

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER LII.—(CONTINUED.)

But what could I do? I might have thrown up my commission, and remained upon the spot, but that would have been worse than idle. I could not have protected myself, much less another. The rangers once gone from the place, my life would not have been safe there for a single hour.

Only one plan suggested itself that had the semblance of feasibility—to seek another interview with Isolina—her father as well—and adjure them to remove at once from the scene of danger. They might go to San Antonio de Bexar, where, far removed from hostile ground, they could live in safety till the war should be ended.

It was only at the last moment that this happy idea came into my head, and I reviled myself that I had not conceived it sooner. The chief difficulty would lie in the opposition of Don Ramon. I knew that he was aware of the friendship that existed between his daughter and myself, and furthermore, that he had opposed no obstacle to it; but how could I convince him of the necessity for so sudden an expedition as the one I was about to propose? how should I persuade him of the peril I myself dreaded? and from such a source!

Another difficulty I might encounter—in the proud spirit of Isolina herself. Much did I fear she would never consent to be thus driven from her home, and by such a poltroon as she knew her cousin to be. She had cowed and conquered him but the day before; she feared him not; she would not be likely to partake of my painful apprehensions. My counsel might be disregarded, my motives misconstrued.

The time, too, was unfavorable. We must be on the march by sunrise—so ran our orders—and already the day was breaking. I cared not much for this; I could easily have overtaken my troop; but it was a delicate matter—that could only be excused by a certain knowledge of danger—to awake a gentleman's family at such an hour, even for the purpose of warning them. Moreover, should my advice prove fruitless, I reflected that my visit—which could not be made in secret—might aid in bringing about the very danger I apprehended. A circumstance so extraordinary could not fail to be noticed by all.

It was thus that I was held in irresolution, while my troop was forming for the march.

At the last moment, thanks to the thoughtful Helingsworth, a compromise offered. He suggested that I should send my advice in writing. In that I could be as explicit as I pleased, and bring before my proteges all the arguments I might be able to adduce—perhaps more successfully than if urged by a personal appeal.

My comrade's suggestion was adopted; and in haste, but with a fervor resulting from my fears, I penned the admonitory epistle. A trusty messenger was found in one of the *Ayankisados*, who promised, as soon as the family should be stirring, to carry the letter to its destination. With my heart somewhat relieved of its load, though still far from light, I gave the order to march. The bugle rang clear and loud, and its cheerful notes, as I sprang into the saddle, combined with the inspiration borrowed from my buoyant steed, produced a soothing effect upon my spirit.

CHAPTER LIII.

CAMP GOSSIP.

It was but a short-lived light—a passing gleam—and soon again fell the shadow, dark as ever. Strive as I might, I could not cast the load that weighed upon my bosom; reason as I would, I could not account for its heaviness.

It was natural that a parting like ours should produce pain, and misgivings as to the future. My life was to be staked in the lottery of war; I might fall on the field of fight; I might perish by camp-pestilence—a foe that in the campaign kills more soldiers than sword or shot—the many perils of flood and field were before me, and it was natural I should regard the future with a degree of doubtfulness. But it was not the contemplation of all these dangers that filled me with such a terrible foreboding. Strange to say, I had a forecast that I should survive them. It was almost a conviction, yet it failed to comfort me. It comprehended not the safety of Isolina. No—but the contrary. Along with it came the presentiment, that we should never meet again.

Once or twice, as this dread feeling became most acute, I reined up my horse half resolved to gallop back; but again the wild idea passed from me, and I continued irresolutely on.

Something of prudence, too, now restrained me from returning; it would no longer have been safe to go back to the rancheria. As we issued from the plaza, we could hear distant jeering and cries of "Mueran los Tejanos!" It was with difficulty I could restrain the rangers from turning to take vengeance. One, the worst for mesal, had loitered behind under the influence of the drink, fancying himself secure. Him the *peludos* had "bonneted," and otherwise maltreated. They would have murdered him outright, but that some of them, more prudent than their fellows, had counselled the mob to let him go—alleging that the Tejanos were yet "too near, and might come back."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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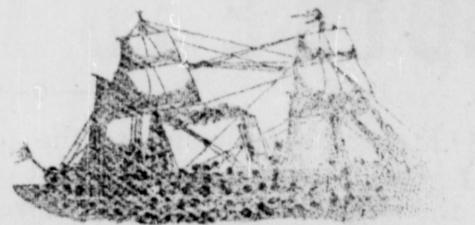
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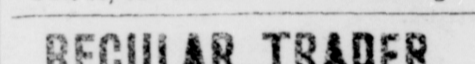
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The above sale is made pursuant to the Power of Sale contained in an Indenture of Mortgage dated the sixteenth day of October, A. D. 1875, and made between Samuel Nosworthy Earle and Esther Julia Earle his wife of the one part, and Thomas Heath Haviland, of the other part.

For further particulars, apply at the office of Estace H. Haviland, Solicitor, Charlottetown.

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TIME TABLE NO. 17.

WINTER ARRANGEMENT.

To take effect on the 1st Dec., 1881.

TRAINS OUTWARD.

Table with columns: STATIONS, MIXED, MIXED, MIXED. Rows include Ch'town, Royalty, N. Wiltsh's, Hunter R'r, Bradalbe's, Co'ty Line, Freestown, Kensington, Summ'side, Wellington, Port Hill, O'Leary, Bloomfield, Alberton, Tignish, Royalty, York, Bedford, Mt. Stew't, Cardigan, Georgetown, Mt. Stew't, Morell, St. Peter's, Bear River, Souris.

TRAINS INWARD.

Table with columns: STATIONS, MIXED, MIXED, MIXED. Rows include Ch'town, Royalty, N. Wiltsh's, Hunter R'r, Bradalbe's, Co'ty Line, Freestown, Kensington, Summ'side, Wellington, Port Hill, O'Leary, Bloomfield, Alberton, Tignish, Royalty, York, Bedford, Mt. Stew't, Cardigan, Georgetown, Mt. Stew't, Morell, St. Peter's, Bear River, Souris.

L. B. ARCHIBALD, Superintendent, Railway Office, Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881 [8i, wklly]

THE Weekly Examiner

AND ISLAND ARGUS

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