

CARLIST GOLD.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr Jones!"

The new-comer was a spare, sallow man. The same monotonous color seemed to tinge his whole personality from his russet shoes to the top of his travel-dusted <sup>tan</sup> derby. It was only when you faced him in a good light that you saw his eyes struck another note. At the bottom of their sunken sockets they shone cold and gray and as expressionless as bird's eyes.

Some time before the consul had received a letter from a gentleman in, --well, <sup>Southern</sup> Indiana, who reminded him of a meeting somewhere, several years previously, on the strength of which he begged to introduce his young friend, Mr Jones, whose photograph, endorsed with his signature, was enclosed; as Mr Jones was quite deaf, a martyr to stomach-trouble and ignorant of any but his native tongue, and travelling for his health, any kindness shown him would be taken as a personal favor. Though the consul's city, -- not far from the Iberian frontier -- was one of the richest in the world and had a history antedating the Romans, it also had a climate that beggared adjectives, and few of the Americans who passed through it paused long enough to pay their respects to their representative, <sup>provided</sup> ~~if~~ they had the wherewithal to go on. So the official was quite sincere when he rose from his desk and held out his hand, and said he was glad to meet Mr Jones, when, in time, the young man followed the <sup>Southern</sup> ~~Indiana~~'s letter.

<sup>This was</sup> just at ~~this~~ <sup>a</sup> time <sup>when</sup> our relations with Spain were distinctly strained. The new-comer said he wanted to take in the Peninsula, as part of ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> trip, and dropped into the consulate every day to hear the latest news, and conversations begun with passports always ended in the rumors of war

(2)

and what its policies and results would be. In spite of tales <sup>of</sup> mobbed Americans, riots and fleeing tourists, Mr Jones could not make up his mind to give ~~it~~ <sup>the Alhambra</sup> up and asked vague and pointless questions until one day the consul rather impatiently said:

"See here, young man, you evidently intend to go to Spain, war or no war; ~~and~~ if you <sup>will</sup> tell me just what you want to do, I <sup>will</sup> do my best to help you, --but discussion as to the relative naval strength of that kingdom and the United States <sup>is</sup> rather far from the point, isn't it?"

Mr Jones gave an almost imperceptible start. Rising and closing the office door, he hesitated a moment and then said:

"You are right. I may as well say I do intend to go to Spain. ---- Pardon me if I speak ---- confidentially, <sup>sir.</sup> I am going on a secret ~~and~~, <sup>as</sup> as you will see, a very delicate mission. ---- About 20 years ago, a man evidently a Latin <sup>came</sup> and settled in a certain western town, where it was inferred that he had left some of the Spanish American countries for reasons <sup>of his own</sup> --presumably political. Though a man of good appearance, he made few acquaintances, but among them was the local postmaster, a friend of the <sup>Indiana</sup> ~~Indiana~~ man whose letter introduced me here, sir. They became quite intimate, but the stranger made no reference to his past, and without appearing to do so, parried leading questions very effectually. He clerked in one of the largest grocery stores in town and was no more different from other people than could be expected. Shortly after, Mr Blank, the postmaster, also moved away, going to another part of the county. He had almost forgotten the man when one day he received a foreign letter that had been forwarded and stamped so many times that its original starting-point was

quite lost. He opened it with some <sup>(3)</sup> curiosity, but finding it had no signature, put himself to read it with still more curiosity. The writer began by calling to his mind his friendship with a homeless stranger years before, and adjured him on all he held sacred to be true to it and carry out the last request of one worse than dead. ---Once, he said, the greatest Carlist conspiracy that Spain had ever seen was on the point of bursting into all the horrors of civil war. An absolutely perfect organization was backed by an incredible amount of funds--and though all three of the men who formed the executive committee had little to lose but life and honor, in case of disaster, the treasurer was perhaps the most desperate. Every man was at his post, only waiting the signal of revolt, when instead came the terrified whisper that each should save himself who could.

Hastily concealing the funds that had been entrusted to him, the treasurer snatched his motherless child from her cradle and fled into the night.

He had only a ruined house, a noble name and traditions of glory, to leave <sup>at stake</sup> ~~leave~~. Never was there descendant of grandees in a more miserable plight. That is why he had joined the conspiracy. It was the last cast--a final die--

The fastnesses of the Pyrenees gave him refuge, but not for long. The betrayal of the plot had been thorough and the usurper's measures to stamp it out, once for all, ~~was~~ not less so. Risking his life to place his child in safety, the hunted man then succeeded in escaping to America. Years passed. Lonely and in exile, he longed for his daughter, whom he ~~kn~~ knew was growing up into a beautiful woman; he saw her destined to the monotonous existence of the convent that had been, it is true, such a god-given shelter to her, but was not what should be hers, now. Thinking of th

(4)

the time that had gone by and the changes that had come, he resolved to return--though not to stay. <sup>The Cause</sup> ~~He came~~ was lost, the leaders dead or languishing in worse than death, its adherents scattered. He forgot that tottering dynasties have long memories. He had no sooner set foot on ~~Spanish~~ Spanish soil than he was arrested and thrown into prison. And this time there was no escape. ~~The abbe Faria was not more surely entombed than he, living yet dead.~~ From his dungeon he sent a message to the world he should see no more. How he sent it did not matter, but it was his last, and could be understood by no one but the one it was meant for.

Again he adjured the postmaster to fidelity; asked him to go to the safe of the man for whom the stranger had clerked, in which he would find a tin box marked with a name he would recognize. In this box was a metal tag stamped with the number of a safe-deposit ~~drawn~~ drawn in New York, and in that drawer was an address at which indications would be found by which his daughter and the treasure might be located. This done, for the young girl a marriage should be arranged fitting her birth, beauty and dot, ~~and~~ <sup>Carlist</sup> half the hidden gold. The other half was his friend's, for his trouble. And I, Mr Jones <sup>concluded</sup> ~~ended~~ in a matter-of-fact <sup>tone</sup> "have been commissioned by Mr Blank's friend to carry out the matter as far as may be. But until I can get to an almost unknown hamlet in a remote province of Spain, I can do nothing."

For the last five minutes the consul had been, metaphorically speaking, gasping. But not to be outdone by the other, he said calmly:

"Ah, indeed. I quite understand. It is a delicate mission. I may be able to help you a good deal, now and later. Of course, I should

