

THE RED CLOUD CHIEF.

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RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA.

MY LOST CHILD.

I cannot make him die. He is fair and noble.
Never a tearful round my stay, share
When he says, "I am dim with tears, I turn
The world vanishes, he is not there!"

Walk my parlor floor, and the open
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair!

I'm sleeping toward the hill, before my boy
And then I think me that he is not there.

I know his face is but under the coffin,
Close has his eyes, and his forehead fair,
My hand that made him rest, over in prayer I
Stayed and grieved over the poor case,

My spirit and my heart, and my memory,
Before the thought comes that he is not
there.

When at the cool gray break-of-day from sleep
I wake,

The first breathing of the morning's cool
Brings back to life the lost, to startle me,

What I see may say we are in spirit
The world is spirit, though he is not there.

Not there! Where then is he? The form I
see not,

Was not the name of that he used to wear,
The name that had no power upon that east?

But his wondrous looks, he is not there!
Himself in all the past, he lives nor here,
Or here again in sleep,

In dreams I see him now, and on the angel
I see him written, "Thou shall see me there."

You will all have noticed, Father, thy chosen
sons types. These selectives, too rare
That in the spiritual, meeting at thy right

Two by our Heaven to find that he is
there.

—*Forest Pastoral Tribune.*

A WIFE-CHASE IN ECUADOR.

My story has nothing to do with a chase after a runaway wife, as the above caption at first glance might seem to indicate, but with an incident far more romantic and interesting, in my estimation.

It was on a certain saint's day, I forget which, there are so many of them, a good many years ago, that I found myself, under the hospitable guidance of Mr. Provoost, our then consul at Guayaquil, proceeding to San Miguel, a hot little town in the very bosom of equatorial South America, for the purpose of witnessing the burial of a celebrated sportsman who had died in season.

On our way thither we passed a shaded pool, where a number of mountaineers were washing down their horses and mules with great care, as if in preparation for some event of more than ordinary importance. They were male and female drivers, headmen, sheepherds, guides, porters, and attendants, several and independent-looking fellows from the great slopes and table-land in the neighborhood of Quito, and seemed a picture-equeen with their bright blankets, great conchoids, rude weapons, and crimson spurs.

"Bull-fighters, or horse-men?" I asked of my companion, the other.

"Neither, the one nor the other," he replied, "but the time I might expect the event at my leisure." These fellows are preparing for the sombre chase that will take place on yonder plain immediately after the other game."

"A sombre chase? I don't understand."

"You will presently. Do you mark those two young women, who are bathing down their horses near together, and who yet eye each other darkly and malevolently?"

"Yes, the two younger of the tribe are alike enough to be twin brothers."

"They are so, and are much alike in appearance and disposition as often to be mistaken for each other," said Mr. Provoost. "The two I called Vaso and Vase are something of a desperate character, I am told. The three have long been rivals for the affections of Benjaminia, one of the prettiest and most coquettish of the Indian mountain maidens hereabouts, and have had so many quarrels on her account, that their history is well known in the Guayaquil district. She leads them a pretty race to day, and, however, has signified her intention to reward with her hand the one who catches her, and thus put an end to the rivalry."

"You surpass me?" said I. "This woman chusing is a well-known custom among the Tartar nomads of the Asian Steppes, and also, I believe, among certain Indian tribes of North America; but I was not before aware of its being in vogue in this quarter of the globe."

"It is, my friend, and I have witnessed the strange similarity of the customs, rites and games, in vogue among savage or half-savage races living in widely-separated quarters of the world. In the wife-chase in prospect, you will all events witness some superb horsemanship. The Indians of both sexes on these table-lands could outdo us, as does Dazile in the play of polo, as well born on horseback. I only hope that nothing may spring out of the coming contest."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, this little mountain wench, Benjaminia, will, of course, manage to be caught by the one she secretly prefers, and then I predict there will be trouble, sooner or later. The doted brother must give up, though, sufficiently envious of his sister to be jealous on the part of that bold-faced rascal Vaso."

These primitive people, in spite of their ordinary innocent, happy-go-lucky ways, are extremely revengeful in their love affairs. But in this instance she was more tardy in recovering her own self-purification than before. Indeed, before she could do so and get away again, Vaso, who had been following closely behind, had run up to her, clutching one and outstretched arms, that she only escaped by flinging herself prone upon the off-side of her pony, and bringing it to a sudden halt that her pursuer took not ahead in advance. Then, before he could recover himself, she was securing another grip of the stirrup, and, in due time, had the neatly-dressed Martin, who was other rat just then claimed to get temporarily mixed up in a tangle of thicket.

Presently they all four disappeared behind a series of small clumps, about a dozen rods away, and their voices were awaited with no little suspense; for it was felt that the result would then be decided.

It was so, but in a manner not altogether looked for.

It is amazing how smart the very poorest lady can be, having no pretensions whatever, and will turn out on occasions, however dilapidated her home attire. Two young ladies belonging to an old but rather ruined family, whose parents were too poor to keep a servant, would dress themselves for their evening walk in the most fashionable of hats and costumes, with their furs, stockings, and lace handkerchiefs and gloves, complete. In like manner the dress of the young ladies had to be condensed so as to fit the work for the peasants, who had them for the manufacture of the smart stays and chemises they wear on fest days. The attempts at being highly fashionable, combined with an entire ignorance of the ways of the fashionable world, produce sometimes the strangest incongruities. The new veil is now and again applied to the old, called "oldish"; that is, shopkeepers' skilled workpeople, but a few of the old-fashioned ladies still keep it.

Curious specimens of decayed nobility are to be found in these remote villages, people bearing grand names, and retaining considerable pride in their ancient lineage, which generations of illness and unhappiness have reduced to extreme poverty. Many of them are educated and professed, and while they station themselves in the face of the world, they have no resource but to earn their bread by manual labor. One noble Count of this poverty-stricken nobles I once met at the house of the rich man of the village. We were at supper, and as one dirty old man after another came slinking in, each in turn was to my great surprise introduced into Benjaminia's party without a dozen. Then and there strom of joy ensued, for the old man, like friend Marta, with the old Indians. Riding after them came Marta, with a pale cheek, and lowering brow, his smile of easy confidence having given place to smothered rage and troubled discontent; though, for that matter, his disappointment was resignation's self compared with Vaso, whose aspect was like that of a boiled head.

The sprunge of the spectators was more than a shock to the artist, another a blacklayer. I have seen the grand daughters of a Countess working in the fields. With their fortunes their men more deteriorate, until nothing but a remnant of pride remains, and then they are cast down, and professed, and while they station themselves in the face of the world, they have no resource but to earn their bread by manual labor. One noble Count of these poverty-stricken nobles I once met at the house of the rich man of the village.

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Though pale from her hard riding, Benjaminia's handsome face was wreathed with smiles, as she was brought in to receive the congratulations of her friends; and she seemed joyous that, according to the custom of her people, there was no appeal from the result of the trial which she had so recently adorned each corner of our ceiling, and in the center, from amid clouds and wreaths of roses, a rather shapeless Cupid began to be delineated.

In the middle of the work, the artist, whose temper was short and whose feelings were sensitive, took offense (as we supposed) at some unintentional slight on our part. Without the slightest warning, he departed out of doors, leaving the Cupid minus one leg, one arm, and returned no more. Poor Cupid!

in the direction of the plateau, about a mile away, where the preparations for the great event of the day, the sombre chase, had been going on.

A wife-hunt is perhaps the most appropriate name that can be given it. The girl-rider is pursued by one or more admirers, in proportion to her good looks and general popularity with the opposite sex; and though the rider is not always a virgin, and therefore the chase is mostly suspended to at last facilitate her own capture on the part of the suitor whom she really prefers, which renders it a mixed and *homely* wooing, after all; and in this it may be said to be a more genuine affair of the heart and feelings than many of the wife-hunts that are in vogue in more pretentious civilized countries.

We witnessed four of these races on the day in question, all of them exciting and full of interest, and participants, but I was mostly interested in the last, which involved the pursuit of Benjaminia, the mountain-belle, by three rivals, who had been pointed out to me at thewayside post.

Benjaminia was a sprightly and pretty young woman, of apparently unmixed Indian stock. Her figure was slender and willowy; her complexion was clear, brilliant and amiable. She was dressed in three pieces of light-colored cotton, held by black sash and long flowing sleeves; black hair, which floated far below her bosom waist, as she lightly leaned into the saddle, and the laughing good-will of her female companions, who seemed as careless and light-hearted as she. Indeed, in her pastures, or on like occasions, she looked such a tempting prize, as she sat on her back and from time to time, with a smile, cast a sidelong, stealthy glances for her enemies to start in pursuit that I even wondered at being but three competitors for her hand.

"There would be more after her, but for the reputation of these three," said my companion. "They are all desirous of her, though she is wild and desperate men, and I suspect that they can be robbers on occasion, quite as savagely as malefactors. But, so far as I can see, they are not."

It was true. The word had been given, and away dashed the mountain-maid, having given fifty yards start, with the rival livers in mad pursuit.

Never had I witnessed finer horse-chase, even in Mexico. The pursuers were dressed much alike, with all the trappings of golds and silks, lightings, handkerchiefs, jackets, and three-piece sets of bleached llama skin, long hair and there with tawny little bells, with the same exception of the broad saucers about their waists. These were their marks of distinction. Manuel's sash was yellow, Marta's blue and Vaso's red.

For several reasons it was a most exciting race. In the first place, the mounted pair, who were dressed with all the trimmings of chaperons, and the three young men, who were the equals of the broad saucers about their waists. These were their marks of distinction. Manuel's sash was yellow, Marta's blue and Vaso's red.

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The Agricultural Productions of the United States.

The annual report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the year 1880, based on the statistics of 1879, and the year previous, the reports and statement of the Agricultural Bureau, has been issued. It comprises a large amount of interesting information. The facts and data respecting the products of the country are valuable, if reliable. At all events they are the most complete and satisfactory attainable. The report shows where the greatest agricultural interests are located and the relative value of agricultural production.

The report also gives the aggregate value of the products of each State, embracing corn, wheat, rye, oats, barley, buckwheat, potatoes, tobacco, cotton, sugar and of eating live stock, based on the figures of the census of 1870. The following tables show the total

HOME, FARM AND GARDEN.

Hiram Sibley, one of the wealthiest men in the state of Nebraska, and owner of a 5,000 acre farm in Lincoln, which is the largest cultivated farm in the world, 3,000 acres of it were last year devoted to