

THE RED TRAIL

By GUSTAVE AIMARD

CHAPTER XXV.

On his return to the mansion the capataz did not see his master, at which he was extremely pleased, for he desired to delay as long as possible an explanation which, in spite of the wound he so complacently displayed, he feared would turn out to his disadvantage; especially when questioned by a man like the general, whose piercing glance would descend to the bottom of his heart to discover the truth, however cleverly hidden it might be behind a network of falsehoods.

As only a few hours had still to elapse before the explosion of the conspiracy, arranged with such care and mystery, the general was compelled for a while to suspend his schemes for the satisfaction of his love and hatred, and only attend to those in which his ambition was engaged. The principal conspirators had been summoned to Colonel Lupo's, and there the final arrangements had been made for the morrow, and the watchword given.

Although the government appeared plunged in the most profound ignorance of what was preparing against it, and evinced complete security, still the President had made certain arrangements for the morrow's ceremonies which did not fall greatly to trouble the men interested in knowing everything, and to whom the apparently most futile thing naturally created umbrage.

The general, with the curiosity that distinguished him, was anxious to know exactly the extent of the danger he had to meet, and proceeded to the palace, merely accompanied by his two aides-de-camp. He was too calm to let his feelings be seen. He pretended to be delighted, remained for some time with the President, who appeared to treat him with a friendly familiarity, complained of the rarity of his visits, and his obstinacy in not asking for a command.

Still the general remarked that all the courts were stuffed with soldiers, who were bivouacking in the open air; that several guns had been placed, accidentally, perhaps, so as to sweep completely the chief entrance gate, and, more serious still, that the troops quartered in the palace were commanded by officers who were strangers to him, and who had, moreover, the reputation of being devoted to the President of the Republic.

After this daring visit, the general mounted his horse, and under the pretext of going for a walk, went all over the city. Everywhere the preparations for the coming festival were being carried on with the greatest activity. Numerous wooden erections, raised for the occasion, filled the space usually devoted to taumachy, and formed an immense hall of verdure, with pleasant clumps of trees, mysterious walks and charming retreats, prepared with the greatest care, where everybody would go on the morrow to eat the atrocious productions of the Mexican art of cookery.

Exactly in the center of the square a Necatitan tree about twenty feet in height was planted, with its branches and leaves entirely covered with colored pocket handkerchiefs that floated in the breeze. This tree was the Monte Parmasso, intended to serve as a may pole for the leperos at the moment when the bull fights begin, and a trial bull, emballado—that is to say, with its horns terminating in balls, is let into the ring.

All the pulquerias near the square were filled with a hideous, ragged mob, who howled, sang, shouted and whistled their loudest.

In all the streets the procession would pass through the houses were decorated; Mexican flags were hoisted in profusion at every spot where they could be displayed; and yet, by the side of all these holiday preparations, there was, we repeat, something gloomy and menacing that struck a chill to the heart. Through all the gates fresh troops continually entered the city, and occupied admirably chosen strategic points.

When a serious event is preparing, there are in the atmosphere certain signs which never deceive the fosterers of revolutions; a vague and apparently causeless anxiety seizes on the masses, and unconsciously converts their joy into a species of feverish excitement, at which they are themselves startled, as they know not to what to attribute this change in their humor.

Hence the population of Mexico, mad, merry and joyous, as usual when a festival is preparing, in the eyes of short-sighted persons, were in reality sternly sad and suffering from great anxiety. The general did not fail to observe these prognostics; gloomy presentiments occupied his mind, for he understood that a terrible tempest was hidden beneath this fictitious calmness. Valentine's gloomy predictions recurred to him. He trembled to see the hunter's menaces realized; and, though unable to discover when the danger would come, he foresaw that a great peril was hanging over his head; and that his ambitious projects would soon, perhaps, be drowned in floods of blood.

Unfortunately, it was too late to desist; he must, whatever might happen, go on to the end, for he had not the time to give counter orders, and urge the conspirators to defer the explosion of the plot till a more favorable moment. Hence, after ripe reflection, the general resolved to push on, and trust to accident. Ambitious men, by the way, reckon far more than is supposed on hazard and those magnificent combinations which are admired when success has crowned them, are most frequently merely the unfore-

seen results of fortuitous circumstances, completely beyond the will of the man whom they have profited.

The general returned to his house at about 6 in the evening, despairing, and already seeing his plans annihilated. The report of his capataz added to his discouragement, for it was the drop of wormwood which makes the brimful cup run over. He withdrew to his apartments in a state of dull fury, and in his impotent rage accused himself for having ventured into this frightful situation, for he felt himself rapidly gliding down a fatal slope, where it would be impossible for him to stop.

What added to his secret agony was that he must incessantly send off couriers, receive reports, talk with his confidants, and feign in their presence not merely calmness and gaiety, but also encourage them, and impart to them an ardor and hope which he no longer possessed.

The whole night was spent thus. A terrible night, during which the general endured all the tortures that assail an ambitious man on the eve of a scandalous plot against a government which he has sworn to defend.

Sunrise surprised the general giving his final orders. Worn out by the fatigue of a long watch, with pallid brow, and eyes inflamed by fever, he tried to take a few moments of restorative rest, which he so greatly needed; but his efforts were fruitless, for he was suffering from an excitement too intense, at the decisive hour, for sleep to come and close his eyes.

Already the bells of the churches were pealing out, and filling the air with their joyous notes. In all the streets, and in all the squares, boys and leperos were letting off crackers, and uttering deafening cries, which more resembled bursts of fury than demonstrations of joy. The people, dressed in their holiday clothes, were leaving their houses in masses, and spreading like a torrent over the city.

The review was arranged for seven o'clock a. m., so that the troops might be spared the great heat of the day. They were massed on the Pase de Bucarelli and the road connecting that promenade with the Alameda.

We have already stated that the Mexican army, 20,000 strong, has 2,400 officers. Hence, in the enormous crowd assembled to witness the review uniforms were in a majority, for all the officers living on half pay in Mexico, for some reason or another, considered themselves bound to attend the review as amateurs.

At a quarter to 8 o'clock the drums beat, the troops presented arms, a deafening shout was raised by the crowd, and the President of the Republic arrived, followed by a large staff, glistening with gold and lace, and with a cloud of feathers waving in their cocked hats.

General Guerrero had joined the President's staff in his full dress uniform, as Colonel Lupo and other conspirators had also done; the rest, dispersed among the crowd.

In the meanwhile the review went on without any hitch. It is true that the President restricted himself to riding along the front, and then ordering the troops to march past, for he did not dare, owing to the notorious ignorance of the officers and soldiers, risk the execution of any maneuvers, for it would not have been understood, and would have broken the charm under which the spectators were fascinated. Then the President, still followed by his staff, proceeded to the cathedral. We will not say anything about the official reception, etc., which occupied all the morning.

The hour for the bull fight arrived. Since the review no one troubled himself about the troops, who seemed to have suddenly disappeared—not a soldier was visible in the streets; but the people did not think of them, for they were letting off fireworks, laughing and shouting, which was quite sufficient to amuse them. It was only noticed that these soldiers, though invisible about the city, had apparently passed the word to each other to be present at the bull fight. Nearly the whole of the palcos de sol in the circus, that is to say, the parts exposed to the sun, were thronged with soldiers, grouped pell-mell with the leperos, and offering the most pleasant contrast with these ragged scamps, who were yelling and whistling.

The President arrived, and the circus was in a second invaded by the mob. Since an early hour the jamina had begun, that is to say, the framework of verdure raised in the center of the arena, forming refreshment rooms, had since daybreak been filled with countless numbers of leperos, who ate with cries of ferocious delight.

Suddenly, at a given signal, the gate of the torril was opened and a bull rushed into the arena. Then began an extraordinarily indescribable scene, resembling one of those diabolical meetings so admirably designed by Callot.

The leperos, surprised by the arrival of the bull, darted, shouting, pushing and upsetting each other, over the framework, which they threw down and trampled under foot in their terror, while seeking to escape the pursuit of the emballado, who, also excited by the turmoil, hunted them vigorously. In a second the arena was deserted, the refreshment rooms swept clean, and the performers in the jamina sought any shelter they could find on the edge of the palcos or upon the columns, from which they hung in hideous, yelling and grimacing clusters.

The bull, after amusing himself for some minutes in tossing about the remains of the framework, stopped and looked cunningly around, and soon noticed the tree, the only obstacle left to remove in order to completely empty the arena.

He remained motionless for an instant, as if hesitating ere he formed a resolution, then bowed his head, made the sand fly with his fore feet, lashed his tail violently, and rushing at the tree, dealt it repeated powerful blows.

The leperos uttered a cry of despair. The tree, which was overlaid, and incessantly sapped at its base by the bull, swayed, and at last fell sideways, carrying down in its fall the leperos clinging to its branches. The audience clapped their hands and broke into frenzied bravos, which changed into perfect yells of delight when a poor fellow who was limping away was suddenly caught up by the bull and tossed ten feet high in the air.

All at once, and at the moment when the joy was attaining its paroxysm, several rounds of artillery were heard, followed by a well sustained musketry fire. As if by magic the bull was driven back to the torril, the soldiers scattered about the circus leaped into the ring, and becoming actors instead of spectators, drew up in good order and leveled their muskets at the occupants of the galleries and boxes, who remained motionless with terror, for they did not understand what was going on.

A door opened and twenty bandmen, followed by eight officers and escorted by a dozen soldiers, entered the ring and began beating the drums. It was a governmental band. So soon as silence was restored martial law was proclaimed and sentence of outlawry passed on General Don Sebastian Guerrero and his adherents, who had just raised the standard of revolt and pronounced against the established government.

Mexico was once again the prey of one of those scenes of murder and carnage which, since the proclamation of independence, has too often stained her streets and squares with blood.

The President was on horseback in the center of the arena, sending off orders, listening to messages or detaching reinforcements wherever they were wanted. The circus was converted into the headquarters of the army of order, and the spectators, although allowed to depart after some arrests had been effected among them, remained trembling in their seats, preferring not to venture into the streets, which had been converted into real battlefields.

(To be continued.)

USES OF REDWOOD.

California Coast Product a Strong Competitor of Cypress.

In searching for a substitute for ordinary woods employed in construction work, the supply of many of which is rapidly decreasing, it has been found that the coast redwood forests of California offer a product which can be put to excellent commercial use, says the Boston Transcript. California redwood is very durable and its fine working qualities make it a strong competitor of cypress, and also adaptable to many of the uses to which white and yellow pine are put. Redwood, as sold on the market, may be the product of either of the giant sequoias or "big trees," the commercial utilization of which has very properly called forth great protests, or of the coast redwood. Cutting the big trees would mean the speedy extinction of this unique and wonderful species, which is found only in isolated groves and which reproduces abundantly, so that it is a good tree for the forester to utilize for successive timber crops.

It is likely that the lumber trade will encourage the use of redwood more and more in the future, as comparatively little practical use has been made of the products of these extensive forests of California up to the present time. The use of redwood is now about 1 1/2 per cent of the total consumption of lumber. It is estimated that the forests of California have about 75,000,000,000 feet of standing redwood timber and the wise use of these products by conservative lumbering will in a degree make up for the greatly lessened supply of other useful woods.

The Redwood Association has recently requested the forest service of the United States Department of Agriculture to make a complete study of the physical and mechanical properties of redwood lumber in order to obtain reliable information concerning its properties. The forest service has decided to comply with this request and will conduct a series of experiments in cooperation with the University of California at the testing laboratory at Berkeley.

Redwood timber for a long time has had extensive use in California, but not until recently has entered the eastern markets. Its use in the East, thus far, has been for shingles, finishing, flooring, siding and laths. It is probable that in the near future its usefulness as a structural material will extend because of the rising price of the commoner eastern woods, and because of its durability and strength in comparison with its weight. Its fire-resisting quality is another argument for its use which has caused it to find favor in the West. Citizens of San Francisco have always held that the fire risk in that city was less than in other cities with an equal number of wooden structures because of this quality of redwood.

REAR ADMIRAL WALKER.

Gallant Naval Commander's Career Suddenly Closed by Death.

Rear Admiral John Grimes Walker, U. S. N., retired, died suddenly of heart disease at High Pasture, York Cliffs, on the coast of Maine, where he had been passing several weeks in a cottage with his family.



ADMIRAL WALKER.

Admiral Walker won distinction as promoter of the White Squadron, the first of its kind composed of modern ships that the United States sent

into foreign ports in time of peace, marking the advent of a new navy.

Admiral Walker was born in Hillsborough, N. H., March 20, 1835. He was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1856. Promoted lieutenant commander in 1862, he was ordered to the Mississippi Squadron, in which he had command of the Chillicothe and subsequently of the Baron De Kalb. A year afterward he was ordered to the Boston navy yard. He was promoted to commander in 1866 and in 1869 took command of the Sabine. In the Baron De Kalb he saw much active fighting along the Mississippi. In the siege of Vicksburg he commanded the naval battery of the Fifteenth Army Corps and commanded a gunboat in the North Atlantic squadron in the capture of Wilmington. He was especially promoted in 1866 for war service.

In 1877 Walker was promoted captain and was made a member of the Lighthouse Board in 1878. Three years afterward he was made chief of the bureau of navigation. He was ordered to England, Germany and France on duty in connection with the building of the new navy. Promoted commodore in 1889, he was put in command of the squadron of evolution, which visited European waters. In 1892 this became known as the White Squadron, with Walker still in command. Walker was promoted rear admiral in 1894, and was ordered to command the Pacific squadron. After five months he was ordered to the presidency of the Lighthouse Board. On March 20, 1897, he was retired for age. He was the first president of the reconstructed Panama Canal Commission.

SEEDLESS TOMATOES.

Much Expected from New Jersey Experiment.

Professor Halsted and his associates at the New Jersey stations have succeeded in evolving a nearly seedless tomato. Whereas each fruit of the ordinary tomato contains hundreds of seeds, the form which Prof. Halsted has developed seldom contains no more than fifty seeds and frequently there are not more than five or six and often none. This variety has become pretty well established now and is called the Giant. It originated as a result of a cross of Golden Sunrise upon Dwarf Champion. The flesh is particularly fine flavored. The plants, three feet apart each way, covered the ground devoted to the block, and flowered up to the killing frosts near November 1. The type appears to be well fixed. Attempts to cross other sorts upon it have uniformly failed. Seedless fruits have also been produced by Professor Halsted on several varieties and crosses of tomatoes, but these crosses were quite uniformly dwarfed in size, many in a cluster being not larger than peas, but solid fleshed, and often of good quality. In one instance the fruit had the flavor of the strawberry. Cuttings taken from plants which produced numerous seedless fruits of this sort when planted out in the garden gave only normal fruits.

E. P. Sandsten, working at the Wisconsin station, produced seedless tomatoes by an entirely different method, i. e., the use of excessive amounts of fertilizers. Cuttings taken from these types and set outdoors remained true to type, but produced more and larger fruit than in the greenhouse. The work with seedless tomatoes at both these stations is being continued and promises to result in the establishment of varieties with far less seeds than the sorts commonly grown.

A Famous Retreat.

The late Gen. Schofield was once describing in Washington a certain retreat of cavalry.

"I call it a retreat," he said, "but I should really call it a rout."

He smiled.

"In this great retreat," he went on, "the commanding general, as his charger tore along like the wind, turned to an aid who galloped beside him, and said:

"Who are our rear guard?"

"The aid, without ceasing for an instant to belabor his panting steed, replied:

"Those who have the worst horses, sir."

Coffee is a bad thing for a man's temper—especially if his wife doesn't know how to make it.



Macaroni Pudding.

Half-pound of macaroni broken into inch lengths, two cups of boiling water, one teaspoonful butter, one large cup of milk, two tablespoons of sugar, grated peel of half a lemon, a little cinnamon and salt. Boil the macaroni in the water until it is tender, and has soaked up the liquid. It must be cooked in an agate kettle. Add the butter and salt. Cover for five minutes without cooking. Put in the rest of the ingredients. Simmer after the boiling begins ten minutes longer before serving in deep dish. Be careful in stirring not to break the macaroni. Eat with butter and powdered sugar, or cream and sugar.

Baked Toast.

Cut the crust from the bread, slice and toast. As each slice is toasted dip it in salted hot water, then lay in a pudding dish, putting a few bits of butter and a little salt on each slice. When the dish is packed full of the toast pour over it scalding milk, to which add a little cream if you have any to spare. Fill the dish to the brim with the milk, then cover closely and set in the oven to bake for twenty minutes. The toast should be tender all through and absorb most of the milk.

To Corn Beef.

To ten parts of salt add one part of saltpeter and rub it well into the beef until the salt is dried thickly on the surface of the meat. Set in the ice chest for twenty-four hours and repeat the process. Set aside for another day. Make a pickle by boiling together a gallon of salt, four ounces of saltpeter, a pound and a half of brown sugar and five gallons of water. Set aside until cold, then put the meat into it and leave until needed, looking at it occasionally to see that it is keeping well.

Dill Pickles.

Make a brine that is so strong that an egg will float on its surface, then add half as much more clear water as you have brine. Wash cucumbers in very cold water and put in a stone crock in layers, putting on each layer one of grape leaves and one of dill—the leaves and stems. When the crock is full pour in the brine, covering the contents with it. Cover with a cloth before putting the top on the crock. Remove the cloth each week and wash it well, then replace.

Agro Dolces Sauce.

Mix well together two tablespoonfuls of sugar, a half-cupful of currants, four ounces of grated chocolate, a tablespoonful of chopped candied orange peel, the same quantity of chopped lemon peel, a tablespoonful of capers and a cupful of vinegar. Set aside for two hours, then pour over roast venison or veal or boiled tongue and cook for ten minutes. If they are liked a tablespoonful of pineapples (pine nuts) or a dozen chopped almonds may be added.

Crescions.

Boil as much spinach as is needed, drain it well, add to it a little pure olive oil and put it in a saucepan to simmer with a taste of shallot, some chopped parsley, and salt and pepper to taste. Season with stoned raisins, currants and a little sugar. Put the spinach into rounds of paste about two inches in diameter, making the paste of flour and eggs. Fold the paste over the spinach (as one would for turnovers) and fry in pure olive oil.

Green-Corn Pudding.

Grate the corn from a dozen ears. Beat five eggs until very light, whip the grated corn into them, add two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, one tablespoonful of granulated sugar and a quart of milk. Beat very hard, add salt to taste and pour into a deep greased pudding dish. Bake covered for an hour, then uncover, brown and serve as a vegetable.

Bread Panama.

Toast on both sides slices of stale bread from which all the crust has been removed. Put in a bowl, sprinkle each slice with a little salt and sugar and pour in enough boiling water to cover all. Fit a lid on top of the bowl and set it in an outer pan of boiling water. Simmer gently until the bread is as tender as jelly. Eat hot, with powdered sugar and a little nutmeg.

Brown Muffins.

One cup cornmeal, two cups rye meal, one-fourth cup molasses, one-half teaspoon salt. Dissolve one-fourth yeast cake in a little tepid water, add enough more to make soft dough. Let raise over night. In the morning add one saltpoon soda dissolved in as little warm water as possible. Drop into muffin rings, let stand until light. Bake in a rather moderate oven.