die. *Vosotros*,' said he to the blacks. 'Obey! Hurl him into the abyss.'

At the powerful command of the dreaded obi the blacks arose and advanced towards me. I thought the die was cast.

'Unhand the prisoner,' cried Bug-Jargal.

In a twinkling I was free again. My surprise equalled the rage of the obi. He would have flung himself upon me—the blacks arrested his fury. Then his anger burst forth in the most horrid imprecations.

'Demonios! rabia! infierno de mi alma! What? wretches, do you refuse to obey? Do you disown mi voz! Why did I waste el tiempo in listening to este maledicho! I ought to have hurled him instantly to the fishes del baratro! In seeking to make my revenge complete, I have lost it. O rabia de Sathan! Escuchate vosotros! If you do not obey me, if you do not cast the accursed white into the torrent, I will curse you! Your locks shall become white, mosquitos and gnats shall devour your children, your limbs and your arms shall bend like reeds and crisp like leaves; your breath shall scorch your throats like hot sand; you shall die by a speedy death, and your spirits shall be condemned for ever to turn the wheels of a mill as large as a mountain, in the valleys of the moon, where eternal winter reigns.'

The scene had made me shudder with conflicting sensations. The only one of my species within that dark and damp cavern, surrounded by negroes, who resembled so many demons, suspended, in a measure, over the brink of that abyss, threatened, by turns, by the hideous dwarf, and deformed and imprecating sorcerer, whose party-colored vestment and pointed mitre were just discernible by the pale rays of the departing day, and protected as I was by the giant black, who appeared at the only point from which one could catch a glimpse of heaven; it seemed as if I were standing at the very portals of hell, awaiting the sentence of the destruction or the salvation of my soul, and was playing a

part in the fierce struggle between my good angel and my evil genius.

The blacks trembled with terror at the maledictions of the obi. He sought to profit by their indecision, as he cried out,

'I will, that the white die. Obey! he shall die.' 'He shall live,' replied Bug-Jargal, in a voice of thunder, that echoed through the dome. 'I am Bug-Jargal: my father was a King in the country of Kakongo, and administered justice at the threshold of his gate.'

The blacks again fell prostrate to the earth. The chief continued:

'Brothers! Go, tell Biassou not to display, on the summit, the black flag, which is to announce to the whites the death of the captive: the captive has saved the life of Bug-Jargal, and Bug-Jargal wills that he live.'

They arose again from the rock. Bug-Jargal flung his red plume into the midst. The chief of the detachment crossed his arms upon his breast, and took up the regal emblem with great reverence: they then departed without uttering a word. The obi disappeared with them in the shades of the subterranean cavern.

I should endeavor in vain, comrades, to describe to you the the situation in which I found myself. I fixed my moist eyes upon Pierrot; who, upon his part, watched me with a singular expression of gratitude and pride.

'God be praised,' said he at last, 'all is safe. Brother, return by the road you came. You will find me in the valley.'

He made a parting signal with his hand and retired from the crevice.

CHAPTER LIV.

ANXIOUS to reach the place of appointment, and to learn the marvellous blessing which had rescued me from the jaws of death, I prepared to leave the terrific cavern.

At the instant I was directing my steps towards the subterranean gallery, an unforeseen obstacle barred the entrance. It was Habibrah. The revengeful obi had not followed the negroes, as I had thought: he had concealed himself behind a pile of rocks, awaiting the propitious moment for his vengeance. That moment had arrived.

The dwarf suddenly reappeared, and saluted me with a malicious grimace. I was alone and disarmed. A poniard, the same which had discharged the office of a crucifix, was glistening in his grasp—as it flashed upon my view I involuntarily retreated from the stroke.

'Ha! ha! *maledicho!* You thought to escape me. But the fool is less a fool than yourself. I have you now, and this time I will not delay your death. Your friend Bug-Jargal has delayed it in vain. You shall meet him at the place of appointment in yonder valley, but the floods of this torrent shall be charged with bearing your mangled body thither.'

As he finished these words he brandished the poniard and darted towards me.

'Monster!' I exclaimed, retreating along the table-rock, 'would you become, not only a murderer but an assassin also?'

'Revenge!' he replied, gnashing his teeth.

At that moment I had reached the brink of the precipice: he dashed suddenly towards me to pierce me with a single stroke of his poniard. I darted aside and avoided the shock. His foot slipped upon the viscous moss with which the moist rock was partially clothed: he rolled towards the declivity, that had been rounded off by the action of the flood.

'Ten thousand demons!' cried he, roaring with despair. He had fallen into the abyss—

I have told you, that one root of the old tree protruded from the clefts of the granite a little beneath the edge. The dwarf caught it in his fall; his spangled cloak became entangled in the knotted prongs of the stump, and availing himself of that support, he clung to it with all the energy of despair. His pointed bonnet loosened itself from his head; necessity made him drop his poniard, and the weapon of the assassin, along with the tinkling *gorra* of the buffoon, disappeared, echoing far down the depths of the boiling cataract.

Habibrah, suspended over this horrible whirlpool, struggled violently to regain a foothold upon the platform; but his diminutive arms could not reach the edge of the escarpment, and his nails were worn off in powerless efforts to penetrate the viscous surface of the rock, which sloped down into the dark abyss. He howled with rage.

The least effort on my part would have been sufficient to precipitate him headlong; but it would have been an act of cowardice, and I did not dream of the artifice. My moderation struck him. Thanking heaven for the rescue, which had been so unexpectedly sent me, I had resolved to abandon the wretch to his fate, and I was proceeding to leave the subterranean saloon, when, all at once, I heard the voice of the dwarf rise up from the abyss, in the most suppliant and mournful tones.

'Master!' cried he, 'master, do not

leave me! Mercy! In the name of the *Bon Giu*, leave not a human creature, whom you can save, to die, impenitent and guilty. Alas! my strength is failing me; the branch is slipping and bending in my hands, the weight of my body is dragging me down; I must loose my hold, or it will soon break. Alas! master! this fearful whirlpool is boiling up beneath me. *Nom-bre Santo de Dios!* Have you no pity for your poor buffoon? He is very guilty! But will you not prove that the whites are better than the mulattoes, the masters than their slaves?

I had returned to the edge of the precipice in the agony of my agitation, and the tarnished rays of light, which still streamed down from the crevice, exhibited upon the loathsome features of the dwarf an expression I could never forget; it was that of prayer and agony.

'Senor Leopold,' he continued, encouraged by the act of pity in my return, 'is it possible that a human being can see one of his race in the horrible position in which I am, and not stretch forth a hand to save him? Alas, master! help! a little aid will save me from death. What is a little for you is everything for me! Draw me up to you. Mercy! master. My gratitude will equal all my former crimes.'

'Wretch!' I interrupted, 'stir not their memory.'

'Only to detest them, master! Ah, be more generous than I! Oh heaven! Oh my God! I am failing, my arm grows weaker!—*Ay desdichado!* The hand!—your hand! Extend your hand! in the name of the mother who bore you!'

I cannot describe to you the excess of anguish which marked his accents of alarm and suffering. I forgot all. He was no longer an enemy, a traitor, an assassin; he was only an unfortunate dwarf, whom a slight effort of mine could rescue from a frightful death. His cries were imploring me in the most piteous strains. Words and reproaches would have been useless and ridiculous; the need of assistance was urgent, it must be instant or never. I bent down, and kneeling over the edge of the abyss, supported myself with one of my arms against the trunk of the tree, the root of which sustained the unfortunate Habibrah, and extended him the other. As soon as it came within reach he seized it between his two hands with a powerful and fiendish grasp; and instead of seeking to remount, as I expected, I found he only sought to drag me along with him into the abyss! Had not the trunk of the tree been a sure and solid support, I should have inevitably been drawn over the edge by the

violence of the unexpected struggle, which the wretch put forth to accomplish his revenge.

'Villain!' I exclaimed, 'what would you?'

'Revenge,' he replied, with a hollow infernal laugh.

'Ah, I have you at last! Imbecile fool! you have betrayed yourself! I hold you now! You were safe and I was lost. It is you who have voluntarily flung yourself within the jaws of the shark. A few groans, with a few feigned roars, have accomplished all. My consolation is full, for my own death will bring me my revenge. You are caught in the snare, *amigo*, and I am to have a human companion for the fishes of the blue lake of the valley without.'

'Ah, traitor!' I exclaimed, struggling against his efforts; 'is this the recompense you pay for my willingness to rescue you from death?'

'Yes,' he replied; 'I knew I could save my own life along with yours, but I prefer to perish with you. I thirst for your death more than for my life. Come—come with me!'

With these words his browned and callous hands curled like cords about mine, with superhuman energy; his eyes flashed fire, his lips foamed like those of a madman; the strength, the failure of which he was, a moment before, so piteously deploring, was renewed by his rage and vengeance; his feet were braced like two levers against the perpendicular face of the rock, and he bounded like a tiger upon the root, which being entangled with his sorcerer's vestments, sustained him in spite of himself. It was his aim to break the root, and thus fall with his entire weight to drag me down behind him. Occasionally an effort to gnaw, in his demoniac rage, the obstinate root, would interrupt the hellish grimace which his monstrous countenance offered. It seemed as if the infernal demon of that terrific cavern was seeking to drag his prey down into his palace of a bottomless and rayless gulf.

Fortunately one of my knees had been arrested by an anfractuosity in the rock; my arm was partially entwined about the tree, which supported me; and thus against all the efforts of the dwarf, I struggled with all the coolness and energy, which a hope of safety can impart to such critical moments. From time to time I with difficulty raised my breast, and called out with all my strength, *Bug-Jargal!* But the roar of the cascade, and the distance, left me but faint hopes of his being able to hear my voice.

The dwarf, however, who had not calculated upon so much resistance, redoubled his furious efforts. I began to lose my strength, though the struggle may have lasted even less time than it has taken to recount it. The insupportable dragging of the demoniac dwarf had paralyzed my arm; my vision began to grow dim; livid and confused glimmering shot across my eyes; indistinct rumblings crowded upon my ears. I perceived that the root was ready to break; the death-laugh was upon the lips of the monster, and the whirlpool with its tumbling and foaming and roaring, seemed to approach my head!

Before abandoning myself in despair to my fate I made a final effort. Collecting all my remaining strength, I cried at the top of my voice, *Bug-Jargal!* The deep bark of a dog resounded through the dome—

I recognized the voice of Rask, and turned my head. Bug-Jargal and his faithful dog were far above me at the edge of the crevice. I know not whether my cries, or his uneasiness at my delay brought him back. He saw my danger.

'Hold on!' cried he, in a tone of mingled hope and agony.

'Come,' said Habibrah, beginning to apprehend my rescue, and foaming in his frenzy—'Come now. It is time.'

'He collected the ebbing energies of his supernatural strength for a last and final struggle; at the same moment my other arm, fatigued and benumbed, lost its grasp upon the trunk of the tree. My moments seem to have been numbered, when I felt a powerful attempt to draw me from the edge of the precipice. It was Rask!

At a signal from his master he had leaped from the great height of the crevice and alighted upon the platform; his jaws were firmly fastened in the skirts of my coat. Habibrah had spent all his physical powers in his last effort: I summoned up mine again to withdraw my hand. His swollen and relaxing fingers began to slacken their grasp—they opened and my arm was free! Falling with his entire weight upon the root, he had so long been endeavoring to crush, it gave way; and just as Rask gave me a second violent pull from behind, the form of the black was hanging poised above the foam of the roaring cascade; a shriek, a curse, an echo from hell burst from his lips in despair, as he darted far down the depths of the abyss. A rebound, a distant yell, an indistinct plunge—and all was over!

Such was the end of my uncle's buffoon.

CHAPTER LV.

THAT fearful scene, with its obstinate struggle, and terrific denouement, had crushed me with its weight. I was powerless; I knew nothing; consciousness had abandoned me. The voice of Bug-Jargal recalled me to life.

'Brother,' he cried, 'hasten and leave that spot! The sun will have set in a half hour. I will await you. Follow Rask.'

His friendly accents again invigorated me with hope, strength, and courage. I arose. The dog bounded rapidly along the subterranean avenue. His bark guided me through the dark passage. After a few minutes I again discovered the light of day; at length we reached the entrance, and I respired freely. As I departed from the black and humid archway, I recalled the prediction of the black at the moment of our entering it. 'But one of us two shall ever retrace his steps along this road.' His object had been frustrated, but his prophecy had been fulfilled.

CHAPTER LVI.

HAVING reached the valley I rejoined Bug-Jargal. Throwing myself into his arms, I would have put a thousand questions, but my feelings overpowered my utterance.

'Listen,' said he; 'your wife, mysister, is in safety. I have deposited them in the camp of the whites, with your father, who commands the advance guard. I am anxious to surrender myself a prisoner, to save the lives of the ten hostages, who are to die in my stead. Your parent bade me hasten and prevent your death: the ten blacks should only be executed after you were, and Biassou was to announce your death by displaying the black flag upon the highest peak of the mountains. I ran to your rescue; Rask was my guide; and, thank heaven, I arrived in time. You shall live, and I also.'

He extended his hand as he added: 'Brother, are you satisfied?'

Again did I cast myself into his arms. I conjured him not to abandon me, but to live with me among the whites: I promised him an office in the Colonial army. He interrupted me wildly—

'Have I ever thus proposed to you to enroll yourself in my bands?'

I gazed upon him in silence, as I perceived my error. He added in a pleasant tone,

'Come—let us hasten our return, to assure your wife of your rescue.'

The proposal was but an echo of the anxiety of my own heart. Intoxicated with happiness I arose, and we set forward. The black knew the road, and moved on in front. Rask followed—

At this point D'Auverney ceased, and cast a look of anguish about him. The perspiration collected in large drops upon his forehead; he hid his face in his hands. Rask watched his gestures with an air of restlessness.

'Yes, it is always thus you gaze on me,' he muttered to himself.

At the same moment he started in violent agitation from his seat, and left the tent. The sergeant and the dog followed him.

CHAPTER LVII.

'I'll engage,' cried Henri to his comrades, 'that we are drawing near the catastrophe. It will provoke me exceedingly to have any evil fate befall Bug-Jargal. He was a famous fellow, a noble soul!'

Paschal removed from his parched lips the neck of the osier-covered bottle, as he added:

'I would give twelve panniers of the best Port to have a look at the cocoa-shell, the old African king used to drain at a draught.'

Alfred, who was just in the mood of thrumming his guitar to an air, interrupted him and begged Lieutenant Henri to tie up his tags:

'This negro,' he added, 'tantalyzes my curiosity much. Only I wish I dare ask D'Auverney if he recollected the air of *la hermosa Padilla*.'

'Biassou is much the more remarkable character,' replied Paschal. 'To be sure his filthy wine might have been no great affair, but at least the fellow knew what a Frenchman was. Had I been his prisoner I would have allowed him to pull my moustaches for a few piasters more, than the city of Goa paid a Portuguese captain. I assure you, my creditors are even more pitiless than Biassou.'

'Apropos, captain! There are the four Louis d'ors I owe you,' exclaimed Henri, as he flung his purse to Paschal.

The captain returned a glance of surprise at his generous debtor, who might more justly have been termed his creditor. Henri hastily resumed:

'Come, comrades; what think you of the tale our captain has rehearsed?'

'Upon my word,' replied Alfred, 'I have not been a very attentive listener, but I must confess I had expected to hear something more interesting from those brown-study lips of D'Auverney. But after all, we had a romance in prose at the outset, and I like romances in prose. What air shall we chant it to? To tell the truth, the history of Bug-Jargal gave me a fit of ennui, it is too long.'

'You are right,' said the aide-de-camp Paschal, 'it is too long. If I had not had my pipe and my flask by my side I should have passed a wretched night. Notice by the way, what a crowd of absurdities it contains. How can one believe, for example, that that little baboon of a sorcerer, that what d'ye call him—*Habit-bas*?—how can one believe that he would be willing to drown himself in order to drown his enemy—'

Henri interrupted him with a smile.

'That is, in water, Captain Paschal. But in generous old Jamaica, that's quite another case; is it not so, captain? For my part, what amused me most during this recital of D'Auverney, was to watch that maimed dog raise his large head and prick up his ears every time the name of Bug-Jargal was pronounced.'

'Ha! ha!' replied Paschal; 'that's just the opposite of what I have seen the good old grandmothers of Celadas do, when the priest came across the name of Jesus in the Missal; then there was a simultaneous bobbing of heads. One day as I entered the church with a dozen cuirasseurs—'

The discharge of the sentinel's musket announced that D'Auverney had returned. All were silent again. He moved back and forth a few times without opening his lips, and with his hands crossed upon his breast.

The old sergeant, Thaddeus, who had resumed his seat in a corner of the tent, secretly watched his motions, and strove to be engaged with the caresses of Rask, that the captain might not perceive his embarrassment.

At length D'Auverney resumed.

CHAPTER LVIII.

RASK followed us. The most elevated rock of the valley was now no longer tinged by the sun: one glimmer of light flashed upon the mountain and then vanished away.

The black started forward at a rapid

pace, and dragged me forcibly along by the hand.

'Listen,' said he.

A low deaf noise, like the discharge of a piece of artillery, echoed faintly along the vales, and prolonged its sounds upon the adjacent hills.

'It is the signal,' said the negro in a voice of anguish. 'That was the echo of a cannon, was it not?'

I gave him an affirmative nod.

At two bounds he reached an elevated rock. I followed, as rapidly as I could. He crossed his arms and began to weep bitterly.

'Yonder,' said he to me.

I looked toward the quarter, which he pointed out, and saw the peak he had shown me upon my interview with Marie, the only one which the setting rays still shone upon, and above it waved the folds of the black flag.

Here again D'Auverney paused.

I have since learned that Biassou, in his haste to depart, and believing me dead, had ordered them to raise the hateful standard before the return of the detachment, who were charged with my execution.

Bug-Jargal was still standing lost in stupor, with his arms crossed and gazing at the ill-omened flag. Suddenly he turned about and took a few rapid steps, as if to descend the rock.

'Oh, my God! my God! My unfortunate companions!' broke from his lips. 'Did you hear the cannon?' he asked as he turned towards me.

I made no answer.

'Well, brother, that is the signal; they are leading them out to be shot.'

His head fell upon his breast. He again approached me.

'Go; recover your wife, brother; Rask will conduct you.'

He whistled an air of his native Kakongo; the dog wagged his tail and seemed anxious to direct his eye towards a certain point in the valley. Bug-Jargal seized my hand, as the swelling tears burst forth; but his sighs were convulsive.

'Farewell,' cried he with a firm voice. He was lost beneath the foliage of the trees which surrounded us.

I was petrified at this movement. The little I could comprehend of what was to happen, was sufficient to awaken my apprehensions of evil. Rask, seeing his master disappear, advanced to the edge of the rock and dropped his head, uttering a plaintive howl. He returned to my feet with every sign of despair; his large eyes

seemed to moisten with tears. He regarded me restively, then returned towards the spot where his master had disappeared, and broke out in repeated barks. I understood his signal; I had the same fears with himself. I took a few paces by his side, and he set out, scenting the track of Bug-Jargal.

He would soon have been lost to my sight, though I ran with all my remaining strength, had he not, from time to time, halted to give me an opportunity to overtake him. In this way we traversed several valleys, and at last escaped from the thick woods and mounted a few covered hillocks. At length——

The voice of D'Auverney failed. A cloud of despair seemed to have settled over all his features; he could hardly articulate these words:

'Continue, Thaddeus; I have no more strength left than an old woman.'

The old sergeant was no less agitated than his captain; but a habit of obedience showed its ruling force.

'By your leave,—— since you desire it, my captain. I must tell you, my officers, that although Bug-Jargal, otherwise called Pierrot, was a noble negro, very affectionate, very strong, and very courageous, and the first brave of the land,—always excepting yourself, if it please you, my captain,—I was none the less terribly enraged with him for which I shall never forgive myself, though my captain has pardoned me; and therefore, my captain, after learning that your death was fixed for the evening of the second day, I got into a wild fit of rage against the poor prisoner, and it was with an infernal pleasure I announced to him that either he or ten of his companions should go to keep you company, and should be shot down, as we say, by way of reprisal. At this announcement he manifested no alarm, but an hour afterwards he escaped by practicing a——'

D'Auverney made a gesture of impatience. Thaddeus proceeded:

'Well, let that pass. When we saw the big black flag upon the mountain, as he did not return,—and that astonished us,—by your leave, my officers, we took the discharge of the cannon for the signal, and I was commanded to conduct the ten negroes out to the place of execution, called the Great Devil's Mouth, and a little way off from the camp. Well, what matters it! When we reached the spot, you perceive, my officers, that it was not to give them a free field. I had them bound, as was proper, and arranged my platoons. Just then out darted that true

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Galtar from the forest; his arms were clasped about my neck; he almost suffocated me.'

'I am come in time,' said he. 'Good day Thaddeus.'

'Lo, my officers, that was all he said, and off he ran to release his compatriots. I was dumb with stupefaction. Then, by your leave, my captain, there began a great struggle of generosity between the black and himself, and would that it had lasted but a few moments longer. Never mind—yes, I must blame myself; it was I who made them cease the contention. He took the place of the blacks. At that moment his big dog—poor Rask!—he leapt out of the wood and seized me by the throat—. Well would it have been, my captain, had he held on a few moments longer—. But Pierrot made a signal, and the poor dog released me. Bug-Jargal could not, however, prevent him from running and crouching at his feet. Then I thought you dead, my captain—I was choking with rage—I cried—'

The sergeant raised his hand and looked at his captain, but he could not articulate the fatal word 'fire.'

'Bug-Jargal fell. A ball shattered the paw of his dog. From that hour, my officers,' (and the sergeant dropped his head in sadness) 'from that hour he has been lame. I heard some faint groans in the opposite wood. I entered it; it was yourself, my captain. A ball had pierced you at the very moment you were emerging to save the noble negro. Yes, my captain, you groaned, but not for yourself; it was over the body of Bug-Jargal. Bug-Jargal was dead. They carried you to the camp; you were wounded, but less dangerously than he, for you recovered; thanks to the care of Madame Marie.'

The sergeant paused. D'Auverney, in a low and painful tone of voice, repeated the words:

'Bug-Jargal was dead.'

Thaddeus dropped his eyes as he added. 'And he has left me to live. It is enough for me.'

CONCLUSION.

THE readers of romance have pushed a concession into a law, and are in the habit of exacting at the hands of the narrator, definite elucidations of the fate of all the different *dramatis personæ*, for whom an interest may have been awakened. With a view to gratify that habit, researches have been instituted upon the ultimate fate of Captain Leopold D'Auverney, to-

gether with that of his sergeant and his dog. The reader will recall the sombre melancholy of the captain, as well as the fact of its proceeding from the double cause of the untimely death of Bug-Jargal, and of the subsequent loss of his dear Marie, who had only escaped the massacre and pillage of Fort Galifet, to perish in the first conflagration of Cape Haytien. With reference to the captain himself, the archives of the nation furnish us the following facts:

The day after an important battle, gained by the troops of the French Republic over the combined armies of Europe, the Brigadier-General M——, who was invested with the chief command, was seated in his tent alone, and digesting, after the hasty notes of his chief staff officer, the report which was to be despatched to the National Convention, upon the victory of the former evening. An aide-de-camp entered the tent to announce that a Representative of the people was in attendance to confer with him. The general had acquired an unconquerable abhorrence of that species of ambassadors in red bonnets, which 'The Mountain' deputized to the camp to degrade and decimate the staff; a sort of titled delators, empowered by the several Bureaux with the prerogatives of espionage upon glory. It would, however, have been dangerous to refuse the visits of any of the gang, especially after a victory. The bloody idol of those days was a great lover of illustrious victims; and the sacrificial priests of the 'Place de la Revolution' were ready to go mad for joy, when they were able, by a single stroke, to cut off a head and a crown, were it only one of thorns, like that of Louis XVI, or of flowers, like those of the young daughters of Verdun, or of laurels, like those of Custine, or of André Chenier. The general, therefore, ordered his aide to introduce the Representative.

After a few ambiguous and guarded felicitations upon the recent triumph of the Republican arms, the Representative approaching the general, said in an under voice:

'That's not all, citizen general. It is not enough to conquer the enemies without, we must also exterminate those within.'

'What is your pleasure, citizen Representative,' replied the general.

'There is in your army,' replied the Commissioner of the Convention with a mysterious shrug, 'a captain by name Leopold D'Auverney: he serves in the thirty-second demi-brigade. Do you know him, General?'

'Yes, certainly,' answered the general. 'I have just been reading a circumstantial report from the adjutant general, commanding the thirty-second demi-brigade, which has immediate reference to his case. The thirty-second has in him an excellent captain.'

'How, citizen general?' interrupted the Representative, drawing up with an air of hauteur. 'Have you dared to assign him another grade?'

'I will not hide the fact, citizen Representative, that such was really my intention —'

The Commissioner again interrupted the General with an impetuous fervor.

'The rejoicings of victory blind you, General M —! Be on your guard as to what you do and what you say. If you would warm in your bosom those serpents who are the enemies of the people, tremble lest the people in crushing the serpents do not crush you along with them. That Leopold D'Auverney is an aristocrat, a counter-revolutionist, a royalist, a feuil-lant, and a Girondist! Public justice cries aloud for his blood. He must be delivered up to me this very hour.'

'I cannot grant it,' replied the General coldly.

'What? *Cannot?*' resumed the Representative with increased emotion. 'Are you not aware, General M — that there exists no power so unlimited as mine? The Republic commands, and you *cannot!* Listen to me: out of condescension to the success of your arms I will read you the note which has been transmitted, respecting that D'Auverney, and which I must return with his body to the public accuser. It is an extract from a long list of names, and I hope I shall not be forced to place your name at the bottom of the roll. Listen.'

'LEOPOLD AUVERNEY—ci-devant DE (pal-pable aristocracy)—Captain in the thirty-second demi-brigade, convicted.'

Primo: Of having recounted in a conventicle of conspirators a pretended counter-revolutionary history, tending to ridicule the principles of equality and liberty, and to exalt the ancient superstitions known under the names of *royalty* and *religion*.

Secundo: Of having employed expressions condemned by all good *sans-culottes* to characterize divers memorable events, and especially the enfranchisement of the late blacks of St. Domingo.

Tertio: Of having uniformly employed the word *monsieur* in said recital and never the word *citoyen*.

Quarto et ultimo: Of having by afore-

said recital secretly conspired to the overthrow of the Republic, in favor of the faction of Girondists and Brissotists. He deserves death!

'There, General, what think you of that? Will you still protect the traitor? Can you hesitate any longer to deliver up to vengeance the enemy of his country?'

'That enemy of his country,' replied the General in a dignified tone of voice, 'has sacrificed his life for her honor. In reply to the extract from your report let me read you an extract from mine. Listen to me in turn.'

'LEOPOLD D'Auverney, Captain in the thirty-second demi-brigade decided the late victory, which my arms achieved. A formidable redoubt had been thrown up by the allied forces: it was the keystone of the battle: it must be carried, or all was lost. The death of the brave, who should first attack it, was certain. Captain D'Auverney offered up his life on the altar: he carried the redoubt, was slain upon its walls, and victory was ours. The sergeant Thaddeus, of the the thirty-second, and a large dog were found dead over his body. We suggest to the National Convention to pass a decree, that Captain D'Auverney has merited well of his country.'

'You perceive, citizen Representative,' continued the General calmly, 'there is a little difference between our messages: both of us are despatching a list to the Convention. The same name is found upon the two lists. You denounce him under the title of a traitor, and I honor him with that of a hero. You would devote him to ignominy, and I to glory. You would fit him out with a gallows, and I with trophies: well, well! Every one to his taste. Happy, however, for the brave man to have escaped your tomb by a forestalling death in battle. Go, praised! He whom you would have sent to death, is already dead. He can wait your motion.'

The Commissioner, enraged to find that his conspiracy had vanished with his conspirator, muttered between his teeth,

'Dead, eh? Well that's a pity!'

'There's hope yet,' replied the General with indignation. 'There's one resource still left for you, citizen Representative of the people. Go, seek out the body of Captain D'Auverney from beneath the rubbish of stone, and powder, and earth and balls, near the redoubt. Who knows but the bullets of the enemy have been mindful of your affection, and have spared the skull of the corpse? It would make a grand victim for the National guillotine.'

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