

# THE RED TRAIL

By GUSTAVE AIMARD

## CHAPTER XXIII.—(Continued.)

The capataz made a wry face. "There will be probably plenty of blows to receive, and very little profit to derive from such an expedition."

"I believed that you were devoted to me," the general remarked bitterly.

"Your excellency is not mistaken: I am truly devoted to you, but I have also a fondness for my skin."

"I will give you twenty-five ounces for every silt it receives; is that enough?"

"Come, I see that your excellency wishes me to be cut into mince meat!" the capataz exclaimed joyously.

"Then that is agreed?"

"I should think so, excellency, at that price a man would be a fool to refuse."

"But about horses?"

"We have at least ten or a dozen in the corral."

"That is true; I did not think of that," the general exclaimed, striking his forehead, "have seven lassoed at once."

"Where must I take the senioria?"

"Bring her to this house, for she shall not set foot in the convent again."

"Very good, when shall I start, general?"

"At once, if it is possible."

"In twenty minutes I shall have left the house."

In the meanwhile the carriage dashed along; it passed at full gallop through the San Lazaro gate, then turned suddenly to the right and entered a somewhat narrow street. At about the middle of this street it stopped before a house of rather modest appearance, the gate of which at once opened, and a man came out holding the bridles of two prairie Mustangs completely harnessed, and with a rifle at each saddle-bow. The Frenchman got out and invited his companion to follow his example.

"Resume your usual dress," he said, as he led him inside the house.

The Tigreiro obeyed with an eager start of joy. While he doffed his gown his companion mounted, after saying to the young ladies:

"Whatever happens, not a word—not a cry; keep the shutters up; we will gallop at the door and remember your lives are in peril."

Don Martial at this moment came out of the house attired as a caballero.

"To horse and let us be off," said M. Rallier.

The Tigreiro bounded on to the Mustang held in readiness for him, and the carriage, in which the mules had been changed, started again at full speed. The house at which they had stopped was the one hired by Valentine to keep his stud at.

Half an hour thus passed and the carriage disappeared in the thick cloud of dust it raised as it dashed along. Don Martial felt new born; the excitement had restored his old ardor as if by enchantment, he longed to be face to face with his foe, and at length came to a settlement with him.

All at once the Indian uttered a cry. The two men looked back with alarm and saw a body of men coming up at full speed. At this moment the carriage was following a road bounded on one side by a rather thick chaparral, which extended for some distance; on the other by a deep ravine.

At a sign from the Frenchman the carriage was drawn across the road and the ladies got out and went, under Curumilla's protection, to seek shelter behind the trees. The two men, after seeing that their friends were concealed, with their rifles to their shoulders and fingers on the triggers, stood firmly in the middle of the road, awaiting the onset of their adversaries, for, in all probability, the newcomers were enemies.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Curumilla, after concealing, with that Indian skill he so thoroughly possessed, the young ladies at a spot where they were thoroughly protected from bullets, had placed himself, rifle in hand, not by the side of the two riders, but, with characteristic redskin prudence, he ambuscaded himself behind the carriage, probably reflecting that he represented the entire infantry force, and not caring, through a point of honor, very absurd in his opinion, to expose himself to a death not only certain but useless to those he wished to defend.

The horsemen, however, on coming within range of the persons they were pursuing, stopped, and by their gestures seemed to evince a hesitation; the fugitives did not at all understand, after the fashion in which they had hitherto been pursued. The motive for this hesitation, which the Frenchman and his companions could not know, and which perplexed them so greatly, was very simple.

Carnero, for it was the general's capataz who was pursuing the carriage, with his peons, all at once perceived, with a secret pleasure, it is true, though he was careful not to let his companions notice it, that while they were pursuing the carriage other horsemen were pursuing them, and coming up at heading speed. On seeing this, as we said, the party halted, much disappointed and greatly embarrassed as to what they had better do.

They were literally placed between two fires, and were the attacked instead of the assailants; the situation was critical, and deserved serious consideration. Carnero suggested a retreat, remarking with a certain amount of reason that the sides were no longer equal and that success was highly problematical. The peons, all utter ruffians, and expressly chosen by the general, but who entertained a profound respect for the integrity of their limbs, and were but very slightly inclined to have them injured in no disadvantageous a contest with people who would not recoil, were disposed to follow the advice of the capataz and retire before a retreat became impossible.

Unhappily, the Zaragate was among the peons. Believing from his conversation with the colonel that he knew better than any one the general's intentions, and attracted by the hope of a rich reward if he succeeded in delivering him

of his enemy, that is to say, in killing Valentine; and moreover, probably impelled by the personal hatred he entertained for the hunter, he would not listen to any observation, and swore with horrible oaths that he would carry out the general's orders at all hazards, and that, since the persons they were ordered to stop were only a few paces before them, they ought not to retire until they had, at least, attempted to perform their duty, and that if his comrades were such cowards as to desert him, he would go on alone at his own risk, certain that the general would be satisfied with the way in which he had behaved.

After a declaration so distinct and peremptory, any hesitation became impossible, the more so as the horsemen were rapidly coming up, and if the capataz hesitated much longer he would be attacked in the rear. Thus driven out of his last intrenchment, and compelled against his will to fight, Carnero gave the signal to push on ahead.

But the peons had scarce started ere three shots were fired, and three men rolled in the dust. The newcomers, in this way, warned their friends to hold their ground and that they were bringing help. The dismounted peons were not wounded, though greatly shaken by their fall, and unable to take part in the fight; their horses alone were hit, and that so cleverly that they at once fell.

"Eh, eh!" the capataz said, as he galloped on: "these picaros have a very sure hand. What do you think of it?"

"I say that there are still four of us; that is double the number of those waiting for us down there, and we are sufficient to master them."

"Don't be too sure, my good friend, Zaragate," the capataz said with a grin; "they are men made of iron, who must be killed twice over before they fall."

The Tigreiro and his companions had heard shots and seen the peons bite the dust.

"There is Valentine," said the Frenchman.

"I believe so," Don Martial replied.

"Shall we charge?"

"Yes."

And digging in their spurs, they dashed at the peons.

Valentine and his two comrades, Belhumeur and Black Elk (for the Frenchman was not mistaken, it was really the hunter coming up, whom the Canadian had warned) fell on the peons simultaneously with Don Martial and his companion.

A terrible, silent and obstinate struggle went on for some minutes between these nine men; the foes had seized each other round the body, as they were too close to use firearms, and tried to stab each other. Nothing was heard but angry curses and panting, for what is the use of insulting when you can kill?

The Zaragate, so soon as he recognized the hunter, dashed at him. Valentine, although taken off his guard, offered a vigorous resistance; the two men were entwined like serpents, and, in their efforts to dismount each other, at last both fell, and rolled beneath the feet of the combatants who, without thinking of them, or perceiving their fall, continued to attack each other furiously.

The Zaragate, some years younger than Valentine, and possessed of his full bodily strength, while urged on by the love of a rich reward, made superhuman efforts to master his opponent and plunge his navaja into his heart.

Still Valentine felt that his strength was becoming exhausted, the unexpected resistance he met with from an enemy apparently so little worthy of him exasperated him and made him lose his coolness. Collecting all his remaining vigor to attempt a final and decisive effort, he succeeded in getting his enemy once again under him, and pinned him down; but, at the same moment, Valentine uttered a cry of pain and rolled on the ground—a horse's kick had broken his left arm.

The Zaragate sprang up with a tiger's bound, and bursting into a yell of delight, placed his knee on his enemy's chest, at the same time as he prepared to bury his navaja in his heart. Valentine felt that he was lost, and did not attempt to avoid the death that threatened him.

"Ah, ah!" the Zaragate said, with a ferocious grin. "I hold my vengeance at length, accursed Trail-hunter."

He did not complete the sentence; suddenly seized by his long hair, while a knee, thrust between his shoulders, forced him to bend back, he saw, as in a horrible dream, a ferocious face grinning above his head. With a fearful groan he rolled on the ground; a knife had been buried in his heart, while his scalp, which was suddenly removed, left his denuded skull to inundate with blood the ground around.

Curumilla raised in his arms the body of his friend, whose life he had just saved once again, and bore it to the side of the road. Valentine had fainted.

The chief, so soon as he saw his friends charge the peons, left his ambush, and while careful to remain behind them, followed to the battlefield. He had watched eagerly the long struggle between the hunter and the Zaragate; trying vainly to assist his friend, but never able to succeed. The two enemies were so entwined, their movements were so rapid, and they changed their positions so suddenly that the chief was afraid lest he might wound his friend in attempting to help him. Finally the Araucano bounded like a wild beast on the Mexican, and without hesitation scalped and stabbed him with the agility characteristic of the redskins, and which he himself possessed in so high a degree.

Almost at the same moment the horsemen also finished their fight. The peons had offered a vigorous resistance, but being badly supported by the capataz, who was disabled at the beginning of the skirmish by Don Martial, and seeing the Zaragate dead and three of their friends dismounted and incapable of coming to their assistance, they gave in.

The capataz had been wounded at his

own request by Don Martial, in order to save appearances with the general; he had a wide gash on his right arm, very severe at the first glance, but insignificant in reality. A peon had been almost smashed by Belhumeur, so that the field of battle remained in the hands of the hunters.

When their victory was assured, they assembled anxiously round Valentine, for they were alarmed at his condition, and most anxious to be reassured. Valentine, whose arm Curumilla had at once set, with the skill and coolness of an old practitioner, soon reopened his eyes, reassured his friends by a smile, and offered the Indian chief his right hand, which the latter laid on his heart with an expression of indescribable happiness, as he uttered his favorite exclamation of "Ugh!" the only word he permitted himself to use in joy or in sorrow, when he felt himself choking with internal emotion.

"Senores," the hunter said, "it is only an arm broken; thanks to the chief, I have had an easy escape. Let us resume our journey before other enemies come up."

"And we, senior?" the capataz cried humbly.

Valentine rose with the chief's assistance, and took a furious glance at the peons. "As for you, miserable assassins," he said with a terrible accent, "return to your master and tell him in what way you were received. But it is not sufficient to have chastised you perdy, I must revenge for the odious snare into which my friends and I all but fell. I will learn whether in open day, and some half a dozen miles from Mexico, bandits can thus attack peaceable travelers with impunity. Begone!"

So soon as the peons, in obedience to the hunter's orders, had left the battlefield, he, on his part, gave his companions the signal to start. Don Martial had hurried to reassure the ladies, who were standing more dead than alive at the spot where the chief had concealed them. He made them get into the carriage again, without telling them anything except that the danger was past, and that there was not the slightest doubt but what the rest of the journey would be performed in safety.

Valentine's friends tried in vain to induce him to get into the carriage with the ladies. He would not consent, but insisted on mounting his horse, assuring them, in the far from probable event of their being attacked again, that he could be still of some service to his companions in spite of his broken arm. The latter were too well acquainted with his inflexible will to argue or press the point with him further, so Curumilla remounted the coach box and they started.

The rest of the journey was performed without any incident, and they reached the quinta twenty minutes later.

The skirmish had taken place scarce two miles from the country house. On reaching the gates, Valentine took leave of his friend without dismounting.

"What!" the latter said to him, "are you going, Valentine, without resting for a moment?"

"I must, my dear Rallier," he answered; "you know what imperious reasons claim my presence in Mexico."

"But you are wounded."

"Have I not Curumilla to attend to my hurt? Do not be anxious about me; besides, I intend to see you again soon. This quinta appears to me strong enough to resist a surprise. Have you a garrison?"

"I have a dozen servants and my two brothers."

"In that case I am easy in my mind; besides, there is only one night to pass, and I believe that after the lesson his people have received, the general will not venture on a second attack, for some days at least. Besides, he reckons on the success of his pronunciamento. You will come to me to-morrow at daybreak, will you not?"

"I shall not fail."

"In that case I will be off."

"Will you not say good-by to the ladies?"

"They are not aware of my presence and it will be better for them not to see me; so good-by till to-morrow."

(To be continued.)

"MOMENTUM IN VARIATION."

**Explanation of Growth of "Useless Animal Organs."**

In many animals there are certain organs which, useful in their earlier stages, have apparently been so greatly developed as to become rather hindrances. The horns of certain deer, for example, useful as weapons of defense when smaller, have become so large as rather to handicap the animals in the struggle for life. The huge overgrown teeth, or tusks, of certain of the boar family may be cited as further examples. These are sometimes explained as organs which have been more useful in their present state under former different conditions, and which have persisted through heredity. In the American Naturalist, however, F. B. Loomis brings forward another explanation. He thinks the growth of such organs is due to what he calls "momentum in variation." As a variation proceeds in a certain direction it acquires, like a body moving under the action of gravity, a momentum which may carry it past the stage of greatest utility. This factor in evolution, Mr. Loomis thinks, has not been assigned the importance it deserves.

Other evolutionists, however, have suggested that when an animal or plant has once started to vary in a given direction, it acquires a tendency to go on varying in that direction. And this, although the word momentum is not used, agrees with the above theory.

**Listening for Bombs.**

"What makes Bilkins jump so at every little noise?"

"He's been over in Russia a year and it's got to be a habit with him."—Detroit Free Press.

The Sahara has over one-half the area of the United States. Its population is very small for its area. The Libyan and Nubian deserts are only a continuation of it to the Red Sea.

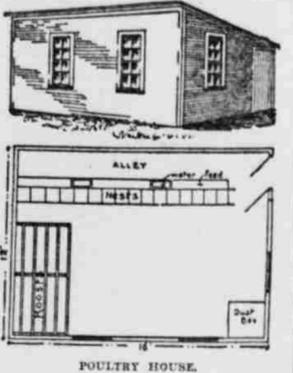
There are over 7,000 women in charge of American postoffices.

own request by Don Martial, in order to save appearances with the general; he had a wide gash on his right arm, very severe at the first glance, but insignificant in reality. A peon had been almost smashed by Belhumeur, so that the field of battle remained in the hands of the hunters.



### Model Poultry House.

The illustration shows the exterior view and ground plan of a poultry house intended for one colony of fowls. The house is 12x16 feet on the ground, nine feet high in front and six feet in the rear. It has three windows, two on the south side and one on the east end which admit plenty of sunlight. There are no windows on the north and west, thus making a warm corner for roosts and avoiding drafts. It is covered with shiplap, paper and siding on the outside, is ceiled on the inside and has a good shingle roof. A raised platform is built two and a half feet from the main floor in one end of the house, six inches above which are the roosts. The roosts rest upon a frame fastened to the wall with hinges so that it can be easily raised and the platform cleaned in a very short time each morning. The space under the roost platform and the entire remaining part



POULTRY HOUSE.

of the house, except the alley, may be used for a scratching room. The alley is separated from the pen by wire netting except under the nests where vertical slats should be used placed two inches apart. Between these slats the chickens feed out of a trough that sits in the alley where they cannot get into it with their feet.

### Why Milk Costs More.

Interesting statistics as to the cost of milk production are given by the local milk dealers of a Massachusetts town in an announcement made of an increase in the retail price of milk to seven cents a quart during the winter months. On this announcement we find the following suggestive comparisons:

"Twenty years ago mill feed cost \$14 per ton; today \$22 per ton. Then cotton seed cost \$18 per ton; today \$34 per ton. Then, farm labor cost \$20 per month; today, \$26 per month. Then, milk cows cost \$45 each; today, \$65 each. Formerly a milk dealer's outfit consisted of about 25 tons, costing about \$15. Today, for the same business, it requires bottles, boxes, fillers, coolers, etc., costing \$150. Our plumbing, carpenters' repairs, blacksmithing and other like expenses have increased 33 per cent. Added to the above are the constantly increasing restrictions of state and local boards of health, which undoubtedly improve the quality of the milk, but at a considerable increase in cost, which increase has fallen on the producer and dealer, when it should be paid by the consumer."

### Farmers and Poultry Fanciers.

The farmer has a real grievance against the poultry fancier, in that he has done all of his crossing and in-breeding of fathers, daughters, uncles and aunts without any regard to practical utility, says Farming, whether the hens from which he has been breeding were producing 90 eggs a year or 200 made no difference. His whole aim has been to breed out a fowl flight feather or two, or to create a better comb, or eyes of a better tint at a sacrifice of everything else. The result is that when a farmer goes into the market to buy thoroughbreds with his money in his pocket ready and willing to pay for the best stock, he not only often pays for qualities he does not need, but actually pays a premium for something that has been obtained at a sacrifice of the very qualities which he does need. There are a few men, however, raising thoroughbred stock that is "bred to lay," or to meet certain market demands, and those are the men that should be patronized.

### Dairy Notes.

Large yields per animal means less cost in making them.

Success in home dairying depends upon four things: The cow, her care and feeding, the manufacture of the produce, the marketing of the same.

Unless a big cow is an extra milker, she is less profitable than a smaller one that is a fair milker.

The butter product of all cows is more or less influenced by the care and feeding of the animal.

An advantage of dairying in connection with grain raising is that it makes a home market for home grown crops.

Dairying has this advantage, that its produce is in the line of food and is always in demand at some price and is therefore a money crop to the farmer; to this may be added the fact that the money comes quite frequently.

In churning if the friction is too violent, the butter is produced too speedily, it is deficient in color and does not keep well.

When the churn is quite filled it is almost impossible to produce butter, not only because there is want of air, but also because the cream swells in the process of churning.

The value of cream is based on the dry solids it contains and cream from different cows and from the same cows at different periods of the year has a surprising difference in butter value.

### Stacking Wheat.

Years ago it was a common custom to stack the wheat as soon as it was well cured in the shock, but gradually this custom was abandoned until in many parts of the country it was a rare sight to see a stack.

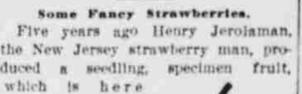
Of recent years a reaction seems to be slowly taking place and stacking is again coming into fashion, according to a writer in American Agriculturist. The reason for this is not in doubt. It is the bitter and costly experiences that have come home to farmers through leaving their grain in the shock until the machine came around. Of course, when everybody stacked and the thrashing season occupied six weeks or more, a majority of the crops were necessarily left standing in the shock for weeks, exposed to storms and winds.

Now, of course, while it is a fact that rainy seasons in July are uncommon, they are of sufficiently regular occurrence to make the damage they inflict far outweigh the cost of annually stacking or storing the grain.

Stacking can be carried on every moment of the day that the wheat is dry enough to handle. If the stack is uncompleted at night or when a shower comes up it can be covered with a tarpaulin. With his grain once safely in the stack the farmer is independent of the weather and the machine boss and can go about his other work serenely conscious that he has done his duty in safeguarding his principal cash crop.

### Some Fancy Strawberries.

Five years ago Henry Jerolaman, the New Jersey strawberry man, produced a seedling, specimen fruit, which is here shown. When the increase of the first plant had made a row eight feet long Mr. Jerolaman on going away one day told the boy left in charge that no berries were to be sold from those plants for less than \$1 per quart, thinking that would be prohibitive. On his return the boy handed him \$4, a customer having taken four quarts, all that were ready at the time. Next day the same man returned and got three quarts more. This was running into money so fast that Millionaire seemed an appropriate name for the berry. The fruit illustrated was two inches in diameter and about as large as any seen. Many run from one and a quarter to one and a half inches. The shape is uniform, no corking being noted; color bright red, with a fine gloss; quality good, above the average to my taste. Its season is long and nearly every berry is strong and abundant, the plants standing from ten to fifteen inches high by actual measurement.



MILLIONAIRE.

### KEVITT SEEDLING.

To produce strawberries of mammoth size, so that a dozen berries will fill a quart basket, plants should be set out in the early part of August in good, rich soil and kept well cultivated during the growing season. All runners should be kept off the plant.—Rural New Yorker.

### Horses and Grass.

A famous veterinary surgeon declares that grass beats all the drugs in creation as a sure cure for sick horses and mules. Horses should have a few pounds of grass daily from spring until fall, he says. The prevalent notion that it is harmful is idiotic and cruel. Grass to horses is the same as fresh vegetables and fruit to us. Their craving for it proves their need of it. Yet ignorant, unfeeling drivers yank them away from it as if it were poison instead of the life-giving medicine it is, designed by their Maker for them. When they gnaw the bark of trees or eat leaves it is because they crave grass and can't get it.—Buffalo Horse World.

### New Strawberry Varieties.

Several hundred new varieties of strawberries have been introduced within the past five years, and each has had its share of praise until the amateur is confused. Failure with certain kinds is because all varieties do not thrive alike under the same conditions. Some will give better results on light soil than on heavy, and some will not thrive except on moist soils. The beginner should endeavor to select a variety that has been tested in his neighborhood with good results. Strawberry plants may be set out in the fall, though the spring season is usually preferred.

### Fencing Fence Wire.

A better way to fasten wire to a fence post where staples do not hold is to use short pieces of wire. Twist one end around the wire on one side of the post, bring it around on the other side and twist around the wire again. By treating several posts this way the wire will be drawn quite tight without the aid of a stretcher.



- THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN**
- 1191—Richard I. defeated the Saracens at Arsouf.
  - 1207—Wallace defeated the English at Cambuskenneth.
  - 1456—Mohammed II. repulsed at the grade.
  - 1522—Circumnavigation of the globe completed by the return of Magellan's ship to Spain.
  - 1544—Valparaiso, Chili, founded. Pedro de Valdivia.
  - 1547—English defeated the Scots at Pinkie.
  - 1565—French sailed from Port Royal, S. C., against Menendez at Augustine, Fla. Founding of Augustine, Fla.
  - 1584—Sir Humphrey Gilbert landed in Newfoundland.
  - 1605—Capt. John Smith elected president of Virginia colony.
  - 1609—Henry Hudson arrived in New York bay.
  - 1631—Gustavus defeated Tilly at Lutzen.
  - 1650—Cromwell defeated the Scots at Dunbar.
  - 1683—Jean Baptiste Colbert, entered the Ministry of Louis XIV. of France died.
  - 1751—New style of calendar adopted in Great Britain.
  - 1755—Expulsion of Acadians from Nova Scotia announced.
  - 1760—Montreal capitulated to the British.
  - 1763—Detroit relieved from siege by Indians.
  - 1768—Cyclone at Havana destroyed thousands of lives.
  - 1770—American colonies first called "United States" by Congress.
  - 1781—Lafayette prevented the march of Cornwallis into North Carolina. New London, Conn., burned.
  - 1795—First newspaper exclusively of commercial topics issued at Boston.
  - 1800—Malta ceded to the British.
  - 1804—United States ship "Intrepid" blown up in Tripoli harbor.
  - 1807—Copenhagen surrendered to British Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart.
  - 1812—French defeated the Russians at the battle of Borodino.
  - 1818—James J. Wallack made his first appearance on the American stage.
  - 1828—Earl of Dalhousie finished his term of office as governor general of Canada.
  - 1835—John G. Carlisle, ex-Secretary of the Treasury, born.
  - 1838—Ferdinand I. of Austria crowned at Milan.
  - 1841—President Tyler vetoed the bank bill.
  - 1846—John Y. Mason of Virginia became Secretary of the Navy. Elias Howe invented his sewing machine.
  - 1850—House of Representatives passed the fugitive slave bill. New Mexico and Utah territories organized.
  - 1852—Brevet Col. Robert E. Lee superintendent of the West Point Military academy.
  - 1858—Gold found in Tangle river, Nevada.
  - 1860—Union force under Grant occupied Paducah, Ky.
  - 1861—First provincial synod of the Church of England met at Montreal.
  - 1862—Gen. Lee crossed the Potomac and invaded Maryland.
  - 1865—President Johnson issued his second amnesty proclamation.
  - 1870—French republic declared the flight of the Empress Eugenie.
  - 1873—Great Britain paid the indemnity awarded in the Alabama claims.
  - 1874—Colorado for the first time a Democratic.
  - 1876—Fire at St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, destroyed five hundred houses.
  - 1879—Massacre of British residents at Canul.
  - 1884—Parliaments demanded that the Government declare war on China.
  - 1886—Apaches under Chief Geronimo surrendered to Gen. Miles in Arizona.
  - 1891—The new Chilean government recognized by the United States. Tennessee Legislature refused to abolish the convict lease system.
  - Centenary of Meyerbeer's coronation at Berlin. German government moved the prohibition of the importation of American pork.
  - 1893—President Cleveland opened Pan-American Medical Congress at Washington.
  - 1894—Twelve thousand tailors struck New York City against the task-work system.
  - 1895—Attempt made to blow up Rothschild bank in Paris.
  - 1898—United States commissioners pointed to negotiate a treaty with Spain. New Westminster, C., nearly destroyed by fire.
  - 1901—President McKinley shot at Buffalo exposition.
- Naval Shake-up Begun.**
- One of the most radical shake-ups in the history of the United States navy now reported to be under way in the department, with special reference to personnel of the line on the battleships which are to take part in the forthcoming Pacific cruise. The purpose is to advance the younger men to the fighting line and send their elders to the rear, and it is said that of the eighteen captains now in command of the ships on the line, only fourteen will be men younger than the officers now in command.