

THE NEBRASKA ADVERTISER

W. W. SANDERS, Publisher.

NEMAHA, - - - - - NEBRASKA.

FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

What shall I say if he, some day returning,
Shall seek thee, knowing not?
Tell him I waited—till pale death remembered
The life that love forgot.
If he should ask to know thy place of dwelling,
What shall my answer be?
Give him the ring of gold from off my finger,
Give it him—silently!
But if, as with a stranger, he still questions,
Say what then shall I do?
Speak to him very gently, as a sister,
Perchance he suffers, too!
And if he ask why silent and deserted
The halls so bright before?
Answer no word, but show the lamp extinguished.
The widely opened door.
And last, perchance, he ask of that last hour—
What message must I keep?
Smile in his face, and say I parted smiling!
Yes, smile—lest he should weep!
—Austin South, in Sydney Bulletin.



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CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

"Quick, Jacopo—follow me," and driving my spurs home, the good horse plunged forward, topping the bank almost on the instant that the ambuscaders, who rushed out with a shout, reached it. The man to the left, who was riding a white horse, and pulled up in an unaccountable manner, making a point at the one on my sword side, I ran him through the throat, my blade twisting him clean round in the saddle as I dashed on. The attacking party, coming at a great pace, were carried by their horses down the slope into the stream, and before they could turn I had gained a fair start, and to my joy heard Jacopo swearing as he galloped behind me.

"Maldetto! I could not fire, signore—you were right in front of me—but here goes." He turned back in his saddle, and would have left off his piece had I not shouted out:

"Hold! hold! till I tell you," and fortunately he heard my words, or the chances were there would have been a miss with no opportunity of reloading.

We gained a full hundred yards before the others recovered themselves, coming after us with yells of anger, and I distinctly heard Ceci's voice:

"Two hundred crowns for them, dead or alive!"

Now commenced a race for life. We had the start and meant to keep it; but their horses were the fresher, and it became a mere question of who could last longest. We made the pace as hot as we could, in the hope that if we came to close quarters again some of our pursuers would have tailed behind. For a little time things went well, and I was beginning to think we should be able to show our friends a clean pair of heels, when I suddenly felt my horse pulling, stretching his neck forward and holding on to the bit, in a manner which left no doubt to my mind that he was done. Jacopo, too, called out:

"We had better fight it out, excellency; my horse is blown."

Before giving a final answer, I slung round in the saddle to see how the enemy were getting on. The only two who were at our heels was the man mounted on the white horse, who had pulled aside in so strange a manner when charging me, and another, whom I could not make out. The rest were well behind, but riding hard. We could probably account for these two, and turning back I shouted to Jacopo:

"All right; fight it out."

As I said this my horse stumbled and rolled clean over, killing himself on the spot, but without throwing me clear of him and without doing any damage to me. I had just time to scramble to my feet, when the two foremost of our pursuers were upon us.

Jacopo had been carried some yards on by the speed of his mount, but as the men came up he turned sharp round in his saddle and fired. The report was followed by a yell of pain, and the leading horseman fell; the other, who bestrode the white horse, again sheering off from me. Here he met with Jacopo, who was coming back at a gallop, and, it seemed to me, flung himself from his horse, doing this in so clumsy a manner as to be immediately ridden over by my knave.

"Mount—mount, excellency—mount behind me!" and Jacopo steadied his horse. But there was no time, and three of the remaining horsemen dashed up. Two of the horses shied past the body of my animal, but the third came boldly up, and the rider immediately engaged Jacopo. I could not give my brave fellow any aid, for my time was fully occupied in dealing with my own adversaries. Their horses were too fresh, or not well in hand, by great good luck, and so they could not manage to come at me together. Seeing this, I made a dash across the road into the wood—it was but a few feet—and both my adversaries followed, with the result that the horse of one of them put his foot in a rut, and, stumbling forward, unseated his rider, and the other, in aiming a cut at me, got his sword entangled for a second in an overhanging bough. This second was, however, enough for me to give him six inches of cold steel, and he pulled round and rode off, dropping his sword, and swinging from side to side in his saddle like a drunken man. The man who had fallen from the horse was nowhere to be seen. Indeed, I did not look for him, but rushed back to the assistance of Jacopo, and this time, having opportunity for observing, if only for a

twinkling, saw his opponent was my friend, the siam monk. He, however, had as quick an eye, and, taking in the situation, made a sudden charge at Jacopo, and as suddenly wheeling his horse to the left, shot past him and fled on ahead, leaving us masters of the situation.

"Are you hurt, excellency?" called out Jacopo.

"Not in the least. How are you?"

"Nothing but a scratch, excellency, which I received from his reverence, who, with all his monkish cowl, wields a good weapon."

"Well, jump down and let us see who our friends are, but first let us look at your wound."

"It is really nothing, as I said, signore," and Jacopo sprang lightly to earth. I did not, however, listen to him, and taking from him his flint and steel, lighted a pipe of dry wood, which I converted into a torch. With the aid of this and the moonlight, I examined Jacopo's wound, which after all was but slight, and had just bled a little up with my kerchief, when I became aware that the man whom Jacopo had ridden over had risen on his hands and knees, and was crawling off in the brush-wood.

"Steady, friend," I said, and running up to him, gave him a prick with my sword as a hint to stop. He made a little outcry, but had the good sense to take the hint, and casting the light of the torch on his face, I recognized my old acquaintance, the ancient Brico.

"So, signore," I said, "I have again to be thankful to you."

Jacopo, too, came up and recognized the man at a glance.

"Cappita!" he burst out, "but it is the ancient Brico! Shall I beat his brains out, excellency?"

"Mercy, most noble cavalier," exclaimed Brico, "I yield me to ransom."

"Ransom forsooth!" called out Jacopo, "such ransom as a noose will give you. Prepare to die."

"Be quiet, Jacopo," I said, "the ancient has yielded to ransom, and we will leave him to discuss the terms with the moon. Fetch me the bridle from my poor horse yonder, and bind this knave firmly."

Jacopo needed no second bidding, and in five minutes the ancient, securely bound, was sitting like a trusted fowl in the middle of the road, alternately cursing and weeping.

"Perchance, excellency, we had better look at the other," and Jacopo pointed to the man whom he had shot, who lay on his face. "Perchance," he added, "he, too, might turn out an old acquaintance."

We did so, and as we bent over him I saw it was Bernabo Ceci come over his last account. He was shot through the heart, and lay quite dead, with a frown on his forehead, and his teeth clenched in the death agony. I looked at him in a sad silence, which Jacopo broke.

"I never knew a cross-marked bullet to fall, excellency. He is stone dead."

"May he rest in peace," I answered; "he was a brave man, although my enemy."

"And he is still enough now, your worship—and see! There is his horse grazing quietly. It will do excellently to replace the lost one."

He ran forward and secured the animal, whilst I had a final look at my dead beast.

His neck was broken, and there was an end of him. Whilst Jacopo at my request was changing the saddles, I stirred up the ancient, who had lapsed into silence, and begged the favor of his informing me to whom I was indebted for the excitement of the night. Brico at first would not answer, but an inch of steel removed his suikness, and he told me all that I believe he knew, which was to the effect that he and some others had been hired by a great Florentine called Strozzi, to stop me at all hazards on my journey to Rome, and that the party was commanded by Ceci, who was to pay them 200 crowns for their trouble. More he evidently did not know, and disregarding all his entreaties to loosen him, we rode off, wishing him a good night. Nevertheless I am afraid he suffered considerable discomfort.

"That rascal monk," said Jacopo, as we jogged along, "has gone on ahead of us, and to-morrow, perhaps, will rouse the country in advance of us."

beyond imagination. I listened with a smooth face, and the good man no doubt thought that I believed his stories. In this, however, he was mistaken, nevertheless they were diverting in the extreme. Jacopo was overcome by the sickness of the sea, and flung himself down in a corner on the deck of the ship from which spot nothing would induce him to move. At every lurch he threw out a prayer which ended in a groan, and so great was his distress that, as he afterwards stated, he would have sold his soul to Satan for a paul, if only to obtain an hour's relief. As for me, I was well, having had some experience of the ocean before, when employed by the most serene republic for service against the Turk, and found contentment in the master's stories, and in pacing up and down watching such things as came under my view. I had plenty of opportunity for reflection on the voyage, and came to the conclusion that on delivering my letter to the cardinal at Rome, I would seek out Bayard if he were there, lay my story before him, and beseech his help to enable me to recover myself.

At last, one fine day, we reached Ostia, and there disembarked, after bidding farewell to the master, and set out on our way to Rome. Jacopo recovered his spirits as his foot touched land, and though the rudeness of his cheek had paled a little, he was quite himself again by the time we crossed the Stagno di Ostia. Finally we came in full view of the Eternal city, and towards the afternoon, having pressed along at a good pace, our jaded horses brought us before the gate of St. Paul.

CHAPTER XIII.
ROME.

As we rode up to the ruinous stretch of the battered wall, and saw before us the gate, lying open against the mottled green and gray high-ground of the Aventine, that old hill, covered with straggling and unkempt vineyards, and studded with the walls of monasteries, I was moved more than I can tell, for I was about to realize a dream of my life, and put my foot once again in the place of my birth, a spot not only bound to me by that tie, but sacred with the hundred legends of my forefathers' history, men who had for centuries played so great a part in its fate, until our house was cast forth by the mother city, to wander as exiles over the land. It is true that since the days of my childhood I had not seen Rome, it is true that such memories of it as I had were dim and misty, and that to recall them was like trying to bring back before one's eyes, when awake, the vague but pleasant visions of a delightful dream; nevertheless my heart filled with a strange joy, and my pulse began to beat more rapidly, as each stride of my horse brought me nearer home. In short, I was a Roman come back to Rome, and in these words sum up my feelings.

Filled with such thoughts, I tightened the reins half unconsciously, and my horse, doubtless upset by his voyage, and the hard going from Ostia, very willingly slackened his pace to a walk. Jacopo, as in duty bound, followed my example, and immediately began to buzz into speech.

In a short time we came opposite the Monte Testaccio, that curious mound made of old pottery, which lies towards the river, southwest of the Ostian gate, and so engrossed were we in our talk that we did not observe a large party of riders of both sexes, with an escort of men-at-arms, coming at a hand gallop from our right, straight in our direction. Our attention was however sharply drawn to the fact by the cry of an equerry who was riding well in advance of the others, and this man shouted:

"The road! the road! Way for his holiness! Way! Way!"

We drew off at once to the side, Jacopo dismounting and sinking to his knees. I however contented myself with uncovering, and watching with no little astonishment the party as they came up. They were evidently returning from hawking, and at the head of the column of riders were two men in full Turkish costume.

"Who are those Turks?" I asked Jacopo, and the knave, still kneeling, and holding his hands up in supplication, answered hurriedly:

"One is the Soldano Diem, excellency—O, Lord, I trust we may not be hanged as an afternoon's amusement—the other, the fair one, old Alexander VI. himself—O Lord! What cursed luck! Kneel, excellency; it is our only chance."

"Tush!" I replied, and remembered at once that the brother of Bajazet, the Great Turk, was a hostage in Rome, practically a prisoner in the hands of Alexander, a legacy he had inherited from the Cibo, and which brought him 40,000 ducats annually. I could understand Diem in eastern costume, but the pope masquerading in broad daylight as a Moor! It was as wonderful as it was disgusting to me. And then the remembrance of Corte's daughter came to my mind, and as they approached, I could hardly refrain from making a dash to rid the world of the monster who sat in St. Peter's chair.

When they had gone, Jacopo arose from his knees, and dusting them with his hands whilst he looked up at me, said: "Corpo di Bacco! But I gave up all for lost. I vow a candle to St. Mary of—I forget where—but to the shrine nearest to the place we dine, for this lucky escape."

"Come, sirrah!" I said, a little annoyed, "mount. There never was any danger."

"Very well, your worship!" and Jacopo drew a little to the front. "There they go," he said, shading his eyes with his hands, and turning to the left, where a dun cloud of dust on the Via della Marmorata marked the progress of the Borgia. "The best way, signore," he continued, "is over the hill; we will get a view from there, and then passing by the places you want to see, make for a quiet hostel I know of in the Strangers' Quarters."

Following him, we rode up the Aventine, until we reached the old wall of Servius Tullius. Here we stopped to observe the view. To the west and southwest we could see the green of the Campagna merging into the distant gray of the Roman Maremma, whilst beyond that clear blue line, below the flush of the coming sunset, marked the sea. Beneath us lay the Tiber and the island, the yellow water of the river stirred into ripples by the breeze, and looking from the distance like hammered brass. Beyond the Tiber rose Monte Gianicolo, beyond which the top of the Vatican hill was just visible. To the north the view was a little shut in by the Palatine and the church of St. Prisca above us, and far off rose the cone of Soratte. Northeast and east lay the

Palatine, the Esquiline, with the campaniles of Santa Maria Maggiore and San Pietro in Vincoli. Over Monte Coelio we could see the heights of the Sabine hills, and running our eyes along the Appian way, we could almost descry the Alban lake, the mountains being distinctly visible. We stayed for a few moments drinking in the view, and then going onwards, turned northwest, past St. Prisca, and began the descent, by a winding way, held in by vineyards. Coming down we caught a glimpse of the three churches of the Aventine, namely, S. Sabina, S. Maria Aventina and St. Alessio, which was held by the monastery of St. Jerome, whose walls rose hard at hand. A look to the right showed us the Circus Maximus, above which towered the huge obelisk surmounted by four lions. At length we came to the Vicolo di San Sabina, and at the corner of the street rose the gray walls and square tower of the castle of the Savelli. I drew rein, and looked at it with a bitter heart, and a sigh I could not control escaped me, as I saw the breeze catch and spread to the wind the silken folds of the standard of the Chigi, who bore quartered on their shield the star of the Savelli and the tree of De la Rovere. It floated there, in all the insolent pomp of a new house, whose money bags were full, and the sight of it was enough for me. Jacopo must have caught the look on my face, for he said, kindly:

"Who knows, excellency—luck may turn." Well meant as the words were, they jarred on me, and, without replying, I moved on, silently raising my sword to the salute, as I passed the grim gates from which my ancestors held the road as far as the river, and almost held Rome itself.

As we went past the Island, I did not even raise my head to see the Theater of Marcellus, within which lay another and the oldest of our family houses, having come to us through Fierleone towards the close of the eleventh century.

Jacopo was for going straight on past the monastery of the Aracoeli, on the Capitol; but, unluckily, I discovered that my horse had cast a shoe, and this was a matter not to be neglected. So we turned to the right and entered the Campo Vaccino, formerly the Forum of Rome. It being now sunset, here were collected hundreds of oxen and buffaloes, and from the height of Monte Caprino we could hear the bleating of the herds of goats which were pastured thereon, and the tinkling of their bells as they moved slowly down towards their shelter for the night. A hundred fires were blazing cheerfully, and served to dissipate the blue vapor which began to hang over the place. Round these fires were groups of people, mostly countrymen, who seemed in the best of spirits, as they listened to songs, or watched numbers of their party, who danced merrily to the tune of a pipe. Hard by were a number of sheds, used by mechanics, and the blaze, which showed a forge in work, soon attracting our attention, we made there at once, and had the horse attended to.

Whilst the smith was beating out a shoe, I sat down on a rough bench, my horse being fastened to a wooden post, and Jacopo holding his nag by the bridle paced up and down, occasionally stamping his feet on the ground to free them, as he said, from the ants. In other words, he was suffering slightly from cramp. To my right was a large crowd, evidently enjoying a show of jugglery, and from their cries of wonderment and pleasure they seemed to be having their money's worth. So I rose and elbowed my way to a good place, unfortunately only in time to see the end of the affair. The juggler was robed in a doctor's gown, and after performing a trick he distributed nostrums for various ailments, free of payment. Imagine my surprise in recognizing in him no other than Matthew Corte; and as I came up he placed a tambourine in his little dog's mouth, and bade him carry it round for subscriptions. Coppers were freely flung in, and as the little animal stopped before me I dropped in a florin and stooped to pat its head. As I rose I caught Corte's eye, and saw he knew me, but as he made no sign I stayed quiet. Collecting his money, the doctor bowed his thanks and began packing up the instruments of his trade. I went back to my seat and watched the smith at work on my horse, thinking that Corte must have somehow come into funds.

By this time the blacksmith had completed his task, and we delayed no longer, but went off at once. It was fortunate that Jacopo knew Rome as he did, or we might have been hopelessly lost in the labyrinth of streets, some of them in total ruin, some of them entirely uninhabited, for at the time so hideous was the misgovernment of the city that all who could do so had fled from Rome, and those who remained could not have exceeded 30,000 in number, of whom at least 10,000 men and women, were beings who had lost all claim to the respect of mankind, and were capable of almost any crime. These are hard words, but true, nor, indeed, have I ever seen a place where all that was bad was so shamelessly exposed as in Rome when Rodrigo Sforza was pope. At length we reached the Strangers' Quarters, but Jacopo's hostel was not to be found, and, after searching for it in vain, we were content to pull up before the door of a small inn built on the lower slope of Monte Pincio, barely a bow-shot from S. Trinita de' Monti, the church erected by Charles of France in 1395, and a little beyond the convent of the Dames du Sacre Coeur. I cannot say that the hostel was an inviting-looking place; in fact, it was little better than one of the common osterie or wineshops with which Rome abounded; but it was too late to pick and choose, and for the night, at least, I determined to stay here. Our first duty was to attend to the horses, which we had stabled in stalls, immediately below the room to be occupied by me, Jacopo having to put up with lodgings in the stables for the night. After the beasts had been fed and groomed, I set myself to a plain dinner, washed down with the contents of a straw-covered mezza fiasco of Frascati. Jacopo waited on me, and when I was done contentedly devoured the remainder of the manzo or boiled beef, and cooled his throat with a bottle of Marino, which I presented to him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Deathless Devotion.

Kind Father—My dear, if you want a good husband, marry Mr. Goodheart. He really and truly loves you.

Daughter—Are you sure of that, pa?

Kind Father—Yes, indeed. I've been borrowing money of him for six months, and still he keeps coming.—N. Y. Weekly.

SILVER REPUBLICANS.

A Convention of the Party to Be Called at the Same Time and Place as the Democrats.

Washington, Feb. 12.—"I can see no reason why the silver republican party, so-called, will not maintain its organization intact during the coming campaign," said Senator Henry M. Teller, the acknowledged leader of the party. "None of the great reforms for which the party stood in 1896 have come to pass under the present administration. With the present financial bill enacted into law, the bimetallic plank in the St. Louis platform will be seen to have been but the veriest sham. A convention of the party will be called to meet at the same time and place determined upon by the democrats. If the platform of that party is consistent with the principles for which the silver republicans stand, and if the nominees are satisfactory, the democratic candidates will be supported."

SOUTHERN WAR CLAIMS.

A Rough Estimate of the Bills Introduced into Congress Figures Up to an Aggregate of \$300,000,000.

Washington, Feb. 12.—The demands on the treasury at this session in the way of claim and pension bills probably exceed anything known in the history of congress. A rough estimate of the claim bills, exclusive of pensions, introduced in both houses, figures up to an aggregate of over \$200,000,000. And, in addition, the pension bills, if they should all become laws, would add much more than that sum to the pension roll. Among the ancient claim bills reffered the cotton tax. This bill has 30 years.

MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.

Great Britain Reduces the Standard of Height for Soldiers in Order to Get Men to Enlist.

London, Feb. 11.—The supplementary army estimate shows that in consequence of the war the amount now wanted is £13,000,000 (\$53,000,000), and the number of additional men to be provided for 120,000. The original estimate for men for the year was 184,853. In October last 35,000 more were voted and 120,000 are now provided for. This makes the total 339,853. Owing to the fact that the labor market is generally good and volunteers for service in South Africa are growing scarce, the war office has issued an order reducing the standard of height. It is a case of either lowering the height, start increasing pay or drafting.

ONE FROM THE SOUTH.

The President Will Probably Choose a Democrat to Serve on the New Philippine Commission.

Washington, Feb. 11.—Ex-Gov. Roger Wolcott, of Massachusetts, has wired the president his inability to accept a position on the new Philippine commission. The three commissioners already selected are Judge Taft, Prof. Worcester and Col. Charles Denby, the last two having served on the old commission. It is altogether probable that the president will select one member from the south, and presumably a democrat.

Methodist Twentieth Century Fund.

San Francisco, Feb. 12.—Regarding the intention of the Methodist Episcopal church of this country to collect \$20,000,000 as a twentieth century offering fund, Dr. Thomas Filben states that the work is progressing smoothly, and that the entire sum will doubtless be collected by the end of 1901. It is said that England will raise a similar fund amounting to \$10,000,000, and Canada \$5,000,000. This immense sum will be used for educational, charitable and church purposes, and a convention will be held in this city next June to devise a proper method for its distribution.

Roosevelt Not for Vice President.

New York, Feb. 12.—Gov. Roosevelt will not be a candidate for the vice presidency. This was settled at the conference between Gov. Roosevelt, Senator Platt and State Chairman Odell Saturday, in so far as they could settle such a question. An official announcement to this effect will be made by Gov. Roosevelt himself from Albany this week. He will do everything he can to prevent the national convention from forcing his nomination. Gov. Roosevelt will be renominated for governor.

A Statement by Gov. Roosevelt.

New York, Feb. 12.—Gov. Roosevelt issued this statement last night: "I most earnestly hope that the pending treaty concerning the Isthmian canal will not be ratified, unless amended so as to provide that the canal when built shall be wholly under the control of the United States alike in peace and war. This seems to me vital, no less from the standpoint of our sea power than from the standpoint of the Monroe doctrine."