

Scotch merchantman. We were fighting hand to hand on her red decks and I saved Pierre from a raw-boned half-naked Scotchman who took him unawares. "Merci!" said Pierre to me, changing swords and giving me his diamond-hilted one. "Merci!" he said again to the Scot I had brought down and then drew his knife across the fellow's throat. There was a wife and little girl with him too, and when they brought lamps to clear decks, these two were lying on the dead man's body. D'Auvergne got them I think. He was Pierre's favourite, a dark sullen dog I never liked."

Biencourt shook his head.

"It was brutish work."

"Yes, yes," assented Imbert eagerly, "but I took no part beyond the fighting. I was mad for war in those days, and they had proscribed me in France so what could I do? Ah, it was rare sport with a man's life in his hands a dozen times a day and the swirl of blue waters all about him."

Biencourt laid his pipe upon the table and stared moodily into the fire. The blood had dried upon his arm but the pain at times half maddened him, a dull beating pain rising at intervals to sharp agony,

"There are better trades than the rovers," he said at length, "and I must find one soon or those crazy walls will sink upon us. A vessel and some men and I would turn conquistador on my own account and wrest some of the gold fields from the Spaniards. But there, help will surely come from France by spring."

Imbert shook his head portentuously. Then a softer look came into his fierce black eyes, he drew nearer and laid his uncouth hands gently on the long