

THE QUILL-WORKER.

Plains, plains and the prairie land which the sunlight floods and fills, To the north the open country, southward the Cypress hills, Never a bit of woodland, never a rill that flows, Only a stretch of cactus beds, and the wild, sweet prairie rose; Never a habitation, save where in the far southwest A solitary tepee lifts its solitary crest, Where Neykia in the doorway, crouched in the red sunshine, Broiders her buckskin mantle with the quills of the porcupine.



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CHAPTER XI.—CONTINUED.

I resolved not to go back to my lodging, but to quit Florence the moment I had secured my horse. It was necessary, however, to provide some change of attire. I did not intend to substitute a steel corselet for my buff-coat, having a mind to fight my way back to fortune with no defense but that over my heart, and contented myself with purchasing a light steel helmet, a pair of stout riding-boots, a cloak, and some other articles which could go into a small valise, capable of being fastened on to the back of a saddle. These I left at the vendor's, promising to call for them in an hour or so, and hurried toward the horse market, my shadow still keeping behind me, in his accustomed place. Opposite the Baptistery I heard, to my surprise, some one shouting my name, and looking in that direction saw a man running across the pavement towards me. I recognized at once one of my lanes, Jacopo Jacopi, a Lucchese, whom I had every reason to believe devoted to me. He had served with me at Fornovo and after; and although he subsequently left me for a little time, on my joining the Venetian fleet against the Turks, he returned to my banner once more, when it was spread on firm ground, and had always proved a devoted follower. He came now to me with joy on his face, shouting out, "Ah, excellency! It is I, who am a glad man to see you."

"Mark that man, Jacopo," I said; "wherever he is, there is danger for us; and now tell me some news of the army." "The duke is in full march on Perugia, and means to drive Cesare thence. The whole country is awake, as you know. The general, Ives d'Allegres, is come on a mission to Florence." "Ives d'Allegres here!" "Yes, excellency, and the lord of Bayard has hurried to Rome." "Then this means something that I cannot follow." "Nor can I explain, excellency." "And tell me, has the duchesse de la Tremouille gone back to France?" "Yes, by sea from Leghorn, with a great train of ladies, just before war was declared again. It is said she is gone to the court of the king of Macon, and the escort was commanded by Count Carlo Visconti." "Do you know any who went with her?" "Nearly all the ladies who were at Arezzo, for the duke, it is said, would have none of them, now that war was begun again." "I had to come to the question direct: 'Was Mme. d'Entragues in the train of the duchesse?'" "I am sure of that, excellency. I was with them as far as Siena, when I took my leave."

and yet Jacopo did not come. I waited until the gong struck six, and was just about to ride off, leaving a message with the guard, when I saw him approaching. "Make haste," I cried, as I mounted; "you are late." "Tardon, excellency! But the lady was not there. I had to wait a full hour before she came back from riding, and Gen. d'Allegres was with her." "Did you give the packet?" "I did, excellency. I rode up, asked who Lady Angiola was, and presented the packet, saying it was from Cavaliere di Savelli, my master."

CHAPTER XII. THE AMBUSCADE.

It is good to go through the air, with the strength of a brave horse under one, to know that his strong muscles are stretching with an enjoyment as keen as his rider's pleasure, to hear the air whistle as one cuts through it, and to feel the blood fairly dance in the veins. After those weary weeks of illness, of inaction, and of mental despair I had passed through, it was as if new life was poured into me, to know that I was once more in the saddle, with a prospect, however faint, of regaining all I had lost. As the landscape on each side of me melted into a green gray streak, it seemed to carry away with it my suffering; as the true horse answered willingly to the touch of my spur, I forgot the past, and was once again Ugo di Savelli, with a spirit as high as the days before the black sorrow fell upon me. To the left of the road was a broad stretch of springy turf, crossed by a fairly wide water channel. I could not resist giving the beast a burst over this, and, followed by Jacopo, galloped over it with a free rein. Both the horses took the jump like bucks, and, carried away by the moment, we held on, until we reached the stony and boulder-covered incline which led to the valley of the Greve. Here the turf came to a sudden end, in a line such as the edge of a calm sea makes in a bay, and then began a steep descent of gravel and loose stones, whose many colors of gray, ochre and brown, were splashed here and there by masses of short, thick shrubs, which gradually increased in denseness, until they spread before us, a sea of somber green, that stretched to the clear blue of the Greve. Here, on the crest of the slope, I drew bridle, thinking the horses had enough of it for the present, and that it would be well to husband their strength. Jacopo pulled up alongside of me and, stooping to pat the neck of his mount, said: "Excellency, the horses are in good condition; they will carry us well to Leghorn!" He spoke the truth, for although they might have been in better training, as the few clots of yellow white foam on the part of the reins which had touched their necks showed, still we should have been content with less from new and practically untried purchases, such as we had made, and I congratulated myself mentally on our luck, for Barabhas himself would have had much to learn from the horse-dealers of Tuscany.

to the north of Montespertoli, or at Ponte a Elsa, each of which places was particularly suited for an ambuscade, although, of course, considering their numbers, the attempt might be made elsewhere, and openly, without very much danger. So with another hurried word of warning to Jacopo, and holding my sword ready, I galloped along, increasing the pace as much as possible, whenever we went past a clump of trees, and both of us keeping as sharp a lookout as the light, or rather darkness, permitted. We avoided the regular ford of the Resa on the Montespertoli road, crossing higher up in the direction of Montelupo, and here got a good wetting, for the water was deeper than we anticipated. Had Ceci and his friends only lain in wait for us at this point, we should have had no chance. As it happened, however, we had taken a zig-zag route, which had either thrown them off the track entirely, or we should meet them further on, either at one of the two spots mentioned by me, or in some other equally convenient locality. At any rate, we were safe for the present, and that was something to be thankful for, even if we were in darkness. So my thoughts ran on as we scrambled somehow to the opposite bank of the Resa, and groped our way up until we felt soft grass under our feet, for we had dismounted on fording the stream, and led our horses by their bridles up the steep left bank. Here we called a halt, determined to await the moon, and Jacopo managed somehow to tether the horses, fastening the halters to the stump of a tree he discovered by stumbling against, and on which he wasted some of those curses he was so anxious for me to reserve for my enemies. After giving the horses their feed, which they nosed out readily enough, despite the darkness, he joined me where I sat on the grass trying to dry, and wrapping up the lock of his arquebus in a woolen cap, which he produced, to keep it from damp, he took his seat beside me at my invitation.

TWO BILLION DOLLARS.

Treasury Statement Shows That the "Medium" Increased About \$23,000,000 in January—Almost One-Half Gold. Washington, Feb. 4.—A \$2,000,000,000 country in actual money supply was shown to be the position of the United States for the first time by the statement of circulation prepared at the treasury department. The money in circulation January 1, 1900, was \$1,980,398,170, an amount never before attained. The figures for February show an increase of nearly \$23,000,000, and carry the total money in actual circulation in the United States to \$2,003,149,355. The per capita circulation, for an estimated population of 77,116,000, is stated at \$25.98. One of the features of the \$2,000,000,000 circulation is the fact that nearly half of it rests upon gold, being either gold coin or gold certificates issued against gold coin in the custody of the treasury. The gold coin reported in circulation on February 1 was \$619,447,176, and the gold certificates were \$184,882,889.

AN AFFECTING SCENE.

Mrs. Logan and Mrs. Lawton Overcome by Emotion, Embrace One Another and Then Falst. Chicago, Feb. 5.—The funeral train bearing the bodies of Maj. Gen. Lawton, Maj. Logan and Maj. Armstrong arrived at the Chicago & Northwestern depot last night. Awaiting the train were Mrs. John A. Logan, Maj. Logan's mother, Charles E. Wilson, secretary of Gov. Mount, of Indiana, representing the state in receiving Gen. Lawton's body, and several local committees. When the train stopped Mrs. Logan was one of the first to mount the steps of the sleeping car in which was the widow of Gen. Lawton. Mrs. Lawton was comforting her young son, Manley, when Mrs. Logan appeared. There was a moment of silence and suspense. Then the two bereaved women, overcome by emotion, embraced and mingled their tears, and as the two women wept together their emotions proved too strong and they fainted simultaneously.

GEN. ALGER INTERVIEWED.

The Ex-Secretary of War Thinks It Unfortunate That Americans Should Mix Up in South African Affairs. Detroit, Mich., Feb. 5.—Ex-Secretary of War Russell A. Alger said yesterday in the course of an interview: "It is most unfortunate and in exceeding bad taste for the public men of the United States to mix up in the affairs of South Africa at the present juncture. It is particularly unfortunate when the animus is directed against Great Britain—she who was our valuable friend of two years ago. During our war with Spain Great Britain's whole attitude towards us was so unmistakably friendly that its influence in preventing what might otherwise have occurred in the way of European intervention will never be capable of full measurement. We owe her a debt of gratitude and the least we can do to repay it is to abstain from interference in her present struggle against the South African republics."

FEDERAL ELECTION LAW.

Republicans Talking of a Measure for Kentucky, Mississippi and Missouri—Congressman Barthold Advocates It. St. Louis, Feb. 4.—A Globe-Democrat special from Washington says: A federal election law to meet conditions in Kentucky, Missouri, Mississippi and other states has been drawn up by some of the republican leaders of the house, and unless there is a change in the presentment of the republicans it will be introduced in a few days. Congressman Barthold, of Missouri, informed the republican caucus that unless a measure of this kind was passed by congress they had seen the last republican representative from Missouri, and his statement, taken with the conditions alleged to exist in Kentucky, Mississippi and other states, has aroused a strong feeling among republicans.

DUE WARNING TO CHINA.

United States and European Powers Join in a Note to the New Dynasty Saying Foreigners Must Be Protected. New York, Feb. 4.—According to advices received by the state department at Washington from Minister Conger, accredited to China, there is a secret society organized in China, the avowed object of which is the murder or expulsion of all foreigners in the celestial empire. Members of the society are known in China as the "Boxers." Mr. Conger has joined with representatives of other powers in presenting a joint note to the Chinese government demanding that it provide adequate protection to citizens and subjects of western nations residing in China.

Kobbe's Latest Victory.

Manila, Feb. 4.—Brig. Gen. Kobbe has occupied the islands of Samar and Leyte. In the fight at Tacloban ten insurgents were killed and the Americans captured five cannon with their artillerymen.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Question of Heads.

"How can you beat and scratch your husband in this terrible way?" said a judge to a woman of spirit and independence. "Don't you know that he is the head of the family, and ought to be respected as such? Don't you know that he is your head too, and ought to be obeyed?" "This was pretty severe doctrine to preach to a distracted family, but every man in the world will say that it is strictly true, and ought to be enforced. This woman, however, was untried, and in very pert tones said: "Judge, is that man my head?" "Most assuredly he is," was the reply. "Well, judge," said the stern disciple of a logical system, "is there any good reason why I shouldn't scratch my head if I wish to?"—London Tit-Bits.

The first large iron bridge was built in 1777.