

THE RED TRAIL

By GUSTAVE AINARD

CHAPTER XIX.

It was very late when the conspirators separated, and when the last groups of officers left the rancho the sound of the Indian horses and mules proceeding to market was audible on the paved highway.

The two travelers had seated themselves again at a corner of the table, opposite one another, and were dumb and motionless as statues. At length the person who had always spoken on his own behalf and that of his companion struck the table twice, and the landlord hurried up at this summons.

"What do you wish for, excellency?" he asked, with an obsequious air.

"I tell you what, landlord," the stranger continued, "it strikes me that your criado is a long time in returning; he ought to have been back before this."

"Pardon me, excellency, but it is a long journey from here to the Segunda Monterilla. Still, I believe the peon will soon be back."

At this moment there was a tap at the door.

"Perhaps it is our man," the stranger said.

After exchanging a few words with the new arrival, the landlord unhooked the chain and opened the door.

"Excellency," he said to the stranger, "here is your messenger."

The peon entered, politely doffed his hat and bowed.

"Well, my friend," the stranger asked him, "did you find the person to whom I sent you?"

"Yes, your excellency, I had the good fortune to find him at home."

"Ah, ah! And what did he say on receiving my note?"

"Well, excellency, he is a caballero, for sure; for he first gave me a piastre, and then said to me: 'Go back as quick as you can walk and tell the gentleman who sent you that I shall be at the meeting he appoints as soon as yourself.'"

"So that—"

"He will probably be here in a few minutes."

"Very good; you are a clever lad," the stranger answered. "Here is another piastre for you."

"Thanks, your excellency. I should be a rich man with only two nights a month like this."

The peon had scarce left the room ten minutes ere a rather loud voice was heard without; horses stamped, and not only was the door struck, but there were several loud calls.

"Open the door without fear," the stranger said; "I know that voice."

The ranchero obeyed, and several persons entered.

"At last you have returned, my dear Valentine," the newcomer exclaimed in French, as he walked quickly toward the travelers, who, for their part, went to meet him.

"Thanks for your promptitude in responding to my invitation, my dear Rallier," the hunter answered.

"Now," said Valentine, so soon as the door closed behind the landlord, "we shall talk at least in safety."

"Speak Spanish, my friend," said M. Rallier.

"Why so? It is so delightful to converse in one's own tongue, when, like me, you have so few opportunities for doing so. I assure you that Curumilla will not feel offended."

"Hum; I did not say this on behalf of the chief, whose friendship for you I am well acquainted with."

"Who then?"

"For Don Martial, who has accompanied me, and has important matters to communicate to you."

"Oh, oh, that changes the question," said the hunter. "Are you there, my dear Don Martial?"

"Yes, señor," the Tigero answered, emerging from the gloom, "and very happy to see you."

"Who else have you brought with you, Don Antonio?"

"Me, my friend," said a third person, as he let the folds of his cloak fall. "My brother thought that it would be better to have a companion."

"Your brother was right, my dear Edward, and I thank him for the good idea, which procures me the pleasure of shaking your hand a few moments sooner. And now, señores, if you are agreeable, we will sit down and talk."

"I am ready," Antonio Rallier answered, as he sat down.

"If you like," Valentine continued, "we will proceed in rotation."

"First and before all else, my friend," said Antonio Rallier, "permit me to thank you once again, in my own name and that of my family, for the service you rendered me in your journey across the Rocky Mountains. Without you, without your watchful friendship and courageous devotion, we should never have emerged from those frightful gorges, but must have perished miserably in them."

"What good is it, my friend, to recall at this moment—"

"Because," Antonio Rallier continued eagerly, "I wish you to be thoroughly convinced that you can dispose of us all as you please. Our arms, purses, and hearts all belong to you."

"I know it, my friend, and you see that I have not hesitated to make use of you, at the risk even of compromising you. So let us leave this subject, and come to facts. What have you done?"

"I have literally followed your instructions; according to your wish, I have hired and furnished for you a house in Tacuba street."

"Pardon me, but you know that I am very slightly acquainted with Mexico, for I have visited that city but rarely, and each time without stopping."

"The Tacuba is one of the principal streets in Mexico; it faces the palace."

"That is famous. And in whose name did you take the house?"

"In that of Don Serapio de la Ronda. Your servants arrived two days ago."

"You mean—"

"I mean Balbumé and Black Elk.

They have made all the arrangements, and you can enter when you please."

"To-day, then."

"I will act as your guide."

"Thank you; what next?"

"Next, my brother Edward has taken, in his own name, at the San Lazaro gate a small house, where ten horses, belonging to the purest mustang breed, were at once placed in a magnificent corral."

"That concerns Curumilla."

"And now one other thing, my friend."

"Speak!"

"You will not be angry with me?"

"With you? nonsense!" said Valentine, holding out his hand.

"Not knowing whether you had sufficient funds at your disposal—and you will agree with me that you will require a large sum—"

"I know it. Well?"

"Well, I—"

"I see I must come to your assistance, my poor Antonio. As you believe me a poor hunter not possessed of a farthing, and are so delicate minded yourself, you have placed in a corner of the room, or in some article of furniture, of which you want to give me the key and don't know how, fifty or perhaps one hundred thousand piastres, with the reservation to offer me more, should not that sum prove sufficient?"

"Would you be angry with me had I done so?"

"On the contrary, I should be most grateful to you."

"In that case I am glad."

"Glad of what, my dear Antonio?"

"That you accept the hundred thousand piastres."

Valentine smiled.

"I am delighted to find that you are the man I judged you to be. Still, I do not accept it."

"Do you refuse, Valentine?" he said mournfully.

"Let us understand each other. I do not refuse; I simply tell you that I do not want the money, and here is the proof," he added, as he took out a folded paper, "you, as a banker, may know the firm of Thornwood, Davison & Co."

"It is the richest in San Francisco."

"Then open that paper and read."

Mr. Rallier obeyed.

"An unlimited credit opened at my house," he exclaimed in a voice tremulous with joy.

"Does that displease you?" Valentine asked with a smile.

"On the contrary; but you must be rich in that case."

A cloud of sadness passed over the hunter's forehead.

"I have grieved you, my friend."

"Alas! as you know, there are certain wounds which never close. Yes, my friend, I am rich; Curumilla, Belhumeur and myself alone know in Apacheria the richest placer that exists in the world. It was for the purpose of going to this placer that I did not accompany you to Mexico; now you understand; but what do I care for this incalculable fortune, when my heart is dead, and the joy of my life is forever annihilated!"

And under the weight of the deep emotion that crushed him, the hunter hung his head down and stifled a sob.

"Koutonepi," said Curumilla in a hollow voice, "remember that you have sworn to avenge our brother."

The hunter drew himself up as if stung by a serpent, and pressed the hand of the Indian offered him.

"Women alone weep for the dead, because they are unable to avenge them," the Indian continued in the same harsh, cutting accent.

"Yes, you are right," the hunter answered with feverish energy; "I thank you, chief."

Curumilla laid his friend's hand on his heart and stood for an instant motionless, at length he let it fall, sat down again, and wrapping himself in his sarape, he returned to his habitual silence, from which so grave a circumstance alone could have aroused him.

"Forgive me, my friends, for having forgotten, during a moment, the character I have assumed," said Valentine in a gentle voice.

Their hands were slightly extended to him.

"Now," he exclaimed in a firm voice, "let us speak of that poor Dona Anita de Torares."

"Alas!" said the elder Rallier, "I cannot tell you anything, although my sister Helena, her companion at the Convent of the Bernardines, to which I sent her, has let me know that she would have grand news for us in a few days."

"I will give you that news, with your permission," Don Martial said at this moment, suddenly joining in the conversation.

"Do you know anything?" Valentine asked him.

"Yes, something most important."

"Speak then, my friend, speak, we are listening."

The Tigero, without further pressing, at once reported, in the fullest details, his interview with Don Sebastian Guerrero's capataz.

CHAPTER XX.

The Convent of the Bernardines is situated but a short distance from the Paseo de Bucarelli. On the day when we introduce the reader into the convent, at about five in the evening, three persons, collected in a leafy arbor, at the end of the garden were talking with considerable animation.

Of these persons, one was a nun, while the other two, girls of from sixteen to eighteen, were novices.

The first was the Mother Superior of the convent, a lady of about fifty years of age, with delicate and aristocratic features, gentle manners, and a noble and majestic demeanor.

The second was Dona Anita. She was pale and white as a corpse, her fevered eyes were not easy, fixed on any object, and she looked about her hurriedly and desperately.

The third was Dona Helena Billier, a light-haired, blue-eyed girl, with a saucy look, whose velvety cheeks, and noble and well-defined features, revealed the candor and Innocence of youth, combined with the laughing expressions of a boarder spoiled by an indulgent governess.

Dona Helena was standing a little outside the arbor, like a vigilant sentry carefully watching lest the conversation between the Mother Superior and her companion, should be disturbed.

"Sister Redemption is coming this way, holy mother," Dona Helena said at this moment.

At a sign from the Mother Superior, Dona Anita withdrew to the other end of the bench on which she was seated, folding her arms on her chest.

"Are you looking for our mother, sister?" Dona Helena asked a rather elderly lay sister, who was looking to the right and left as if really seeking somebody.

"Yes, sister," the lay sister answered, "I wish to deliver a message with which I am intrusted for our mother."

"Then enter this arbor, sister, and you will find her reposing there."

The lay sister entered the arbor, approached the Mother Superior, stopped three paces off, folded her arms, and looked down and waited.

"What do you desire, daughter?" the Mother Superior asked her.

"Your blessing in the first place, holy mother," the lay sister answered.

"I can give it to you, daughter; and now what message have you for me?"

"Holy mother, a gentleman of lofty bearing, called Don Serapio de la Ronda, wishes to speak with you privately."

"Remain here till the oracion, my children; converse together, but be prudent," she said.

Then after giving Dona Anita a parting kiss, the Mother Superior went away, sorely troubled in mind at this visit from a man she did not know, and whose name she heard for the first time. When she entered the parlor the abbess examined the stranger with a hasty glance. On perceiving her he rose from his chair and bowed respectfully. This first glance was favorable to the stranger, in whom the reader has doubtless already recognized Valentine Guilloué.

"Pray resume your seat, caballero," the abbess said to him, "if your conversation is to last any time; we shall talk more comfortably while sitting."

Valentine bowed, offered the lady a chair, and then returned to his own.

"Señor Don Serapio de la Ronda was announced to me," the lady continued after a short silence.

"I am that gentleman, madam."

"I am at your orders, caballero, and ready to listen to any communication you may have to make."

"Madam, I am merely commissioned by the Minister of the Home Department to deliver this letter, to which I have a few words to add."

While uttering this sentence with exquisite politeness Valentine offered the abbess a letter bearing the ministerial arms.

"Pray open the letter, madam," he added, on seeing that she held it in her hand unopened; "you must be acquainted with its contents to understand the meaning of the words I have to add."

The abbess, who in her heart was impatient to know what the minister had to say, offered no objection and broke the seal of the letter. On reading it a lively expression of joy lit up her face.

"Then," she exclaimed, "His Excellency deigns to grant my request."

"Yes, madam; you remain, until fresh orders, responsible for your young charge. You have only to deal with the minister in the matter; and," he added, with a purposeful stress on the words, "in the event of Gen. Guerrero, the guardian of Dona Anita, trying to force you into surrendering her to him, you are authorized to conceal the young lady."

"Oh, señor," she answered, her eyes filling with tears of joy, "pray thank His Excellency in my name for the act of justice he has deigned to perform."

"I will have that honor, madam," Valentine said, as he rose, "and now that I have delivered my message, permit me to take leave of you, while congratulating myself that I was selected by His Excellency the minister to be his intermediary with you."

At the moment when Valentine left the convent Carnero entered it, accompanied by a monk whose hood was pulled down over his face. The hunter and the capataz exchanged side glances but did not speak.

(To be continued.)

French Ovens in Canada.

In Canada the French settlers still continue to use large brick ovens out of doors, such as were built in France 250 years ago. The perfection of the stove and range in the last fifty years have driven many of these ovens out of commission, but many of the habitant farmers think that no good baking can be done in any other oven.

Its use is simple. A fire is made in the oven of good hard wood and when the oven is exceedingly hot the ashes are raked out and the large loaves ready to bake are placed on the bottom of the oven without pans. The family baking is the work of an entire day and occupies the attention of more than one member of the family.

The making of the bread is begun the previous day when, according to the size of the family, from one-half to a whole barrel of flour is made into dough. When this is all baked the loaves are stored in the larder, a small building also detached from the main house.

This baking is intended to supply the family from one to two months in the colder weather. This method of baking makes a very thick crout or crust. As all of the natural elements of the grain are left in the flour the bread is dark in color. One learns to like this bread very much.—Travel Magazine.

A Reason for It.

"Do they always have laundries attached to big prisons?"

"Certainly. Don't they always have to wash and iron the convicts?"—Baltimore American.

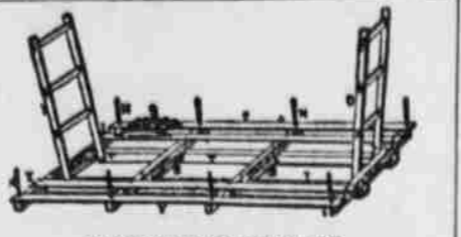
"To calm public excitement" the Hungarian Jockey Club has paid the debts of a Buda-Pesth bookmaker, who lost \$41,500 over the Austrian Derby.

Very few men ever attempt to drown their sorrow in water.

FARMS AND FARMERS

Growing Cucumbers for Pickling.

Factories for pickling cucumbers are being established wherever the farmers can be induced to become interested. Small pickles, not over 2 1/2 inches long, usually bring about 50 cents per bushel, a bushel containing about 800 pickles. The average yield is estimated at 100 bushels per acre, though several hundred bushels may be grown upon an acre. The mildew destroys the vines in some sections, but this is kept down by spraying. The striped cucumber beetle, which can not be destroyed by Paris green or ordinary insecticides, is a formidable enemy where it makes its appearance. The long green varieties of cucumbers are used. Plenty of manure should be applied. A fertilizer consisting of one part nitrogen, one part phosphoric acid and two parts of potash is about the proper formula for cucumbers. Cucumbers are salted with two quarts of salt per bushel of cucumbers, packed closely in tierces or barrels, and enough brine added to cover them. The brine should be added daily, as evaporation lowers the water in the vessel and exposes the cucumbers, which may damage them. Growers can co-operate, form a joint stock company, and sell the pickles on the market, thus securing the largest profit possible from growing them.



COMBINATION HAYRACK.

Handy Combination Hayrack.

The combination hayrack shown in the first illustration is a convenient one. It is made of pine or other straight grained light wood fourteen or sixteen feet in length, eight inches wide and three inches thick; if of oak or other hard wood, two and one-half inches thick will give sufficient strength.



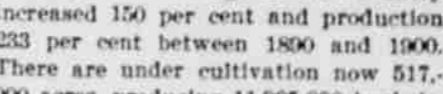
Safe Stepladder.

Build your stepladder like this, and it will never slip.

The Peanut Trade.

Peanuts have become an important article of American foreign commerce in the last six years, especially on the import side, in spite of the fact that we produce about 12,000,000 bushels a year. Peanut imports have grown in value from \$6,000 in 1900 to \$500,000 this year, while our exports thereof will approximate \$300,000. When this fiscal year closes we shall have to list peanuts for nearly \$1,000,000 of our total foreign commerce for the year, according to the Bureau of Statistics of the Department of Commerce and Labor.

The peanut acreage in this country increased 150 per cent and production 233 per cent between 1890 and 1900. There are under cultivation now 517,000 acres, producing 11,900,000 bushels. The crop is concentrated in a few Southern States, Virginia supplying one-third of it, North Carolina another third.—New York Sun.



FRAME OF BED PIECES.

over them, as shown at S. Wash with petroleum and keep under shelter when not in use.—Country Gentleman.

The Strength of Flour.

Millers and bakers know that large differences exist among various sorts of wheat flour with regard to baking value, or strength, but it appears that only recently have complete chemical tests been made to determine why a given quantity of flour of one brand will produce a loaf and nearly one-third larger than the same quantity of another brand. According to experiments by the Department of Agriculture at Cambridge, England, the volume of a loaf of bread depends in the first instance upon the relative amount of sugar in the dough. The addition of sugar always increases the size of the loaf, or, as the baker says, makes the flour stronger. There are other differences affecting such things as texture and color of bread, the chemical bases of which are yet under examination.

Butter Contents of Milk.

As a reference for those who may desire to know how much butter to expect from milk, it may be mentioned that no correct average can be given, as milk from different cows varies. Milk containing 3 per cent of butter fat will make about 1 pound of butter from 29 pounds (about 13 1/2 quarts) of milk. One quart of milk weighs 2.15 pounds. Milk containing 13 per cent of solids should contain about 4 per cent of fat, 3 1/4 per cent of albumen and 5 1/4 per cent of milk sugar, ash, etc. The average amount of butter fat in cream is about 22 per cent. The separator method of handling cream occasions less waste than by the old method. An ounce of salt is the allowance for 1 pound of butter.

Poultry as a Business.

Is there progress in poultry keeping? Read the market reports. Look at the amount of poultry advertising done today as compared with five years ago. How did the winter prices of eggs in the last five years of the nineteenth century compare with those of the first five years of this? Thousands of people are to-day making a comfortable living and many have become independent by raising poultry and eggs for the market. It has been proven by experiments that it costs no more to produce a pound of poultry than it does to produce a pound of pork or beef, yet poultry is always worth more per pound than any other meat and sells just as readily.

Timber on the Farm.

Every farmer should have his acre or more of timber. It pays in many ways—providing protection, fuel and shade. More than that, there is such a tremendous demand for wood that the timber division of a farm could be made in time to yield a monetary profit. Of course, it will take time to start a forest, but once started, it will be an asset and will certainly add to the market value of the farm.—St. Joseph News-Press.

Weevil Optimism.

There are people who believe that the advent of the boll weevil will ultimately prove a good thing for the country and who regard the little insect as a blessing in disguise. We hope they are right. It is argued that the boll weevil will bring about a re-adjustment of labor conditions; will break up the cotton system and substitute diversified farming, truck and fruit growing.—Homer (La.) Guardian-Journal.

Teaching Botany in Public Schools.

In country schools botany should be taught by devoting an hour or two each week, in the growing seasons, to excursions to the fields and woods, plants being selected, described and classified. By this mode of teaching, an interest in botany will be created on the part of the children.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



- 1214—French defeated the Germans at Bouvines.
- 1265—Simon de Montfort killed at the battle of Evesham.
- 1291—Founding of the Swiss Confederation.
- 1498—Columbus discovered Trinidad.
- 1554—Florentines defeated the French at Marciano.
- 1619—House of Burgess, first popular legislative assembly in America, met at Jamestown, Va.
- 1643—Cromwell victorious at Gainsborough.
- 1644—Conde victor at Friedburg.
- 1667—Ending of the war between France and Great Britain.
- 1675—Turenne killed at Salsbach.
- 1685—Marquis de Dononville entered on his duties of Governor of Canada.
- 1689—Battle of Killiecrankie.
- 1694—Bank of England chartered.
- 1757—French and Indians besieged Fort William Henry, in New York.
- 1759—Montcalm repulsed Wolfe in the latter's attack on Quebec.
- 1772—First partition of Poland.
- 1775—Continental congress adopted articles of war.
- 1777—Lafayette made a major general in the American army.
- 1780—Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold assumed command at West Point. Col. Sumner repulsed by British at Red Bank, Pa.
- 1794—Fall of Robespierre and end of the Reign of Terror.
- 1799—Ferdinand IV. of Naples restored.
- 1804—American naval force bombarded Tripoli.
- 1805—Francis I. of Austria declared war against France.
- 1806—Battle of Talavera.
- 1813—Plattsburg, N. Y., taken by the British.
- 1816—First State election held in Indiana.
- 1818—Charles, Duke of Richmond, became Governor of Canada.
- 1830—Paris declared in a state of siege.
- 1831—London bridge inaugurated by William IV.
- 1834—Slavery ceased throughout the British possessions.
- 1847—Telegraphic service established between Toronto, Buffalo and Montreal.
- 1848—Woman's rights convention at Rochester put forward a claim for suffrage.
- 1854—Capt. U. S. Grant resigned his commission in the army.
- 1858—The Victoria Nyanza discovered by Capt. Speke.
- 1863—Battle of Winchester, Va.
- 1864—Chambersburg, Pa., burned by the Confederates. Gen. Sherman began the siege of Atlanta. Battle of Mobile Bay.
- 1866—Atlantic telegraph cable completed.
- 1870—Colorado admitted to the Union.
- 1880—Princess Louise of Wales married to the Duke of Fife.
- 1890—Mississippi constitutional convention met at Jackson.
- 1892—Congress appropriated \$2,500,000 to be coined into half dollars as memorials of the World's Columbian exposition.
- 1894—War declared between Japan and China.
- 1896—Forty-seven persons killed in railroad disaster near Atlantic City, N. J.
- 1897—Tidal wave caused great destruction of lives and property in Japan.
- 1900—General strike of Paris cab drivers.
- 1905—Andrew Carnegie gave \$2,500,000 to his native town of Dunfermline, Scotland.
- 1905—The Japanese captured the Island of Saghalien.

Money Lost Hopeful Fact.

Bernard Shaw, in his recent essay, "First Aid to Critics," makes the startling paradox that "the universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience," while poverty he describes as "the chief crime, worse than murder." He goes on to explain that money is a curse "only when it is cheapened to worthlessness for some and made impossibly dear to others." Instead of spending so much time and energy upon catching and punishing our so-called criminals, Mr. Shaw asks if it would not be better to painlessly kill every adult with less income than \$1,800 a year, and at the same time fatten and clothe every hungry and naked child.

New South Polar Expedition.

A British expedition, headed by E. H. Shackleton, who was a member of the Discovery expedition, sailed from London on the steam barkentine *Endurance* for King Edward VII. Land, where winter quarters for twelve persons and provisions for two years will be established. The intention is to make a dash for the south pole during the summer of 1908. The equipment includes a motor car provided with different sets of runners for traveling over surfaces of varying softness.