

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER LXXV.—(CONTINUED.)

But although they had preserved their independence for three centuries, for three centuries they never known peace. Between the red Indian and the white Iberian, along the frontier of Northern Mexico, a war border has existed since the days of Cortez to the present hour—constantly shifting north or south, but ever extending from east to west, from ocean to ocean, through wide degrees of longitude. North of this border ranges the "Indio bravo;" south of it dwells his degenerate and conquered kinsman, the "Indio manso," not in the "tents," but in the towns of his Spanish conqueror; the former free as the prairie wind—the latter yoked to a condition of "peon" vassalage, with chains as strong as those of slavery itself. The neutral belt of hostile ground lies between—on the one side guarded by a line of garrisoned forts (presidios), on the other sheltered from attack by the wild and waterless desert.

I have stated that this war-border has been constantly shifting either northward or southward. Such was its history up to the beginning of the present cycle. Since then, a remarkable change has been going forward in the relative position of Indian and Iberian; and the line of hostile ground has been moving only in one direction—continually towards the South! To speak in less poetical phrase, the red man has been encroaching upon the territory of the white man—the so-called savage has been gaining ground upon the domain of civilization. Not slowly or gradually, either, but by gigantic strides—by the conquest of whole provinces as large as England ten times told!

I shall make the announcement of a fact, or rather a hypothesis—scarcely well known, though strange enough. It may interest, if not surprise, the ethnologists. I assert, then, that had the four tribes of North Mexican Indians—Comanche, Lipano, Apache, and Navajo—been left to themselves, in less than another century they would have driven the degenerate descendants of the conquerors of Cortez from the soil of Anahuac! I make this assertion with a full belief and clear conviction of its truthfulness. The hypothesis rests upon the basis of realities. It would require but very simple logic to prove it; but a few facts may yield illustration.

With the fall of Spanish rule in Mexico, ended the predominance of the Spaniard over the Indian. By revolution the presidios became shorn of their strength, and no longer offered a barrier even to the weakest incursion. In fact, a neutral line no more exists; whole provinces—Sonora, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Cinaloa, and Leon—are no better than neutral ground, or, to speak more definitely, form an extended territory conquered and desolated by the Indians. Even beyond these, into the "provincias internas," have the bold copper-colored free-booters of late carried their forays—even to the very gates of Durango: Two hundred Comanche warriors, or as many Apaches, fear not to ride hundreds of miles into the heart of civilized Mexico—hesitate not to attack a city or a settlement—scruple not to drag from hearth and home lovely maids and tender children—only these—and carry their slave and captive to their wild fastnesses in the desert! And this is no occasional foray, no long gathering outburst of revenge or retaliation; but an annual expedition, forming part of the regular routine of the year, and occurring at the season when the buffalo have migrated to the north—occurring in that month in the calendar of these aboriginal brigands, jocosely styled the "Mexican moon!"

Upon whose head falls the blow thus periodically repeated? Upon the poor and unprotected? No doubt you will fancy so.

A single fact may serve to undeceive you. Only a few years ago, Trias, a man of "first family" in Mexico, and governor of the State of Chihuahua, lost one of his sons by an Indian foray. The boy was taken prisoner by the Comanches; and it was only after years of negotiation and payment of a large sum, that the father recovered his child. Thus the governor of a province, with means and military at his command, was not powerful enough to cause the surrender of his captive son: he was forced to buy him!

It is computed, that at this moment, there are three thousand white captives in the hands of the North Mexican Indians—nearly all of them Spanish descent. They are mostly females, and live as the slave-wives of their captors—if such connection may be dignified by the name. There are white men, too, among the Indian prisoners, taken in their youth; and strange as it may appear, few of them—either of the men or women—evidence any desire to return to their former life or homes. Some, when ransomed, have refused the boon. Not uncommon along the frontier has been witnessed that heart-rending scene—a father who had recovered his child from the savages, and yet unable to reclaim its affection, or even to arouse it to a recognition of its parentage. In a few years—sometimes only months—the captives forget their early ties, and become wedded to their new life—become Indianized.

But a short time before, an instance had come under our own observation,

The wounded brave taken in the skirmish at the mound, was a full-blooded Mexican—had been carried off by the Comanches, some years before, from the settlements on the Lower Rio Grande. In consideration of this, we gave him his liberty, under the impression that he would gladly avail himself of the opportunity to return to his kindred.

He proved wanting in gratitude as in natural affection. The same night on which he was set free, he took the route back to the prairies, mounted upon one of the best horses of our troop, which he had stolen from its owner!

Such are the "Cosas de Mexico"—a few of the traits of frontier life on the Rio Bravo del Norte.

But what of the war-trail? That is not yet explained.

Know then, that from the country of the Indians to that of the Mexicans extend many great paths, running for hundreds of miles from point to point. They follow the course of streams or cross vast desert plains, where water is found only at intervals of distance. They are marked by the tracks of mules horses and captives. Here and there they are whitened by bones—the bones of men, of women, of animals, that have perished by the way. Strange paths are these! What are they, and who has made them? Who travel by these roads that lead through the wild and homeless desert?

Indians: they are the paths of the Comanche and Cayuga—the roads made by their warriors during the "Mexican moon."

It was upon one of these that the trapper was gazing when he gave out the emphatic utterance:

"War-trail, by the Eternal!"

TO BE CONTINUED.

The death of the late Sir William Palliser, inventor of the Palliser guns, and M. P. for Taunton, Eng., is a loss to the British Empire. Sir William has done much for Canada. At the meeting of the Dominion Artillery Association, it was stated that when war with Russia and a descent upon our shores seemed impending, Sir William and his brother, Captain Edward Palliser, who has been associated with him in his artillery labours, presented to Canada, as a gift, two heavy rifled guns of their own construction, of seven and eight inches calibre respectively. They were landed on the wharf of Quebec free of cost to the Canadian Government, and are now mounted on the Citadel of Quebec to command the St. Lawrence, and they offered in addition a still more powerful gun for the defence of British Columbia. But the connection of the Palliser family with Canada, and their services to her and to the Empire, are not of yesterday; an ancestor of that family was commodore of the fleet which brought the victorious Wolfe to our shores, and Sir William's brother commanded one of the first exploration parties through what is now our great North-West Territory.

Prof. Goldwin Smith has written to the London Times declaring his views on the Irish question. He thinks that a vigorous Irish policy would be applauded by the mass of the American people as distinguished from the politicians. He makes a number of recommendations, including the abolition of trial by jury, the suspension of representation of the rebel districts, and special legislation concerning foreign emissaries. Parnell on the other hand thinks matters would improve if the Government introduced a Bill to relieve poor tenant farmers of rent, and amended the Land Act regarding purchase, so as practically to assist tenants to become owners.

Sixteen affidavits respecting Dr. Lamson's alleged insanity have been sent to England by the Attorney-General of the United States. It is a little strange that Dr. Lamson's mental condition, which is alleged to have been unsound since 1871, should have escaped the notice of the various medical men he worked with during the Turco-Russian war, and that its discovery should have been reserved for non-professionals. It is also a little strange that his alleged insanity should have made no impression upon those who claim to have proof of it until such time as such proof was wanted. And then the impression was rather sudden.

NOTICE.

HAVING rented the premises lately occupied by C. F. HARRIS, the subscriber begs to intimate to the public that he is carrying on the

TINSMITH BUSINESS

in all its branches. Orders punctually attended to. A call respectfully solicited.

L. W. HARRIS, Upper Queen St., Feb. 8, 1882.

GOLD MEDAL, PARIS, 1878.



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A FEW MUZZLE LOADING 9 BORE GOOSE GUNS—W. & C. Scott's make—at the London House. G. DAVIES & CO. March 18, 1882

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FRESH ROASTED COFFEE! WARRANTED.

NOTICE.

THE business heretofore carried on by Mr. Robert Bridges will, from date, be carried on by the undersigned, under the name and style of A. L. BRIDGES & Co. A. L. BRIDGES. March 1, 1882—1st

To Lobster Packers

FOR SALE.—171 Ingots Tin, 33 Pigs Lead. PEAKE BROS. & CO. March 7, '82—3aw

Administration Notice.

THE undersigned Administrator of the Estate of Mary Walsh, late of Charlottetown, in Queen's County, widow, deceased, hereby notifies all persons indebted to the said Estate to make immediate payment to him, and all persons having claims or demands against the said Estate are hereby required to exhibit such claims and demands duly attested to him for payment, within twelve months from this date. A. A. McLEAN, Administrator. Ch'town, 1st March, 1882.—3m 1aw

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Baking Powder (Woodills), Horsford's, Cook's Friend, Princess.

WANTED.

AT THE JUNK STORE, Head Pownal Wharf, old Copper, Brass, Iron, Lead, Zinc, Rope and Canvas, Horse Hair, Hags, &c., for which the highest price will be paid. Ch'town, Jan 13, '82—3m

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Canned Salmon, Mackerel, Finnen Haddies, Lobsters, &c.

ASTHMA—Ask your Druggist for O'CONNOR'S Asthma Remedy, or send 50 cents (in stamps), or \$1, and you will receive it (by mail, post-paid). I guarantee immediate relief, for no amount of profits could induce me to tamper with sufferers from that dread disease. Address C. O'CONNOR, Long Creek, Lot 65, P. E. I. S. Conroy & Co., Annandale, Agents for King's County. (In 10 wks)

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F. LEPAGE & CO.

Having commenced the Auctioneer and Commission business, we solicit consignments of general merchandise, Furniture, &c. Evening Sales of Household Goods will be continued at our Store for a few evenings.

F. LePAGE & CO., Auctioneer. March 4, '82—pat

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TO be sold by PUBLIC AUCTION, on TUESDAY, the second day of May next, at the hour of eleven o'clock, in the forenoon, at the Court House in Charlottetown, under and by virtue of a Power of Sale contained in an Indenture of Mortgage dated the twenty-sixth day of April, A. D. 1881, and made between Albert Duchemin and Juliana Duchemin, his wife, and Edmund Duchemin and Emily Duchemin, his wife, of the one part, and Edward Jarvis Hodgson and Neil McLeod of the other part,—

ALL that tract, piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being in the City of Charlottetown, in Queen's County, in Prince Edward Island, and being part of Town Lot Number Twenty six in the second hundred of Town Lots in Charlottetown aforesaid, commencing at the corner of Prince and Sidney Streets, and running southerly along Prince Street the distance of eighty-six feet, or until it reaches the northern boundary of land in possession of Thomas Alley; thence at right angles with Prince Street easterly along said boundary eighty-six feet, or until it meets the division line between Town Lots Twenty-six and Twenty-seven; thence along said division line parallel with Prince Street northerly eighty-six feet, or to Sidney Street aforesaid, and thence westerly along Sidney Street eighty-six feet, to the place of commencement.

For further particulars apply at the office of Hodgson & McLeod, Solicitors, Charlottetown.

Dated this 28th day of March, A. D. 1882. EDWARD J. HODGSON, NEIL McLEOD, ALBERT DUCHEMIN, EDMUND DUCHEMIN.

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