

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER XLII. THE CABALLADA.

It was nearly a quarter of an hour before the cloud moved away; and then, to my surprise, I saw a clump of horses—not horsemen—upon the prairie, and scarcely half a mile distant from the mesa.

I strained my eyes upon the distant prairie, but the dim horsemen were no longer to be seen. They must have ridden off beyond the range of vision.

I was about to seek my comrade and communicate to him what had passed, when, on rising to my feet, I found him standing by my side. He had been all around the summit without seeing aught, and had returned to satisfy himself that the guerrilla was still quiet.

"Hillo!" he exclaimed, as his eyes fell upon the caballada; "What the deuce is that yonder, a drove of wild horses? It's mighty strange them biggers don't notice 'em. By the eternal—"

I know not what Garey meant to have said. His words were drowned by the wild yell that broke simultaneously from the Mexican line; and the next moment the whole troop were seen springing to their saddles, and put themselves in motion.

We, of course, supposed they had just discovered the caballada of wild horses, and it was that that was producing this sudden tampele. What was our astonishment on perceiving that we ourselves were the cause of the alarm; for the guerrilleros, instead of fronting to the plain, rode closer up to the cliff, and screaming wildly, fired their carbines at us!

We were puzzled at first to know how they had discovered us. A glance explained that the moon had risen higher in the heavens, and the shadow cast by the mound had been foreshortened. While gazing out at the caballada, we had incautiously kept our feet, and our figures, magnified to gigantic proportions, were thrown forward upon the plain directly under the eyes of our enemies.

They had but to look up to see us where we stood. Instantly we knelt down among the bushes, clutching our rifles. The surprise occasioned by our appearance upon the cliff, seemed to have deprived our enemies, for the moment, of their habitual prudence, as several of them rode boldly within range. Perhaps they were some of the late arrivals. In the dark shadow we could not make out their forms; but one had the misfortune to be mounted on a white horse, and that guided the trapper's aim. I saw him glancing along his barrel, and heard the sharp crack. I fancied I heard a stifled groan from below, and the next moment the white horse was seen galloping out into the moonlight, but the rider was no longer upon his back.

Another cloud passed over the moon, and the plain was again shrouded from our sight. Garey was proceeding to reload, when a cry arose amidst the darkness, that caused him to pause and listen. The cry was again repeated, and then uttered continuously with that wild intonation which can alone proceed from the throat of the savage. It was not the guerrilla that was uttering that yell; it was the yell of the Indian warrior.

"Comanche war whoop!" cried Garey, after listening a moment. "Comanche war-whoop!" by the eternal! Hoarow! the Indians are upon 'em!"

Amidst the cries, we could hear the rapid trampling of horses, and the ground appeared to vibrate under the quick heavy tread. Each moment the strokes sounded nearer. The savages were charging the guerrilla!

The moon shot forth from the cloud. There was no longer a doubt. The wild-horses were mounted; each carried an Indian naked to the waist, his painted body glaring red in the moon-light, and terrible to behold.

By this time the Mexicans had all mounted and faced towards this unexpected foe, but with evident signs of irresolution in their ranks. They would never stand the charge—no, never. So said Garey, and he was right.

The savages had advanced within less than a hundred paces of the Mexican line, when they were observed to pull suddenly up. It was but a momentary halt—just time enough to enable them to mark the formation of their foes, and send a flight of arrows into their midst. That done, they dashed onward, uttering their wild yells and brandishing their long spears.

The guerrilleros only waited to discharge their carbines and escopettes; they did not think of reloading. Most of them flung away their guns as soon as they had fired, and the retreat began. The whole troop turned its back upon the enemy, and, urging their horses to a gallop, came sweeping round the base of the mesa in headlong flight.

The Indians, uttering their demoniac yells, followed as fast. They were reaped more furious than their hated foe was likely to escape them. The latter were indebted to us for having put them upon the alert. But for that circumstance, the Indians would have charged thro' while dismounted, and for

different might have been their fate. Mounted and ready for flight, most of them would probably get clear.

The moment we saw the direction the chase was about to take, Garey and I rushed across the summit to that side. From the brow of the precipice, our view was perfect, and we could see both parties as they passed along its base directly below us. Both were riding in straggling clumps, and scarcely two hundred paces separated the rear-most of the pursued from the head-most of the pursuers. The latter still uttered their war-cry, while the former now rode in silence—their breath bound, and their voices hushed in the deathlike stillness of terror.

All at once a cry arose from the guerrilla—short, quick, and despairing—the voice of some new consternation; at the same moment, the whole troop was seen to pull up.

We looked for the cause of this extraordinary conduct: our eyes and our ears both guided us to the explanation. From the opposite direction, and scarcely three hundred yards distant, appeared a band of horsemen coming up at a gallop. They were right in the moon's eye, and we could see glancing arms, and hear loud voices. The hoofs could be heard pounding the prairie, and my companion and I recognized the heavy tread of the American horse. Still more certain were we about that hoarse "hurrah." Neither Indian or Mexican could have uttered that well-known shout.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Eating Before Sleeping.

Man is the only animal that can be taught to sleep on an empty stomach. The brute creation resent all effort to coax them to such a violation of the laws of nature. The lion roars in the forest until he has found his prey, and when he devours it he sleeps until he needs another meal. The horse will paw all night in the stable and the pig will squeal in the pen, refusing to rest or sleep until they are fed.

The animals which chew the cud have their own provisions for a late supper just before dropping off to their nightly slumbers. Man can train himself to the habit of sleeping without a preceding meal, but only after long years of practice. As he comes into the world nature is strong for him, and he must be fed before he will sleep. A child's stomach is small, and when perfectly filled and when no sickness disturbs it, sleep follows naturally and inevitably. As digestion goes on the stomach begins to empty. A single fold in it will make the little sleeper restless; two will weaken it, and hushed again to repose the nap will be short, and three fold put an end to the slumber. Paragoric or other narcotic may close its eyes again, for without either food or some superfluous drug it will not sleep, no matter how healthy it may be. Not even an angel who learned the art of minstrelsy in a celestial choir can sing a babe to sleep on an empty stomach. We use an oft-quoted illustration, "sleeping as quietly as an infant;" because this slumber of a child follows immediately after its stomach is completely filled with wholesome food. The sleep which comes to adults long hours after food, and when the stomach is empty is not after the type of infantile repose. There is all the difference in the world between sleep and refreshment and the sleep of exhaustion. To sleep well the blood that swells the veins in our head during the busy hours must flow back, leaving a greatly diminished quantity behind the brow that lately throbbled with such vehemence. To digest well the blood is needed at the stomach and nearer the fountains of life. It is a fact established beyond a possibility of contradiction that sleep aids digestion and that the processes of digestion is conducive to refreshing sleep. It needs no argument to convince us of this natural relation. The drowsiness which always follows the well-ordered meal is itself a testimony of nature to this dependence.

The Blue-Eyed Lassie.

In the course of his perambulations Burns was occasionally a welcome visitor at the hospitable manse of the Rev. Mr. Jeffrey, the worthy minister of the parish of Lockmarben. One of the daughters of this good man, named Jean, happened to do the honors of the tea table upon the poet's first visit.

Jeanie was just seventeen, of sweet, winning manners, with waving golden tresses and rosy cheeks, but above all, a pair of laughing blue eyes. Burns was charmed with her artless manners, and particularly with her "two sweet eyes;" his susceptible heart was fired with admiration for the daughter of his host.

The next morning after breakfast he presented her with the song which he little dreamed was to give her immortality. It was this song of the "Blue-eyed Lassie." \* \* \* The blue-eyed lassie bloomed into womanhood, and captivated the heart of James R. Wick, a young merchant from the New York, who chanced to be in Scotland on business, she married him and soon removed from that old marse at Lockmarben to take up her residence in that city, where her husband became a prominent merchant of the highest respectability.

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CHARLES I. MORRISON. Ch'town, Feb. 2, 1882.

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BETHUNE & BETHUNE, Solicitors for said company Montreal, January 17, 1882—1m

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Prince Edward Island RAILWAY

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L. B. ARCHIBALD, Superintendent at Railway Office, Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881.

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