

as equivalent to a retraction of whatever words you have uttered offensive to Mademoiselle Duveyrier or myself."

"I retract nothing, I admit nothing," returned Lavrille, sulkily. "If you are not satisfied you can take your remedy. You know who I am, and where to find me."

"In that case," said Leon, calmly, "I have only to repeat what I have already asserted, that my acquaintance with Mademoiselle Duveyrier has never in any degree overstepped the limits of the strictest propriety, that I never left her house at the hour mentioned by Monsieur Lavrille, or at any other undue hour. I pledge my honor to the truth of these assertions, and I trust that the gentlemen here present, will not think it necessary to doubt my word thus solemnly given."

Having thus spoken, he bowed gravely, and left the club.

Leon's departure was the signal for an animated discussion of the scene that had just passed. All united in blaming Lavrille for his intemperate conduct, but opinions were more divided as to the manner in which Leon was likely to resent it. Frenchmen generally have rather a contemptuous idea of Spanish courage, and the majority of the persons who had been present at the dispute, inclined to the opinion that nothing more would come of it, and that Leon would content himself with the explicit contradiction he had given at parting to the assertion of Lavrille's friend, and would overlook the insult that had been offered to himself. Three or four only were of a contrary opinion, and at the head of these was Captain de Roncevalles, who vehemently combated the notion that things would remain as they were, or that the affair would terminate in any other way than by a duel.

Upon the following afternoon those who believed in the warlike intentions of Leon were greatly surprised and disappointed when they learned from Lavrille that as yet he had received no message from the Spaniard. Nevertheless, the partisans of the latter still maintained that the delay was easily accounted for by the arrangements which a man far away from his country would have to make before risking his life in a personal encounter. That evening, however, after the theatre, when Leon was seen as usual at the club engaged in his customary game of chess, and without having taken the steps which all deemed necessary for the vindication of his honor, his warmest advocates found their faith in him somewhat staggered, and on the second day no one any longer doubted that the matter would remain where it was, and that the Spaniard had shown an undeniable fea-

ther. Captain de Roncevalles was the person who appeared most annoyed by the turn affairs had taken. Doubly irritated against Leon, on account of cowardice, and of the persiflage to which he had laid himself open by expressing confidence in his courage, de Roncevalles took no further notice of the Spaniard, scarcely even returning the salutation addressed to him by the latter when they chanced to meet.

It was late on the seventh evening after the scene at the club, and nearly the same persons were assembled there who had been witnesses of the insult offered to Leon. The conversation had again turned on the cowardly behaviour of the Spaniard, and all were loudly condemning it, when the object of their blame entered the room. "Hitherto it was by look and manner alone had been made aware of the contempt in which he was held, but on this occasion, de Roncevalles, who was speaking when he entered, continued his angry animadversions, without regard to the presence of his object. "I repeat," cried he, "what I have already said in the presence of all but one of the persons now here assembled. The man who can sit down under an insult when the way to avenge it and vindicate his honor is plain and open before him, is unworthy to associate with gentlemen. I allude to a person who has been admitted into this society, who is even now present in the room, but who will do well to withdraw both from the one and the other."

And then, as if he had been collecting the votes of the assembly, he asked each for his opinion.

"How say you, de Courcy; do you think as I do? And you, de Visme, and you Victor?"

Each person present distinctly and in turn declared his adhesion to de Roncevalles' opinion: "There was then a momentary pause, and all gazed at Leon, who had been a calm observer of this scene, as if they expected that he would at once depart from amongst those to whom his presence was evidently obnoxious. Instead of doing so, however, he addressed de Roncevalles in a voice of which the tones were firm and clear, although somewhat sad.

"Am I the person, Captain de Roncevalles," he said, "to whom allusion has been made in what has just passed?"

The officer bowed very slightly, while a contemptuous smile curled his lip.

"Will you oblige me by stating distinctly whether the insult offered me by yourself and these gentlemen has its origin in what occurred a few days ago between Monsieur Lavrille and myself, and in my not having resented the insolence of that person's conduct towards me? I can only suppose that to be your motive."

"You are perfectly correct in your supposition, sir," replied de Roncevalles, "but I really cannot conjecture what you are driving at."

"That shall soon be explained. I may not have been disposed to take notice of Monsieur Lavrille's conduct, but I am perfectly prepared to resent that of Captain de Roncevalles. I presume the latter will not object to give me a meeting to-morrow at such an hour, and with such weapons as may be agreeable to himself."

There was a buzz of breathless astonishment in the room. For nearly a minute the buzz of a fly might have been heard. That the man who pusillanimously shrank from an encounter

with the clumsy sot, Lavrille, whom the least expert duellist would have held a cheap bargain, should coolly provoke so formidable a swordsman as de Roncevalles, was an enigma not easily solved. De Roncevalles was for the moment thunderstruck by the Spaniard's temerity, but immediately recovering his presence of mind, he replied in a tone of greater courtesy than he had hitherto adopted—

"I might refuse your challenge, sir, and perhaps ought to do so, upon the ground that you submitted patiently to a former insult. But you are a foreigner, and one of whom I thought well, and I will waive the objection I might fairly raise. Captain de Visme," continued he, "to an officer of hussars who was present, "will you be kind enough to arrange matters with the friend whom Senor Leon may think it proper to appoint?"

Leon named the Count Vermejo as his second, and then left the house.

In a pleasant and secluded meadow to the right of the road from Toulouse to Albi, five persons were assembled within six hours of the scene last narrated, at five o'clock on a brilliant July morning.

The weapons fixed upon was the small sword, which had been proposed by Captain de Visme, and accepted, without hesitation, by the other second. The preparations for the duel were soon completed; the doctor retired to a short distance, and looked to his instruments; the second, who had agreed on all the conditions of the combat, placed their men, and delivered to them the long slender swords, with which they were to bring their quarrel to an issue. Leon was, as usual, perfectly cool and collected; de Roncevalles the same, only on his countenance might be read a feeling of uncertainty, a doubt what he ought to think of a man, who, after shrinking from a contest with one man, gave such indications of calm courage on being placed face to face with a far more formidable foe.

The swords were crossed, and at a given signal the fight began, cautiously at first, each combatant being evidently desirous of ascertaining the degree of skill possessed by his antagonist. De Roncevalles was the first to take the offensive by a feint and a lunge that the Spaniard parried with ease.—Several passes were then made, but Leon showed a disposition to keep on the defensive, while his opponent, on the other hand, excited by the clash and grinding of the steel, became each moment more fierce and dangerous in his attacks. After some rapid passes, during which the swords flashed and played round each other like lines of light, blood was seen to flow from Leon's shoulder. The seconds stepped forward, but the wounded man waved them away. The hurt was trifling, and the combat was again continued.

In few countries are so many good swordsmen to be met with as in France; and de Roncevalles was remarkable even amongst French men for his skill in fence. On this occasion, however, he had met his match, or, as the lookers on thought, more than his match. The seconds were of opinion that had Leon chosen to exert the skill which he evidently possessed, he might have terminated the contest in its earlier stage, in a manner fatal to his adversary. De Roncevalles got vexed, and heated by the obstinate resistance he met with, he was less careful, risked more, and once or twice laid himself open in a manner by which Leon might easily have profited.—But the latter neglected doing so, until at last, taking advantage of a violent and imprudent assault made by his antagonist, he brought his forte in contact with de Roncevalles' faible, and the sword of the French officer flew into the air, leaving its owner disarmed, and at the mercy of his adversary. Leon let the point of his weapon fall to the ground.

"If Captain de Roncevalles," said the Spaniard, in the same calm tone, and with the same exquisitely courteous manner for which he was at all times remarkable; "if Captain de Roncevalles is satisfied that I am not the poltroon for whom he has for some days past taken me, my object in seeking this duel has been attained, and I am sincerely glad that it has been so at such trifling expense of bloodshed."

The Frenchman stood for a moment, struggling between the better feelings of his nature, and mortification, not unmixed with anger, at his defeat. The former prevailed, and he held out his hand to Leon.

"After what has passed," said he, "it would be as absurd in me to doubt your courage as your skill and generosity. I cannot divine your reasons for submitting to the impertinence of that shabby dog, Lavrille; but whatever they may have been, I at least have now no right to question them. Under all circumstances, Senor Leon, Gerald de Roncevalles is your friend."

"My motives for acting as I have done, are easily explained," returned Leon, smiling; "but with your permission, I will defer disclosing them until to-night, when those who witnessed what they consider my pusillanimity, will be present to listen to its justification."

The slight wound in Leon's shoulder was now dressed, and the parties left the ground.

Upon the evening of the day on which this duel took place, de Roncevalles and the other young men who had been present at Leon's dispute with Lavrille, were again assembled at the club. The banker alone was absent.

"I promised you this morning," said he, "that I would explain my motives for overlooking Monsieur Lavrille's insolence, and what was far more difficult for me to submit to his unfounded insinuations against a lady for whom I entertain the highest respect. In order to do so, I must go back to an early period of my life, when I was residing at the Havannah, in which colony my boyhood and youth were passed from the age of seventeen, up to my return to Europe, which took place about eight

years since, I belonged to a society of young men who passed a large portion of their time in fencing rooms and pistol-galleries, and most of whom, consequently, became first-rate swordsmen and admirable shots. After a time, weary of stuffing candles with bullets, and marking each other with the chalked buttons of the foils, some of the most restless and hot headed among us began to covet opportunities of displaying our prowess in a more serious manner. Skill in the use of arms, however ornamental, and often useful an acquirement, has a tendency to make young and thoughtless men quarrelsome, and under the influence of a West Indian sun, the blood easily becomes heated, and the temper irritable. We were twenty in number, all from twenty to twenty five years of age; all possessed of quick eyes, nervous arms, and that suppleness of limb and muscle which a tropical climate gives. In numerous duels with officers of the garrison, with those of various ships of war lying off the island, with foreigners and with natives, we came off victorious; and soon, encouraged with our success, and cherishing a sort of absurd pride in the notoriety it gave us, we made it almost our business to seek duels, and scarcely a week passed without one or the other of our number having an affair of that nature upon his hands. *Los Veinte*, as we were called in allusion to our number, soon became the terror of the Havannah, and the *Habanera* ladies trembled when they saw their sons, husbands, or brothers, repair to a cafe, theatre, or other public place, where they were likely to come in contact with members of our dreaded society.

"Although we were thus, as it might be said almost at enmity with our fellow-citizens, the most perfect good understanding existed among ourselves. We were all young men of competent fortunes, without any occupation in life save that of amusing ourselves. We were in the habit of dining together three or four times a week, either at a *fonda* or at one of other of our houses, and the utmost harmony and good feeling always reigned at these repasts. The dinner hour was early, and after the meal, card playing and conversation, the cigar and the *siesta*, filled up the afternoon in the most agreeable manner.

"We were dining one day at the house of a young Valencian named Louis Villabella, who had just received some choice French and Spanish wines, which he was desirous we should taste. The weather was exceedingly hot, and the dinner had been laid out upon tables in the patio, or inner court of the house, under a thick green awning that effectually excluded the rays of the sun. The repast was excellent, the wines deliciously cool, and we all of us drank enough, some of us perhaps too much. Cards were then produced, and several of the party sat down to play. For some time every thing went on pleasantly and quietly, until, on a sudden, a dispute arose at a table on which a game of *tresillo* was played. The four players were all exceedingly intimate and attached friends, two of them were cousins of the name of Rodriguez. At first no one took notice of their discussion, but at length it became so violent, that we interposed to check it. They fiercely rejected our interference, and continued their quarrel with greater vehemence than before.

"A dispute between mere acquaintances is often easy to arrange; a slight concession on either side may do it; but when bosom friends quarrel it is another matter. They know each other's weak points, and where to strike, so as to give the greatest pain, and leave the most rankling smart. It was so in this instance. The quarrel, which had its origin in some slight misunderstanding about the cards, became envenomed; allusions were exchanged, especially between the two cousins, unintelligible to the bystanders, but which seemed to stimulate to the utmost the rage of the persons to whom they were addressed. At last, in a moment of ungovernable fury, one of the Rodriguezes hurled a pack of cards at his cousin's head, at the same moment that one of the other disputants, incensed almost to madness, spat contemptuously on the ground, and applied to his adversary the most insulting epithet that the Spanish language possesses. Then, as if exhausted by this display of ungovernable passion, the aggressors threw themselves, pale and panting, into their chairs. The two others approached the master of the house, and asked for his swords.

"A feeble attempt was made to patch up the quarrel, but we all saw that it would be in vain. Things had gone too far. The tables were cleared away, and dust was sprinkled over the marble flags of the patio, to prevent the combatants from slipping. Villabella had only one pair of swords. The buttons were snapped off a pair of toils, the points hastily filed, and the four gladiators posted themselves opposite each other, rage, and deadly determination on their pallid countenances.

"I have seen many duels, but I shall never forget that one. Such fiendish fury and blood-thirstiness! They fought too fiercely for the contest to last. In the first passes, all were more or less wounded, but they persevered, although the pavement soon became slippery with blood. We more than once tried to interfere, but were repelled at the sword's point. In less than a quarter of an hour, two of the combatants lay corpses upon the ground, a third was desperately wounded, and the fourth, the younger Rodriguez, was lying upon the lifeless body of his cousin, tearing his hair, and cursing himself, in a frantic paroxysm of grief and remorse.

"I sailed for Europe soon after that sad event," continued Leon, after a short pause, "but before I did so, our society met once more to register a vow, which I for one have strictly kept. With joined hands, and heads uncovered, we swore upon the cross never to provoke a duel, except under these circum-

stances, namely, when we should be insulted on account of a previous act of forbearance. Thus my oath prevented me from resenting the offence offered me by Monsieur Lavrille, but as soon as a third person insulted me for not having noticed it, I was at liberty to call him to account for so doing. I know not whether such a system, or any modification of it, may be susceptible of general application, but it is perhaps not unworthy the consideration of those who are desirous of doing away with the argument of the sword. That duels can ever be entirely abolished I much doubt, but I am fully convinced that means might be found of rendering them of far less frequent occurrence.

On a bright and cheerful morning, about a fortnight after the duel between Leon and de Roncevalles, a long line of equipages was formed before the Church of St. Catharine, at Toulouse. Presently a bridal party began to issue from the church door; gay uniforms, nodding plumes, silks, jewels, and flowers; dashing officers, dapper civilians, and lovely women, and dark-eyed sons and daughters of southern France were there. Between de Roncevalles and his sister, a charming Parisian belle, came the Spaniard Leon, supporting on his arm the graceful form of Pauline Duveyrier. He shook his former antagonist heartily by the hand, Mademoiselle de Roncevalles kissed Pauline on both cheeks, and then Leon handed the latter into an elegant travelling carriage, on which a coat of arms, surmounted by a coronet was emblazoned. The horses' heads were turned southwards, and amidst bright smiles, and waving kerchiefs, and countless good-wishes, the Marquis de Leon y Carceres and his bride set off for Madrid.

From Newman's History of Insects.

SLAVE ANTS.

THE most remarkable fact connected with the history of ants is the propensity manifested by certain species to kidnap the workers of other species, and compel them to labor for the benefit of the community, thus using them completely as slaves; and as far as we yet know, the kidnappers are red or pale-colored ants, and the slaves, like the ill-treated natives of Africa, are of a jet black. The time for capturing slaves extends over a period of about ten weeks, and never commences until the male and female ants are about emerging from the pupa state; and thus the ruthless marauders never interfere with the continuation of the species. This instinct seems specially provided; for were the slave ants created for no other end than to fill the station of slavery to which they appear to be doomed, still even that office must fail were the attacks to be made on their nests before the winged myriads have departed, or are departing, charged with the duty of continuing their kind. When the red ants are about to sally forth on a marauding expedition, they send scouts to ascertain the exact position in which a colony of negroes may be found; these scouts, having discovered the object of their search, return to the nest, and report their success. Shortly afterwards the army of red ants marches forth, headed by a vanguard, which is perpetually changing; the individuals which constitute it, when they have advanced a little before the main body, halting, falling into the rear, and being replaced by others; this vanguard consists of eight or ten ants only. When they have arrived near the negro colony, they disperse, wandering through the herbage, and hunting about, as aware of the propinquity of the object of their search, yet ignorant of its exact position. At last they discover the settlement; and the foremost of the invaders, rushing impetuously to the attack, are met, grappled with, and frequently killed, by the negroes on guard. The alarm is quickly communicated to the interior of the nest; the negroes sally forth in thousands, and the red ants rushing forth to the rescue, a desperate struggle ensues; which, however, always terminates in favor of the negroes, who retire to the innermost recesses of their habitation. Now follows the scene of pillage: the red ants with their powerful mandible tear open the sides of the negro ant-hill, and rush into the heart of the citadel; in a few minutes each of the invaders emerges, carrying in its mouth the pupa of a negro worker, which it has obtained in spite of the vigilance and valour of its natural guardians. The red ants return in perfect order to their nests, bearing with them their living burdens. On reaching the nest, the pupa appear to be treated precisely as their own, and the workers, when they emerge, perform the various duties of the community, with the greatest energy and apparent good-will; they repair the nest, excavate passages, collect food, feed the larvae, take the pupae into the sunshine, and perform every office which the welfare of the colony seems to require—in fact, they conduct themselves entirely as if fulfilling their original destination.

From Buchan's Expedition to the North Pole.

EFFECTS OF PERPETUAL DAY.

NOTHING made so deep an impression on our senses, as the change from alternative day and night, to which we had been habituated from our infancy, to the continued daylight to which we subjected as soon as we crossed the arctic circle. When the ground is but little trodden, even triflings are interesting, and I do not, therefore, hesitate to describe the feelings with which the regarded the change. The novelty, it must be admitted, was very agreeable; and the advantage of constant daylight, in an unexplored and naturally boisterous sea, was too great to allow us even to wish for a return of the alternations above alluded to; but the reluctance we felt to leave the deck when the sun was shining bright upon our sails,