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THE GITANA.

Expressly translated for the FAVORITE from the French of Xavier de Montepin.

IX.—(Continued.)

CIUDAD-REAL WINE
AND ESTREMADURA
HAMS.

On seeing the peril that menaced them the five sailors lost no time in shoving off their boat, which they succeeded in doing when the Spaniards were only a hundred yards from them. The young man, however, remained alone on the beach.

"Look sharp, Phillip," cried his comrades, who had already settled in their seats. "We have no time to lose."
"Comrades," he returned, "this is a cowardly thing we are doing—to go and leave this young fellow who saved my life to the mercy of those ruffians," and he pointed to the goat-herd, who stood motionless, leaning upon his stick, in a perfectly nonchalant manner.

"Well, let him come with us," cried the sailors, "only make haste about it."

There certainly was no time to be lost, so the young Frenchman unceremoniously seized the goat-herd and carried him to the boat. They were only just in time. Propelled by eight strong arms the boat glided off just as the crowd of infuriated Spaniards reached the water's edge. Baulked of their prey, they broke into a storm of imprecations, hurled a few stones after the retreating figures, and returned cursing at their ill-luck.

The young sailor had placed his new friend by his side in the stern-sheets.

"What is your name?" he asked, when they were out of danger.

"José Rovero. And yours?"

"Phillip Le Vaillant." And after a moment's silence he added, "You saved my life, do you know that? I am your friend for life. Give me your hand."

The goat-herd did not understand Le Vaillant's unrecognizable Spanish, but seeing his outstretched hand he grasped it and shook it heartily.

Three-quarters of an hour after the boat reached the "Marsouin."

The rest of the story may be briefly told. The goat-herd, having no ties to bind him to his native land, willingly accepted the offer of a berth on the "Marsouin," where Le Vaillant and himself became sworn friends. Phillip taught José French, and José taught Phillip Spanish.

Young Le Vaillant belonged to a family in easy circumstances at Havre. His father earned a living as a boat-builder, and one of his uncles, a childless widower, owned a small fortune made in business. Phillip himself had taken service on the "Marsouin" to learn navigation and seamanship, in order to fit himself to command a vessel. He was fond of the sea, and possessed great business capacity. He had always evinced a taste for study, and his education, though far from complete, was very much in advance of that of an ordinary sailor. His thirst for knowledge was fully shared in by José, whose teacher Phillip became, and in a few months the young Spaniard, who was gifted with a brilliant intellect and unwearied ap-



"QUIRINO THREW THE PEARLS ON THE FLOOR AND CRUSHED THEM UNDER HIS HEEL."

plication, knew everything his comrade could teach him.

Two years passed, during which the friendship between the young men daily increased. At the end of this time Phillip lost both his father and his uncle, and succeeded to an inheritance of about twenty-four thousand dollars—in those days a very considerable sum. He now gave up the idea of becoming a sea-captain, and settled at Havre in his father's business, but instead of confining it to boat-building, he considerably enlarged it, and devoted himself more especially to ship-building. It is hardly necessary to say that José became his right hand, his other self, as the Romans had it.

Under the management of the two young men the business prospered. Phillip's property rapidly increased, and in ten years he found himself one of the wealthiest ship-owners in Havre.

One day he drew José aside, and announced his intention of demanding in marriage the hand of the harbor-master's daughter. His selection met with José's highest approval, and the interview closed with a characteristic scene. "Now, my friend," said Phillip, "it remains for me to put my affairs in order before my marriage, and to settle my accounts with you."

"Your accounts with me!" cried José in astonishment, "what do you mean?"
"It is the simplest thing in the world. Until now we have had everything in common, as was only just. Now it is different. I must let my future father-in-law know the exact figure of my fortune, and to be able to do this I must separate it from your share."

José burst out laughing.
"Faith," said he, "that is easily done. You know as well as I do that with the exception of the little savings your generosity has enabled me to put by I possess just nothing."

It was Phillip's turn to laugh.

"My poor José," he exclaimed, "what a ridiculous mistake you are making. Do you know that for ten years past you have been my partner?"

"Your partner, Phillip! How can that be? You had all the money and I brought nothing into the concern."

"Nothing, my good José! Is your intelligence nothing? Is your untiring zeal nothing? Your unwearied activity and unceasing care, are these nothing? This is the first time, José, I have heard you talk nonsense."

"But even so," returned the Spaniard, "these qualities of which you make so much you possess in at least an equal degree with myself, and in addition you had money."

"Money! money! money!" cried Phillip, almost angrily; "what idea is this you have got into your head? I thought you would argue in this manner so I took my precautions. In bringing my money into the concern I established the business on most unequal conditions—altogether in my favor. In all justice the fortune we have acquired should be divided into two equal parts, one for each of us. Instead of this I have divided it into three, of which I keep two. What have you to say now? You see, I have robbed you."

"Well," returned José, "that portion which you insist upon handing over to me, to how much does it amount?"

"At present our house owns three millions, therefore, according to this arrangement, your share is a million."

"A million!" cried José, almost stupefied. "You are going to hand a million over to me!"
"How many times must I tell you, you obstinate fellow, that I am only making over to you what is yours by law."

"You can say what you like; but I tell you that I will never accept it."

"Listen to me, my friend," said Le Vaillant gravely. "This is a solemn moment for us. Only one thing in the world can separate us, and that is what you are doing now. So surely as I would give my life for you do I swear to you that, if you persist in your refusal, I can no longer believe in your affection, for in the place of brotherly love I see nothing but pride and selfishness in your conduct."

José hung his head.

"Do you accept?" asked the other.

"I do, since I must. But it is very hard."

"This is not all," continued Le Vaillant.

"You are surely not going to force a second million upon me."

"No. But I want you to believe me when I say: 'My friend, I swear to you by my honor and by the love I bear you that if one of us is obliged to the other I am that one.'"

A few weeks after the scene we have just related Le Vaillant's wedding took place, and José sailed for the West in a new ship, named the "Marsouin," after the old vessel in which the two friends had served as common sailors.

Some five years after Phillip's marriage José

Rovero wedded the only daughter of a rich Cuban planter, and with his friend's consent the partnership was dissolved, and he settled on his father-in-law's estates near Havana.

Thus José Rovero, the poor goat-herd of Cadiz, became the wealthy, the envied, the respected Don José Rovero, the richest merchant of Havana.

X.

THREE LETTERS.

We must now pass over a space of several years. Phillip Le Vaillant is the father of a handsome boy, named Oliver; and a charming daughter has blessed the union of José Rovero with the Cuban planter's daughter.

The two friends, notwithstanding the distance that separated them, still preserved the ancient friendship for one another, though the fresh ties they had contracted gave them little hope of ever seeing one another again.

One day Don José learnt in conversation with the captain of a French vessel that his old friend had been compelled to go into bankruptcy by the failure of two great financial houses with which he had had dealings, and was almost completely ruined. The Spaniard was no man to take half-measures. The very next day one of his vessels sailed for Havre bearing a letter for Phillip Le Vaillant, of which the following is a transcript:

"What is this that I hear my old friend, my more than brother? You have been overtaken by misfortune, and you never sent me word that you needed assistance? How great is my affection for you you may judge inasmuch as I yet find it in my heart to pardon this unkindness."

"Esteban Gallina, captain of one of my ves-