

minded him of that which had once been music to them. As he was well acquainted with the Indian dialects, he readily comprehended the reply, which was in the affirmative.

"'Tis strange," cried the questioner, unconscious that he uttered his thoughts aloud, "that her restless spirit should haunt my path, and pour its wailings on my ear, in the very face of day. Aye, and in the night it comes stealing over the waves. The woods and hills repeat the strain. Hark! hark! methought I heard it even now."

St. Amante listened, but the distant murmur of the waves, and the soft, low breathing of his sleeping infant, were the only sounds that met his throbbing ear; and then, it struck him as strange, that the boy should answer in the Indian tongue, to words he had uttered in his own language.

"How happens it," cried he, "that thou repliest in Mexican to what I speak in French! Dost thou understand my tongue?"

"I cannot speak it—it is foreign to my tongue, though my ears comprehend it," answered the black in a sullen tone.

"That is passing strange, my pretty youth," replied the Buccaneer, with an incredulous smile. "So young, and yet a practised deceiver! Where got ye such imperfect knowledge; or rather, how came ye by such depths of guile?"

A flash of haughty resentment lighted up the lustrous orbs of Zamor, as he listened to the sarcastic remarks of the Buccaneer; but he suddenly softened their expression, and assuming a tone of deep pathos, replied:

"I served a Spaniard once, and he was married to one of your nation, a young and lovely lady, who had forsaken her country and parental roof, for him; and from the eloquent meaning of her eye, I learned to comprehend her words, and understand her tongue. Oh! how she loved the commandante—lived, breathed, alone for him—and, yet, he slew her!"

"Slew her!" reiterated the Buccaneer, with a start of painful interest.

"Yes; he loved another, and killed my mistress that he might wed her rival! but, 'tis said, her spirit haunts the place where she was most unkindly done to death."

"Imp of darkness! do you mock me?" exclaimed the pirate in a furious tone, seizing the black boy by the arm, and regarding him with a look that seemed to wither up his soul; for he perceived that the tale was levelled against himself. Yet the terror and surprise the youth evinced, were so naturally and genuinely displayed, that the Buccaneer half repented of his violence, and added in a milder tone: "I slew her; but she was false! and

if her spirit now stood before me, I would avouch it to her face—and were the deed to do again—why, then again I should do it!" By chance he struck his foot against the cradle in the vehemence of his speech, and awoke the infant, who opened his blue eyes, and fixed them on his agitated sire.

The calm look of the innocent and unconscious orphan, softened the heart of St. Amante, and hushed to sleep the warring and tempestuous passions that lately disturbed its inmost core. He took it up in his arms, and examined its features very attentively; but how could he mistake the bright blue eye, the fair skin and glittering ringlets? Nature asserted her rights; and he imprinted a paternal kiss on the ivory brow of the neglected babe.

The child, unused to his presence, and terrified at finding himself in the arms of a stranger, screamed violently, and stretched out his little hands towards the black, with an impatient and eager gesture. Zamor took him from his father, and tenderly soothed and caressed him, till the pleased infant twined its fair fingers among the raven locks of the ebon complexioned youth, and quickly sank into a deep and placid slumber.

"How doth it happen, Zamor, that my little son should cling as fondly to thy bosom, as if he ne'er had known a fairer, dearer pillow? To some babes thy colour would have made thee rather an object of abhorrence than of love."

"I know the woman who tends upon him, and often have supplied her place, and rocked his cradle. Black skins, my lord, cover not always unkindly hearts! Fair complexions do sometimes veil the black—deceitful—treacherous heart!" and he fixed his piercing eyes on the face of St. Amante, till those of the Buccaneer quailed beneath their gaze.

The pirate frowned, and taking the sleeping infant from the arms of its sable nurse, wrapped it in his mantle, and abruptly quitted the ajoupa.

CHAPTER X.

"FRI.—Come; is the bride ready to go to church?"

"CAP.—Ready to go; but never to return."

ALMERIA GUARDA sat in her own apartment, splendidly arrayed for her bridal, and seldom had any mirror reflected a face and form of greater beauty, than hers appeared in her nuptial attire. She leaned her head on her fair arm, and a thousand hopes and fears thronged her bosom, and lent a bright but ever varying color to her polished cheek. She was about to receive St. Amante's vows, and to pronounce those binding and irrevocable ones, that would make her his for ever. The