

THE FAIR GOD.

BOOK SEVEN.

CHAPTER VIII. THE BATTLE OF THE MANTAS.

The report of a gun awoke the 'zain in the morning. The great uproar of the assault now became familiar to him, filled the chamber. He knelt on the step and prayed, for there was a cloud upon his spirit, and over the idol's stony face there seemed to be a cloud. He put on his helm and mantle; at the door Huapala offered him his arms.

"No," he said, "bring me those we took from the stranger." Huapala marked the gravity of his manner, and with a rising heart and a smile, the first seen on his lips for many a day, he brought a Spanish shield and battle-axe, and gave them to him. Then the din below, bursting out in greater volume, drew the 'zain to the verge of the temple. The warriors made way for him reverently. He looked down into the square, and through a veil of smoke semilucid saw Cortes and his cavaliers charge the ranks massed in front of the palace gate. The gate stood open, and a crowd of the Tascalans were pouring out of the portal, hauling one of the towers whose construction had been the mystery of the days passed; they bent low to the work, and cheered each other with their war cries; yet the mantas—so called by Cortes—moved slowly, as if loth to leave. In the same manner the other tower was drawn out of the court; then, side to side, both started down the street, which they filled so nearly that room was hardly left for the detachment that guarded the Tascalans on the flanks.

The fighting ceased, and silently the enemies stared at the spectacle—such power is there in curiosity. At sight of the structures, rolling, rocking, rumbling, and creaking dismally in every wheel, Cortes' eyes sparkled fire-like through his visor. The 'zain, on the other hand, was disturbed and anxious, although outwardly calm; for the objects of the common wonder were enclosed on every side, and he knew as little what they contained as of their use and operation.

Slowly they rolled on, until past the intersection of the streets; there they stopped. Right and left of them were beautiful houses covered with warriors for the moment converted into spectators. A hush of expectancy everywhere prevailed. The 'zain shaded his eyes with his hand, and leant eagerly forward. Suddenly, from the sides of the machine next the walls, masked doors dropped out, and guns, charged to the muzzle, glared over the house-tops, then swept them with fire.

A horrible scream flew along the street and up to the azoteas of the temple; at the same time, by ladders extended to the coping of the walls, the Christians leaped on the roofs, like boarders on a ship's deck, and mastered them at once; whereupon they returned, and were about taking in the ladders, when Cortes galloped back, and, riding from one to the other, shouted:

"Ordas! Avila! Miras! Where are the torches I gave ye? Out again! Leave not a stone to shelter the dogs! Leave nothing but ashes! Pronto, Pronto!"

The captains answered promptly. With flambéed of resinous pine and cotton, they fired all the wood-work of the interior of the buildings. Smoke burst from the doors and windows; then the detachments retreated, and were rolled on without the loss of a man.

Behind the mantas there was a strong rearguard of infantry, and artillery; with which, and the guards on the flanks, and the cavaliers forcing way at the front, it seemed impossible to arrest, or even interrupt, an attack at once so novel and successful.

The smoke from the burning houses, momentarily thickening and widening, was seen afar, and by the heathen hailed with cries of alarm; not so Cortes; riding everywhere, in the van, to the rear, often stopping by the mantas, as his artist does his last work, he tasted the joy of successful genius. The smoke rising, as it were, to Heaven, carried up his vow not to stop until the city, with all its idolatries, was a heap of ashes and fire—a holocaust to the Mother such as had never been seen.

The cheeriness of his constant cry, "Christo, Christo y Santisimo!" communicated to his people, and they marched laughing and fighting. Opposition had now almost ceased; at the approach of the mantas, the house-tops were given up without resistance. A general panic appeared to have seized the pagans; they even vacated the street, so that the cavaliers had little else to do than ride leisurely, turning now and then to see the fires behind them, and the tall machines come lumbering on.

As remarked, when the mantas stopped at the intersection of the streets, the 'zain watched them eagerly for he knew the time had come to make their use manifest; he saw a door drop, and the jet of flame and smoke leap from a gun; he heard the cry of agony from the house-tops, and the deeper cry from all the people; to the chiefs around him he said, with steady voice, and as became a leader:

"Courage, friends! We have them now, Malinche is mad to put his people in such traps. Lord Huapala, go round the place of combat and see that the first bridge is impassable; for there, unless the towers have wings and can fly, they will stop. And to you, lo," he spoke to the lad tenderly, "I give a command and sacred trust. Stay here, and take care of the gods."

Lo! kissed his hand, and said, fervently, "May the gods care for me as I will for them!" To other chiefs, calling them by name, he gave directions for the renewal of the assault on the palace, now weakened by the sortie, and for the concentration of fresh companies in the rear of the enemy, to contest their return.

"And now, my good lord," he said to a cacique, gray-headed, but of magnificent frame, "you have a company of Tezcucans, formerly the guards of king Cacama's palace. Bring them, and follow me. Come."

A number of houses covering quite half a square were by this time on fire. Those of wood burned furiously; the morning, however, was almost breathless, so that the cinders did little harm. On the left side of the street stood a building of red stone, its front profusely carved, and further ornamented with a marble portico—a palace, in fact, massively built, and somewhat higher than the mantas. Its entrances were barricaded, and on the roof, where an enemy might be looked for, there was not a spear, helm, or sign of life, except some fan-palms and long banana-branches. Before the stately front the mantas were at length halted. Immediately the door on that side was dropped, and the ladder fixed, and Avila, who had the command, started with his followers to take possession and apply the torch. Suddenly, the coping of the palace-front flamed with feathered helmets and points of bronze.

Avila was probably as skillful and intrepid as any of Cortes' captains; but now he was surprised; directly before him stood Guatanimo, whom every Spaniard had come to know and respect as the most undoubted of all the warriors of Anahuac; and he

shone on the captain a truly martial figure, confronting him with Spanish arms, a shield with a face of iron and a battle-axe of steel. Avila hesitated, and as he did so, the end of the ladder was lifted from the wall, poised a moment in the air, then flung off.

(To be Continued.)

What a—(Story):

For Neuralgia, a novel cure—which we hardly believe if true, will ever become popular—is vouchered for, it is said, by a correspondent of the New York Sun. An Irish girl in Paterson, N. J., had suffered with neuralgia of the head and face until almost frantic with pain, actually beating the wall with her head to cause insensibility. Her employer having heard that a Dr. Fere had cured rheumatism by the sting of a wasp, asked the girl if she would try it. With courage born of despair, she exclaimed "Any other torture would be a pleasure beside this." A yellow wasp was obtained, and vexed into stinging her face. Within a few moments the pain ceased, the girl fell asleep, and strange to say, never again had an attack of neuralgia. Well, we don't blame her. The remedy was probably too heroic for a second dose. A learned specialist when told this yarn remarked, "The pain may have stopped temporarily, but it could only have been temporary." Continued he, "It is a fact that a sudden shock to inflamed and painful nerves will stop pain," but the remedy is worse than the disease, as many unthinking people in after years find out, who apply fiery and dangerous compounds externally to stop Neuralgia and Rheumatism. They only continue to shock the nervous system, ignorant of the fact that, as in the morphine of alcohol habit their mental and moral nature is thus being gradually destroyed. "Make haste slowly, if you expect to cure any nerve disease" was the advice to a lady by a friend who had been cured of chronic Neuralgia by using for some time Johnson's Anodyne Liniment inhaled, taken internally, and applied externally, as advised in the wrapper around every bottle. Neuralgia is a fever or inflammation of the nerves, and only by degrees can any inflammation be cured; and then only by an anodyne treatment. Old Dr. Johnson had this in mind when he devised his Anodyne Liniment; a remedy now known to nearly every one, as it deserves to be. Surely a medicine without real merit could not have survived for eighty years as this one has done. j! wyl dyé i

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Ladies and children's undervests at Stanley Bros. Brown's Block. juel 3i

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Straw Hats—Canadian and American Straw Hats, latest styles, very cheap.—D. A. Bruce. m23 ed wyl tf

Git Edge Dressing (4 and 6 oz. bottles) in kegs and boxes, to be had at Goff Bros. m14 f

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Ladies wanting perfecting boots should always go to the Dominion Boot & Shoe Store. my14 tf

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Any old ornament, or article of furniture, wood, earthenware, metal or glass, may be made beautiful by Aspinall's Enamel, which a child can apply. Surface like porcelain, colors exquisite. The following colors may be had at Watson's Drug Store: white, black, grey, peacock blue, turquoise, scarlet, garnet, olive green and old gold. a306 w

COMPLETE.—Our summer stock of suitings, coatings and trousers, neck-wear and underwear is complete. We would call special attention to our \$12 all-wool custom made suits. Our prices in hats can't be duplicated in the city.—D. A. Bruce. my6 ed f

Asparagus, 15 cents per bunch, at George Carter & Co's. All kinds of furniture at auction prices.—John Newson. 1m14

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By order of Committee. May 24—2in dly 3i 2aw.

TENDERS.

TENDER [will be received] until 10th June for painting the roof and spire of St. Patrick's Church, Fort Augustus, according to specification to be seen at the parochial house, Fort Augustus.

By order of Committee. May 24—2in dly 3i 2aw.

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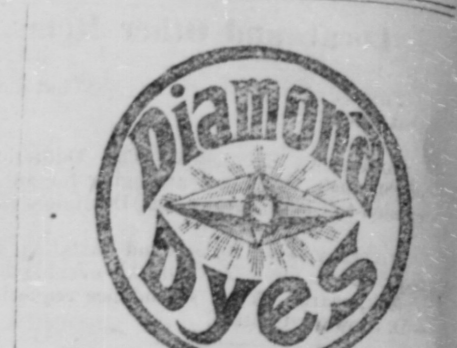
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