

brown curls that drooped over the young seigneur's shoulders.

"It will never come, lad, never. The Jesuits have the queen-mother's ear too surely for her to aid Port Royal. Years will go by and the ruins will fall around us one by one, till we die forgotten, for what is a beggared nobleman hiding in the wilderness to the painted women who rule Versailles?"

Biencourt removed his doublet to ease the pain. It was no scratch Imbert saw, but a long slash crosswise on the white flesh, which was swollen around it. The ex-pirate shook his head and perked his thick lips, for such cuts were dangerous.

"Can you put something on it?"

"Yes—no—that is there is nothing here but—"

"Out with it man."

"I know where there is something, an Indian herb, that will set all right within a week. A minute and I can lay my hand on it but there is a story to tell first. Indeed, methinks, I trampled the laws of Port Royal underfoot."

Biencourt extended his shapely hand, half hidden by long lace ruffles.

"By virtue of our authority as Seigneur of Port Royal, and Vice-Admiral for the King we pardon thee," he said mockingly.

Imbert bowed, then remembering the duel began to laugh too.

"It was the day Memberton died. The black-ropes stood about him waiting and muttering prayers for his soul while the old chief lay silent on the bed. I was there. I saw it all and cursed them underneath my breath and stood and watched for death to come. Ah, he was a grand man for an Indian, a grand man! Bye and bye he stirred and I saw his