

THE RED TRAIL

By GUSTAVE AIMARD

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

The traveler looked at him finally for a moment or two, and then laid his hand firmly on his arm and pulled him toward the table.

"Now, look here," he said to him curtly, "I intend to pass two hours in your hotel, at all risks; I know that between this and eleven o'clock you expect a large party."

The landlord attempted to give a denial, but the traveler cut him short.

"Silence," he continued, "I wish to be present at this meeting; of course I do not mean to be paid; but I must not only see them, but hear all they say. Put me where you please, that is your concern; but as any trouble deserves payment, here are ten ounces for you, and I will give you as many more when your visitors have gone, and I assure you that what I ask of you will not in any way compromise you. Now, I will add, that if you obstinately refuse the arrangement I offer—"

"Well, suppose I do?"

"I will blow out your brains," the traveler said distinctly.

"Hang it, excellency," the poor fellow answered, with a grimace, "I think that I have no choice, and am compelled to accept."

"Good! now you are learning reason; but take three ounces as a consolation."

The landlord, forgetting that he had declared a few moments previously that he had nothing in the house, instantly covered the table with provisions, which, if not particularly delicate, were sufficiently appetizing. When their hunger was at length appeased, the traveler who seemed to speak for both thrust away his plate and addressed the landlord, who was modestly standing behind him, hat in hand.

"And now for another matter," he said; "how many lads have you to help you?"

"Two, excellency—the one who took your horses to the corral, and another."

"Very good. I presume you will not require both those lads to wait on your friends to-night?"

"Certainly not, excellency; indeed, for greater security, I shall wait on them alone."

"Better still; then, you see no inconvenience in sending one of them into the Ciudad?"

"No inconvenience at all, excellency; what is the business?"

"Simply," he said, taking a letter from his bosom, "to convey this letter to Senor Don Antonio Ruffier, in the Calle Montevilla, and bring me back an answer."

"That is easy, excellency; if you will have the kindness to intrust the letter to me."

"Here it is, and four piastres for the journey."

The host bowed respectfully and immediately left the room.

"I fancy, Curumilla," the traveler then said to his companion, "that our affairs are going on well."

The other replied with a silent nod of assent. The travelers rose; in a twinkling when the landlord returned and removed all signs of supper, and then hid his guests behind an old-fashioned counter.

CHAPTER X.

The travelers had scarce time to conceal themselves ere several knocks on the door warned the landlord that the mysterious guests he expected were beginning to arrive.

The door was hardly ajar ere several men burst into the inn, thrusting each other aside in their haste, as if afraid of being followed. These men were seven or eight in number, and it was easy to see they were officers, in spite of the precaution of some among them who had put on civilian attire.

They laughed and jested loudly. The door of the rancho had been left ajar by the landlord, who probably thought it unnecessary to close it; the officers succeeded each other with great rapidity, and their number soon became so great that the room was completely filled.

As for No. Lanchero, he continually prowled round the tables, watching everything with a corner of his eyes, and being careful not to serve the slightest article without receiving immediate payment. At length, one of the officers rose.

"Is Don Sirven here?"

"Yes, senor," a young man of twenty at the most answered as he rose.

"Assure yourself that no person is absent."

The young man bowed and began walking from one table to the other, exchanging two or three words in a low voice with each of the visitors. When Don Sirven had gone round the room, he went to the person who had addressed him and said with a respectful bow:

"Senor colonel, the meeting is complete and only one person is absent; but as he did not tell us certainly whether he would do us the honor of being present to-night, I—"

"That will do," the colonel interrupted; "remain outside, watch the environs and let no one approach without challenging him, but if you know who arrives introduce him immediately."

"You can trust me, colonel," the young man answered, and, after bowing to his superior officer, he left the room and closed the door behind him.

The officers then turned round on the benches and thus found themselves face to face with the colonel, who had stationed himself in the middle of the room. The latter waited a few minutes till perfect silence was established, and then spoke as follows:

"Let me, in the first place, thank you, caballeros, for the punctuality with which you have responded to the meeting. I had the honor of arranging with you. I am delighted at the confidence it has pleased you to display in me, and, believe me, I shall show myself worthy of it; for it proves to me once again that you are really devoted to the interests of our country and that I may freely reckon on you in the hour of danger. You understand as well as I do that we can no longer bow our necks beneath our despotic government. The man who at this

moment holds our destinies in his hands has shown himself unworthy of his mandate. The hour will soon strike for the man who has deceived us to be overthrown."

The colonel had made a start, and would probably have continued his plausible speech for a long time in an emphatic voice, had not one of his audience interrupted him:

"That is all very fine, colonel," he said, "we are all aware that we are gentlemen devoted, body and soul, to our country; but devotion must be paid for. What shall we get by this after all?"

The colonel was at first slightly embarrassed by this warm apostrophe; but he recovered himself at once, and turned with a smile to his interpreter:

"I was coming to it, my dear captain, at the very moment when you cut across my speech."

"Oh, that is different," the captain answered.

"In the first place," the colonel went on, "I have news for you which I feel assured you will heartily welcome. This is the last time we shall meet."

"Very good," said the practical captain.

The colonel saw that he could no longer dally with the matter, for all his hearers openly took part with their comrade. At the moment when he resolved to tell all he knew, the door of the inn was opened, and a man wrapped in a large cloak quickly entered the room preceded by the Alferes Don Sirven, who shouted in a loud voice:

"The general, caballeros, the general."

At this announcement silence was re-established as if by enchantment. The person called the general stopped in the middle of the room, looked around him, and then took off his hat, let his cloak fall from his shoulders, and appeared in the full dress uniform of a general officer.

"Long live Gen. Guerrero," the officers shouted as they rose enthusiastically.

"Thanks, gentlemen, thanks," the general responded with numerous bows. This warm feeling fills me with delight, but may be silent, that we may properly settle the matter which has brought us here; moments are precious, and, in spite of the precautions we have taken, your presence at this inn may have been denounced. I will come at once to facts, without entering into idle speculations, which would cause us to waste valuable time. In a word, then, what is it we want? To overthrow the present government, and establish another more in conformity with our opinions, and, above all, our interests."

"Yes, yes," the officers exclaimed.

"In that case we are conspiring against the established authority, and are rebels in the eyes of the law," the general continued coolly and distinctly; "as such we stake our heads. If our attempt fails, we shall be pitilessly shot by the victor; but because we are resolutely playing a terrible game, and each of us knows that his fortune depends on winning."

"Yes, yes," the captain whose observations had, previous to the general's arrival so greatly embarrassed the colonel, said, "all that is very fine; but we were promised something else in your name, excellency."

The general smiled.

"You are right, captain," he remarked; "but I intend to keep all promises—but not, as you might reasonably suppose, when our glorious enterprise has succeeded."

"When then, pray?" the captain asked, curiously.

"At once, senores," the general exclaimed.

Joy and astonishment so paralyzed his hearers that they were unable to utter a syllable. The general looked at them for a moment, and then, turning away with a mocking smile, he walked to the front door, which he opened. The officers eagerly watched his movements, and the general, after looking out coughed twice.

"Here I am, excellency," a voice said, issuing from the fog.

"Bring in the bags," Don Sebastian ordered, and then quietly returned to the middle of the room.

Almost immediately after a man entered, bearing a heavy leather satchel. It was Carnero. At a signal from his master he deposited his bundle and went out, but returned shortly after with another bag, which he placed by the side of the first one. Then, after bowing to his master he withdrew.

The general opened the bags, and a flood of gold poured in a trickling cascade on the table; the officers instinctively held out their quivering hands.

When all the gold had disappeared and the effervescence was beginning to subside, Don Sebastian, who, like the Angel of Evil, had looked on with a profoundly mocking smile, slightly tapped the table to request silence.

"Senores," he said, "I have kept all my promises, and have acquired the right to count on you. We shall not meet again, but at a future day I will let you know my intentions. Still be ready to act at the first signal; in ten days is the anniversary festival of the Proclamation of Independence, and if nothing alters my plans I shall probably choose that day to try, with your assistance, to deliver the country from the tyrants who oppress it. However, I will be careful to have you warned. So now let us separate; the night is far advanced, and a longer stay at this spot might compromise the sacred interests for which we have sworn to die."

CHAPTER XI.

The Alameda of Mexico is one of the most beautiful in America. It is situated at one of the extremities of the city, and forms a long square, with a wall of circumscription bordered by a deep ditch, whose muddy, fetid waters, owing to the negligence of the government, exhale pestiferous miasmas. At each corner of the promenade a gate offers admission to carriages, riders and pedestrians, who walk silently beneath a thick awning of ver-

ture formed by willows, elms and poplars that border the principal road. These trees are selected with great tact, and are always green, for although the leaves are renewed, it takes place gradually and imperceptibly, so that the branches are never entirely stripped of their foliage.

It was evening, and, as usual, the Alameda was crowded; handsome carriages, brilliant riders and modest pedestrians were moving backward and forward, with cries, laughter and joyous calls, as they sought each other in the walks. By degrees, however, the promenaders went toward the Bucarelli; the carriage became scarcer, and by the time night had set in the Alameda was deserted.

A horseman, dressed in a rich Campesino costume and mounted on a magnificent horse, entered the Alameda along which he galloped for about twenty minutes examining the side walks the clumps of trees and the bushes; in a word he seemed to be looking for somebody or something.

At the moment when the traveler reached the Bucarelli the last carriage was leaving it and it was soon as deserted as the Alameda. He galloped up and down the promenade twice or thrice looking carefully down the side rides and at the end of his third turn a horseman, coming from the Alameda, passed on his right hand, giving him in a low voice the Mexican salute, "Santissima noche caballero!"

Although the sentence had nothing peculiar about it the horseman started, and immediately turning his horse round, started in pursuit. Within a minute the two horsemen were side by side; the first, so soon as he saw that he was followed, checked his horse's pace, as if with the intention of entering into direct communication.

"A fine sight for a ride, senor," the first horseman said, politely raising his hand to his hat.

"It is," the second answered, "although it is beginning to grow late."

"The moment is only the better chosen for certain private conversation."

The second horseman looked around, and bending over to the speaker, said:

"I almost despaired of meeting you."

"Did I not let you know that I should come?"

"True; but I feared that some obstacle—"

"Nothing should impede an honest man from accomplishing a sacred duty," the first horseman said.

The other bowed with an air of satisfaction. "Then," he said, "I can count on you, No—"

"No names here, senor," the other sharply interrupted him. "Caspieta, an old word ringer like you, a man who has long been a Tigreiro, ought to remember that the trees have ears and the leaves eyes."

"Yes, you are right. I do remember it, but permit me to remark that if it is not possible for us to talk here where can we do so?"

"Patience, senor, I wish to serve you, as you know, for you were recommended to me by a trusty man. Be guided by me, if you wish us to succeed in this affair."

"I ask nothing better; still you must tell me what I ought to do."

"For the present very little; merely follow me at a distance to the place where I purpose taking you."

(To be continued.)

Her Plot Cunningly Laid.

A story of an amazingly audacious swindle comes from Madrid, Spain. The heroine is a handsome, elegantly dressed woman who the other day visited a specialist in mental diseases on behalf of her husband, who, she said, was a sufferer from religious mania. Having explained the case, it was arranged that she should return in about an hour with the afflicted husband.

The next scene of action was a jeweler's shop in another part of the city, where she selected diamonds to the value of \$5,000 on the understanding that she would buy them if her husband approved. Would someone accompany her home in a cab and the money would be paid immediately?

A trusted clerk was sent and with him the lady drove back to the doctor's house. In an ante-room she took the stones, "just to show them to her husband," then entering with sublime assurance the doctor's study, she informed the specialist that her husband was now in the ante-room and ready to be examined.

Leaving a visiting card, the lady took her departure and the doctor, bidding the supposed patient to enter, proceeded at his leisure to ask professional questions. The jeweler's man was puzzled at first, but soon he realized that he had been made the victim of a clever fraud. The doctor, however, interpreted his agitation as caused by his complaint and when after two hours matters were finally explained the lady impostor had vanished with her spoils without leaving any trace.

Just a Boy.

"Hold on!" said the learned chemist. "Didn't I give you a bottle of my wonderful tonic that would make you look twenty years younger?"

"You did," replied the patient, "and I took it all. I was then 30 and now I am only 19."

"Well, then will you please settle this little bill you owe for the treatment?"

"Oh, no. As I am only 19 now, I am a minor and minors are not held responsible for the bills they incur. Good-day, sir."

Made Himself So.

Naybor—I called to see Nayvor last night, but he wasn't at home.

Subbubs—Oh, yes, he was.

Naybor—Not at all. I tell you—

Subbubs—But I tell you he was, and very much at home. He monopolized the morris chair in my den all evening.—Philadelphia Press.

Every day there drops into the coffers of the New York elevated railways 27,000 nickels, to say nothing of the other coins and bills.

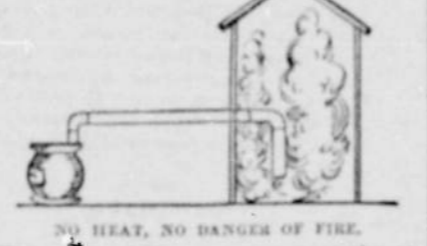
AGRICULTURAL



Smoking Meat.

In the home smoking of meat I have learned something by experimenting that is a great saver of work and of much more consequence—keeps the meat in better shape during the smoking process. I used a low smokehouse, and handle the little necessary fire as best I could, it would sometimes heat the meat more than was good for it. I had the fire covered in a little pit in the center of the smokehouse. Then I tried a pit outside several feet from the building with an underground flue, but all the heat generated in that went into the smokehouse, so it was unsatisfactory.

I placed an old heating stove, with the legs taken off, on the ground about eight feet from the side of the smokehouse, put an elbow on the stove and ran a pipe in through the side of the smokehouse. Then I started a little fire in the stove, and as the smoke poured from the funnel it occurred to me to turn the smoke down, so I put on an elbow with mouth pointing down, and as that worked all right I put a length of pipe on that and watched to see what the smoke would do. In a moment it poured from the pipe right



NO HEAT, NO DANGER OF FIRE.

down near the ground. The end of the pipe is four or five inches from the ground and nearly on a level with the bottom of the stove. It works finely. The cooled smoke rising from the ground conveys no heat to the meat, though quite a little fire is kept in the stove. The fire needs but little attention, as the stove is kept almost closed all the time. It is very satisfactory.—Kansas Farmer.

Feed Cows Their Own Milk.

An endless chain arrangement that on its face appears to be the most economical scheme ever devised has been started by Prof. Erf, of the Kansas State Agricultural College. Prof. Erf takes the milk secured from cows on the college farm, converts it into powder and feeds it to the cows, making what is declared to be the cheapest of all cow foods.

The food invented by Prof. Erf is made of buttermilk. He has perfected a system of drying buttermilk and then converting it into a powder. This dried buttermilk contains about 70 per cent of protein, twice as much as cotton seed meal contains, and can be manufactured for one and a half cents a pound. Thus a food twice as rich as cotton seed can be manufactured at approximately the cost of the latter.

One hundred pounds of buttermilk will make from nine to ten pounds of the finished product and as the estimated waste of buttermilk in the creameries of Kansas is 500,000 pounds daily, it is figured that by the adoption of this process a saving of \$400,000 can be made yearly in Kansas alone.

The American Carriage Horse.

The development of the American carriage horse at the Colorado Agricultural College and Experiment Station is progressing very favorably, says Prof. W. L. Caryle of the Colorado Agricultural College, in the Twentieth Century Farmer. At the present time twenty-two brood mares are to be found on the farm, and of these nineteen are expected to foal this year. Fourteen very high-class yearling colts, by the stallion Garmen, are exemplifying the success of the work undertaken. At the present time seven very fine foals have come to hand this year and the indications are that they are superior to their brothers and sisters of last year. The station and college, in cooperation with the government, will increase the brood mares to thirty-five head during the summer, and thirty-five of the very highest class will be secured.

How to See Plants Grow.

To observe plants growing under the microscope the American Monthly Microscopical Journal says: "Procure a little colomia seed. Take one of the seeds, and with a razor cut off a very tiny slice, cover with a cover glass and place under the microscope. The instrument must be in a vertical position. When it is well focused and lighted, moisten it with a drop of water. The seed will absorb the moisture and throw out a very large number of spiral fibers, giving the appearance of veritable germination. Beginners will find it easier if one applies the moisture while the other looks through the instrument."

NORTHWEST HONORED.

Professor Elliott, of W. S. C., Contributes to Cyclopedica.

It is well known that Prof. L. H. Bailey, of Cornell university, has been working for three years past on an extensive publication to be known as The American Cyclopedica of Agriculture. This is to be published in several volumes and it is expected that it will be accepted by the reading public as the standard reference work on rural affairs. It has been many years since such a work has been attempted and nothing of such an extensive nature has ever been undertaken before in America. Professor Bailey has called to his aid the best known writers on agriculture throughout the entire country, who have written up the various subjects on which they were recognized as authorities. The entire work may be referred to as the combined efforts of the agricultural specialists of America and when published will no doubt find a place in the library of most progressive farmers.

Must Raise Many Crops.

Twenty years ago hundreds of North Dakota farmers bought butter, eggs and even potatoes and cabbages at the village stores, but they were not real farmers, merely wheat raisers. They depended entirely upon one crop, and when that failed, distress followed. James J. Hill quickly taught them the folly of that kind of farming, and to-day the State's diversified crops are equal to those of any other Northern State. The educational movement was not that Mr. Hill had any love for the farmers then, nor has now, but he had a big railway to feed and was forced to teach the farmer how to produce the freight. Now the experiment stations are carrying on the education commenced by Mr. Hill and are doing it better.

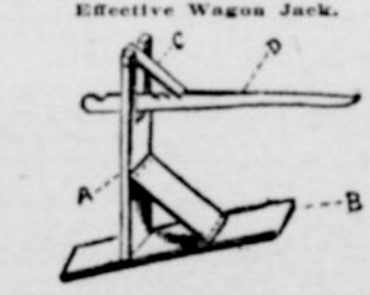
How to Apply Fertilizers.

Should fertilizer be applied in the hills or broadcast? It may not be a mistake to apply very little over each hill as a "starter," but it is better to broadcast. All fertilizer must be dissolved before it can be utilized, and the greater the surface over which it is spread the more water it will receive. The roots of nearly all plants spread and grow near the surface, and have as great feeding capacity off from the plants as near them. To apply fertilizer in the hills is to concentrate it, and much of it will be unused or lost. The best results are obtained when it is distributed over the surface and harrowed in to be carried down by the rains.

Managing the Workers.

Managing the workers on a farm is a science in itself. It is a science that few have studied sufficiently. Planning out the work so that it may be done in the best manner and in the least time is equivalent to a saving in dollars and cents. Not only should the work be properly done and at the right time, but the time between different pieces of work should be as small as possible. Here is a point at which great waste occurs. It is like a man forgetting something at the store and having to drive back miles to get it. No man can properly manage a set of workers without putting some thought on it. Thinking is not so easy as it seems. To think in a logical manner requires effort.

Effective Wagon Jack.



A is of oak 2x4x33 inches; B is 2x4x 14 inches; C is 12 inches long, and lever D is 5 feet long, the short end being 1 foot. The drawing explains itself.

Experiments in Cultivation.

Deep cultivation of some crops is equivalent to pruning the roots. This is especially the case with corn, which sends its roots in every direction, close to the surface of the soil. Experiments in cultivating show that when the roots were cut 2 inches, 4 inches and 6 inches below the surface the increase of crops was greatest when the cultivation was shallow, the greatest harm being done by deep cultivation at the last stages of growth of the plants. The object should be to simply loosen the top soil when cultivating corn and to avoid cutting the roots as much as possible.

"Don'ts" Concerning the Cow.

- Don't be unkind to the milk cow.
- Don't allow cows to sleep in a muddy shed.
- Don't permit the cow to drink impure water.
- Don't use a club, but kind words instead.
- Do not feed the milk cow "rotten" or decayed corn.
- Don't allow your finger nails to grow long if you are a daily milker.
- Don't allow any loafers around when milking, such as dogs, children or cats.
- Don't fall to keep some sort of salt handy so the cow may have free access to it.

Never Heard of Him.

Sunday School Teacher—Gerald, you know one of Bunyan's characters is "Heart's Ease," don't you?

Little Boy—No, ma'am, but if he had business he couldn't have had much heart's ease.

Conspicuous Advantage.

"Johnny," said his grandfather, "you linger too long at the table. I don't hurry with my meals, and yet I finish my dinner before you are half through with yours."

"Huh!" exclaimed Johnny, with his mouth full. "You've had sixty years' more practice in eatin' than I have."

AID TO "DRY FARMING."

Washington State College Conducting Extensive Experiments.

The problem of "dry farming" now before the farmers of the semi-arid region of the Pacific Northwest has been taken up by the Experiment Station of Washington, and it is hoped to work out a method of farming for these regions which will increase their crop bearing capacity. The present operations of experimentation are largely relative to the physics of soils, and in charge of Professor H. B. Berry, soil physicist of the State college. Discussing this problem, Mr. Berry stated:

"Among the questions which we must answer are: What is the best method of conserving soil moisture? What is the value of disking the summer-fallow early in the spring before it can be plowed? What is the value of the sub-surface packer? If the crop suffers from drought, is it because there is not sufficient moisture in the soil, or is it because the plants cannot take the moisture from the soil?"

In the former case we must endeavor to devise a cultural method to conserve moisture; and in the latter case, we must develop a strain of plants that can take moisture from the soil, which is a plant breeding problem."

Figs Thrive in Polk County.

Figs as large and perfectly developed as those raised in the most favored portion of California are grown at the town home of Mrs. E. F. Lucas, in Mouth. Specimens of the fruit were brought to Dallas by Mrs. Martha Cosper, who had been visiting in the normal school town. The figs were of delicious flavor and were far superior to the California fruit usually found in the Oregon markets.

Mrs. Lucas' tree is seven years old, the cutting having been brought from California in 1900. The tree is making a luxuriant growth and has already reached a height of 12 feet. Three crops of fruit are borne each year. The specimens brought to Dallas by Mrs. Cosper included ripe and green fruit of the second crop and half grown fruit of the third crop. The tree has been in bearing four years.

Good Money in Peach Crop.

Shipments of early Crawford peaches from Roseburg this year will aggregate a total of nearly 20,000 boxes. This is the estimate given by E. P. Drew, who is handling the shipments of the local fruitgrowers' association, whose membership embraces nearly all of the peach growers in that vicinity.

Growers have realized good prices for their product. Peaches of average size and quality brought from 65 to 80 cents per box, while those of higher grade brought as high as \$1.25 per box. After deducting transportation charges, these prices left the grower a neat margin of profit. Most of the fruit was marketed in Portland.

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