

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER L'I—(CONTINUED.)

Others, again, are bidding their adios in retired corners, under the shadow of the church walls, or in groups of four or five more openly in the plaza, itself. Early as it is the hour, the people have arisen; and not a few of the brown, rebosa-clad short-skirted wenches are already on their way, jarro on head, to the fountain. There the pitchers are filled, and lifted on their heads—perhaps for the last time—by the rangers, who perform the office with all the rule grace in their power. Then follows a profusion of smiles and bows, and a dialogue, on the ranger's part extending to the whole of his Spanish, which consists of the phrase:

"Mucho bueno, muchacha!"

The usual reply, accompanied with a display of pretty white teeth, is:

"Mucho bueno, cavalero! mucho bueno Tejano!" given in like ungrammatical phrase, in order that it may be intelligible to the person to whom it is addressed.

I have often been surprised at the success of my great uncouth followers with these petite dark-eyed damsels of Ana hauc; but, indeed, many of the rangers are not bad-looking men. On the contrary, there are handsome fellows among them, if they were only put into clean shirts, and a little more closely shaven. But woman's eye is keen-sighted in such matters: she easily penetrates through the disguise of dust, the bronze of sun-tan, and the shaggy mask of an ill kept beard; and no eye is quicker in this respect than that of the fair Mexicana. In the big, apparently rude, individual, called a "ranger," she beholds a type of strength and courage, a heart that can cherish, and an arm that can protect her. These are qualities that, from all time, have won the love of woman.

It is evident they are not all friends whom we were leaving behind us. Hostile faces may be observed, many of them peering from open doors and windows. Here and there a sulky lepero swings about in his blanket, or covers by the corner of the street, scowling savagely from under his broad brimmed hat. Most of this class are absent—as long since ascertained—with the guerrilla; but a few still remain to give shadow to the picture. They regard the approaches towards the women with ill-concealed anger; and would resent this politeness if they dared. They confine the exhibition of their spite to the dastardly means of ill-treating the women themselves, whenever they have an opportunity. No later than the night before, one of them was detected in beating his sweetheart or mistress for the crime, as was alleged, of dallying too long in the company of a Tejano. The Tejano, in this case, took the law into his own hands, and severely chastised the jealous pelado.

Even in the hurried glance which I gave to these scenes of leave taking, I could not help noticing an expression on the faces of some of the young girls that had in it a strange significance. It was something more than sadness; it was more like the uneasy look that betokens apprehension.

Perhaps the state of mind I was in magnified my perceptions. At that moment, a struggle was passing in my own breast, and a feeling of irresolution lay heavy upon me. All night long had my mind dwelt upon the same thought—the danger that menaced my betrothed—all night I had been occupied with plans to avert it, but no reasonable scheme had I succeeded in devising.

It is true the danger was only hypothetical and undefined, but it was just this supposititious indefiniteness that caused the difficulty in providing against it. Had it assumed a tangible shape, I might more easily have adopted some means of avoiding it; but no—it remained a shadow, and against a shadow I knew not what precautions to take. When morning broke, I was still struggling under the same nervous indecision.

Problematical as was the peril my fancy had formed, there were moments when it appalled me—moments when my mind labored under a painful presentiment, and I could not cast the load by any act of volition. With all my philosophy, I could not fortify myself against the belief that "coming events cast their shadows before;" and, spite of myself, I kept repeating in thought the weird prophetic words. Upon my soul, certainly, there were shadows and dark ones; if the events should have any correspondence with them, then there was misery before me.

I have termed the danger in which Isolma was placed indefinite; it was not so indefinite, after a slight analysis; it was directly traceable to the presence of Rafael Ijarra. True, there were other sources of apprehension; other perils surrounded her: arising from the disturbed state of the country—but these did not point at her in particular. That frontier province had been for years in a distracted condition—by revolution or Indian invasion—and war was no new thing to its people. In the midst of strife had the fair flower grown to perfect blooming, without having been either crushed or trodden upon. Isolma de Vargas was a woman of sufficient spirit to resist insult and cast off intrusion. I had just had proof of this. Under ordinary circumstances, I had no fear that she would be unequal to the emergency; but the circumstances in which

she stood were not of that character; they were extraordinary and to an extreme degree. In addition to the light thrown upon Ijarra's designs by his own menacing confession, I knew other particulars of him. Hoingsworth had helped me to a knowledge of this bad man, and that knowledge it was that rendered me apprehensive. From a nature so base and brutal, it was natural I should dread the worst.

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE VATICAN.

MGR. CAPEL ON THE POSITION OF THE POPE—SHALL HE QUIT ROME?—THE POWERS ANXIOUS TO SECURE INDEPENDENCE OF THE VATICAN—THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCH A COURSE.

The New York Herald's Paris correspondent sends the following:—MGR. Capel, the Catesby of Disraeli's "Lothair," is at present in Paris superintending the publication of a French edition of his new pamphlet, "Great Britain and Rome," which is making no little stir in Catholic circles in England and on the continent. Mgr. Capel passes for a man singularly well-informed on matters relating to the diplomatic relations of the Holy See. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that he is known to have been for some time past meditating a journey to the United States, give the eloquent English ecclesiastic a peculiar interest to all Catholic and even non-Catholic denominations. I called on Mgr. Capel in the hope of gleaming some information as to the rumored intention of the Pope to leave Rome. He received me with great courtesy and made no objection to replying to the questions I put him. "You will of course understand, however," said he, "that I am speaking without authority, and expressing only my personal opinions. What are the questions you particularly wish information about?"

Correspondent—I should like an expression of opinion upon the present position of the Papacy in its relation to Christian Powers, and especially in relation to the Italian monarchy.

Mgr. Capel—I have reason to believe that the European Powers are awakening to the necessity of the Pope being assured more perfect independence than he enjoys at present. The Vatican must be independent. It must be protected from outrage, and assured of being able to communicate at all times and under all circumstances with the members of the Catholic Church. King Humbert's Government professes to protect the Vatican, but what reliance can be placed on a Power which is powerless even to protect the remains of Pius IX. from insult. The Pope is at present not safe in the Vatican. His authority is no longer respected, and when people cease to respect his authority, believe me they are not far from wishing to enslave it. I can quite conceive the possibility of cases arising which would compel the Pope to flee from Rome, unless the Great Powers agree to guarantee his inviolability. Such a position as he now has is surely intolerable. Let us imagine an extreme case—the outbreak of war between France and Italy. How would the Catholics of Europe and America be able to hold personal communication with the Pope? You may be aware there are many things which require personal and direct arrangement with the Holy Father. That this may be certain Rome must be secured to the Vatican. Civita Vecchia and the territory adjoining must be proclaimed neutral ground, and placed under the surveillance of the European Powers, and King Humbert must choose a new capital.

Mgr. Capel stated that he was unable to state whether negotiations were in progress between the Quirinal and the Vatican which may lead to the convocation of a European Congress to settle the Papal question.

Correspondent—The Italians with whom I have spoken on the subject have declared that if once the Pope was imprudent enough to leave Rome he would never return to it.

Mgr. Capel—Those Italians spoke in ignorance of historical facts and teachings. Popes have left Rome ere now, but they have returned to it. Popes have held sway who never set foot in Rome, yet the Papacy is still established in the Vatican. If the Pope were again to leave the Vatican, rest assured it would not be long. Can you suppose that the adjoining nations, Austria for instance, or even Germany, would stand by unmoved nor stir a finger to restore the Papacy to its old position. No, the Pope would return even though his departure had been followed by a revolution, and his leaving would be fraught with disadvantages only to Italy. Do they not derive advantages from the presence of the Pope at Rome? To look at the matter from the lowest commercial standpoint think of the money and business it brings to Italy every year. The first person to suffer by the Pope's departure would be King Humbert. He would have to follow him instantly. What would then follow? I do not pretend to be able to foretell. Let us suppose as a consequence the introduction of universal suffrage in Italy. I say that even the universal suffrage would call back the Pope, for though the people often forget it, the great mass of the Italian nation is Catholic.

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TRAINS INWARD.

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L. B. ARCHIBALD, Superintendent, Railway Office, Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881 (Je wklly)

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