he was up to at once, and I thought I'd help him a little, and so I—I asked him if it would be too much trouble, since he was going to Guanajuato anyway, to take a letter from me to my friend. And you just ought to have seen how very grateful the poor fellow was! But you mustn't tell, Rowney; that wouldn't be the square thing."

V.

THE AFFAIR OF MOLINO DEL REY.

MR. PEMBERTON LOGAN SMITH returned from Guanajuato five or six days later, bringing his sheaves with him. But his sheaves did not amount to much.

He arrived from the railway station in time to join the party at dinner; and although dining was about at an end, they all waited while he ate his dinner and at the same time gave an account of himself.

"What a blessing it is again to get something to eat," he observed with much satisfaction as Gilberto—"the best waiter I ever came across anywhere," Mr. Gamboge had declared approvingly—took away his empty soup-plate and filled his glass from a bottle of Father Gatillon's sound Bordeaux. "I stayed at Doña Maria's, of course, and the

old lady did her best for me, I know—but even her best didn't amount to much; and I've been getting hungrier and hungrier every day."

"And how about the picture?" Brown asked. "You must have made pretty quick work of it to get anything done in this time."

"Oh, the picture! Yes, I'd forgotten about that. You see, when I saw the Bufa again I concluded that it was too much for me. It wants a bigger man, you know—somebody like Orpiment. You really ought to go up and paint it, Orpiment; it's a wonderful thing." This pleased Verona, of course. She highly approved of anything in the shape of an acknowledgment of her husband's superiority.

"That's all very well," said Orpiment; "but if you haven't been painting the Bufa, what have you been doing? And what's gone with all your virtuous resolutions?"

"Well, you see, we didn't half do up Guanajuato—it's a wonderful place; I think it's the most picturesque place I ever saw.

I've been investigating it. I found some more pictures, for one thing. There's a tremendously good 'Cena de San Francisco,' that we never saw at all, in the sacristy of that little church just across the street from Doña Maria's. And I went out to the Valenciana mine, and there is one of the most beautiful churrigueresque church interiors out there that I ever laid eyes on: and we missed that, too, you know. There was lots to do without painting. I could have put in another week easily."

"Did you see anything of the Espinosas?" Violet asked, with a fine air of innocent curiosity.

"The Espinosas? Oh, yes, I saw them. In fact I—as it happened, I saw a good deal of them," Pem answered, in some slight confusion. "Yes, they were very civil to me," he continued. "You see I had to present the letter that you sent, Mrs. Mauve; and when they found that I had missed so much that is worth seeing in Guanajuato they took me in hand in the kindest way and

showed me everything. It was ever so nice of them. And—and we happened to come down together on the same train. You see, I found it was quite hopeless to try to paint the Bufa, and as they were coming down I thought I'd come down too. What a nice old lady the Señora Espinosa is, and Don Antonio is delightful. I've rarely met such pleasant people."

"And how about the pretty girl?" Brown struck in, although Rose tried to stop him by pinching him.

"It's never any good to pinch me, Rose," Brown explained, when his conduct subsequently was criticised. "Half the time I don't know what I'm pinched for, and it only makes me get my back up; and the other half you don't get in your pinch until I've said what you don't want me to say. If I were you I'd stop it."

"But, Van, indeed it was very unkind in you to speak that way to-night. Don't you see that Mr. Smith is quite seriously interested in this sweet young girl; and just

suppose you were to make him so uncomfortable that he should break it all off before it's fairly begun. Don't do anything like that again, I beg of you."

"For so young a woman, Rose, your match-making proclivities are quite remarkable. How do you know that this Mexican girl is 'sweet'? Remember your gambling friend at Aguas Calientes, and don't be precipitate, my dear" (this was an unfair allusion on Brown's part, and he had to apologize for it). "After all, though, you must admit that Smith didn't seem to be very badly knocked out by my shot at him."

This was quite true, for Pem had expected some such question, and, being ready for it, he answered with a very fair degree of composure: "You mean the Señora Carillo. She is charming, of course. I don't believe that you know, Mrs. Mauve," he added, turning to Violet, "that your friend is a widow?"

"Oh, how perfectly delightful!" cried Violet. Then, seeing that Rose, Verona, and Mrs. Gamboge all looked shocked, she added:

"Of course I don't mean that it is delightful to have peoples' husbands die, or anything like that, you know. But after they *are* dead, in this part of the world at least, it's delightful to be a widow. A Mexican young girl might just as well be a—a humming-top, for all the good she has of anything, you see. But as soon as she's a widow she can go anywhere and do anything she pleases, and have nobody bothering at her at all. It's better than being a young girl in the States, ever so much. And so Cármen's a widow. Just think of it! And I didn't even know that she had been married. She's got ever so far ahead of me, hasn't she, Rowney? And I thought that I was ahead of her. It's too bad! But who did she marry, Mr. Smith? And when did he die? Do tell me all about it, please."

And Pem explained that the Señorita Espinosa had been married about a year after the time that she had left school, and that her husband had died suddenly within two or three months of their marriage. "I don't

believe it was quite a heart-breaking affair," Pem added. "Her cousin, Rodolfo, you know, told me that old Don Ignacio was a grouty old fellow, and that the marriage had been made up mainly because his *hacienda* adjoined her father's, and there was some row about the water-rights which had been going on for years and which they succeeded this way in compromising. Rodolfo was very indignant about the whole business, and I'm sure I don't wonder. Do they do much of that sort of thing down here, Mrs. Mauve? It's like a bit out of the dark ages."

"But think how happy she is now, Mr. Smith," said the practical Violet; "and think what a good thing it is to have the matter about the water settled so nicely. You don't know how important it is to get a thing like that settled. I remember papa and another man had a bad shooting match about a water-right once; and papa would have been killed, everybody said, if he hadn't been too quick for the other man and got the drop on him. And it cost papa ever so much to square

things after he'd killed the other man; for the judges knew that papa was rich and they made him pay like anything. I'm very glad for Cármen's sake that she was able to do her father such a good turn; and she must be glad too—especially now that it's all well over and she is a comfortable widow. And you say that they all came down with you to-night?"

"Yes, and they sent word that they are coming in a body to call on all of us to-morrow—that's the Mexican way, I believe. And they have a plan on foot for a picnic, or something of that sort, for us at Señor Espinosa's place out at Tacubaya——"

"Oh, in that lovely garden! I used to go out there with Cármen sometimes on Sundays while I was at the convent. It's perfectly delightful!"

"Yes, I fancy from what they said about it that it must be rather a nice place. And after the lunch, or breakfast, or whatever they call it, we're to walk across and see the view of the valley from a place that they say is

very nice—it's upon a hillside above the Molino del Rey; just where the battle was fought in 1847, Don Antonio said. Really, Mrs. Mauve, we all owe a great deal to you for putting us in the way of seeing Mexican life from the inside."

This view of the indebtedness of the American party to the Spanish-American member became general two days later, when they all were conveyed to Tacubaya by Don Antonio in a special tram-car, and were given a breakfast in his beautiful *huerta* that quite astonished them. That Pem approved of the food, Philadelphian though he was, did not, under the circumstances, count for much; but the hearty indorsement of Mexican cooking on the part of Mr. Gamboge and Mr. Mangan Brown, neither of whom regarded such matters lightly, and whose judgment was not biassed by any sudden yielding to the tender emotions, counted for a good deal. It was while they were returning to the city that Mr. Gamboge, after a long, thoughtful silence, thus spoke:

"Brown, I shall remember that dish of *mole*—I have learned the name of it carefully, you see—until my dying day."

And Mr. Mangan Brown briefly but feelingly replied: "And so shall I."

As for Rose, she declared that she must be asleep and had dreamed herself into a Watteau landscape; for such a garden as this was, as she lucidly explained, she believed could have no existence outside of a picture that was inside of a dream.

Mrs. Gamboge, whose tendency was toward the sentimental, wished Mr. Gamboge to come and sit beside her on the grass, beneath a tree near the little brook. And her feelings were rather hurt because Mr. Gamboge declined to fall in with her romantic fancy, on the ground that sitting on the grass certainly would give them both rheumatism. And he didn't mend matters by adding that he would have been very glad to please her had they only thought to bring along a gum-blanket.

But quite the happiest member of this

exceptionally happy party was Mr. Pemberton Logan Smith; for this young man, while he was not as yet exactly in love, had made a very fair start into the illusions and entanglements of that tender passion. During the four or five days at Guanajuato his intercourse with the Señora Carillo had been hampered by the formalities attending new acquaintanceship, and especially by the rule of Mexican etiquette that throws the entertainment of a guest upon the oldest lady of the household. His eyes had been very steadily in the service of the pretty widow; but his ears, and so much of his tongue as the circumstances of the case required—which was not much, for Doña Catalina was a great talker—necessarily were employed in the service of her aunt.

But on the present occasion Doña Catalina naturally devoted herself more especially to Mrs. Gamboge and the two elderly gentlemen—Violet, rather against her will, serving as interpreter—and this left Pem free to follow his own inclinations. It was the first fair

chance that he had had, and he made the most of it. A further fortunate fact in his favor was that he was the only man of the American party—except Jaune d'Antimoine, who was busily employed as interpreter between his wife, Rose, Verona, and the Mexican young gentlemen—who possessed a colloquial command of Spanish. How Pem did bless his lucky stars now that, being overtaken by a mood of unwonted energy, he had had the resolution to grind away so steadily under that stuffy old professor during his winter in Granada!

So, without much difficulty, he contrived to keep close to the widow all day—much to his own enjoyment, and, apparently, not to her distaste. She was not like any of the women whom he had known in Spain—where, to be sure, his opportunities for any save most formal acquaintance had been very limited; and she certainly was unlike her own countryfolk. Even in her lightest talk there was an air about her of preoccupation, of reserve, that was in too marked contrast

with Doña Catalina's very cheerful frankness to be accounted for merely on the ground of the difference between youth and age; and that, so far as his observation had gone, was not by any means characteristic of Mexican women either old or young. And from the obscurity of this reserve she had a way, he found, of flashing out rather brilliantly turned expressions of decidedly original thought. When she accompanied these utterances, as she sometimes did, with a little curl of her finely cut red lips, and with a quick glance from her dark-brown eyes—not tender eyes, yet eyes which somehow suggested possibilities of tenderness—he found that her sayings, if not increased in point, certainly gained in effectiveness. Altogether, Mr. Smith was disposed to regard the Señora Carillo as a decidedly interesting subject for attentive study.

Naturally, since they had been so much together during the day, Pem was the widow's escort when they all set out, in late afternoon, to walk to the point of view that Don

Antonio, as he expressed it, would have the honor to bring to their notice. It was a desperately dusty walk, and the American ladies—who had donned raiment of price for the occasion—contemplated the defilement of their gowns in anything but a contented spirit. They beheld with wonder the calmness with which their Mexican sisters—who were equally well dressed, though in the style that would obtain in New York during the ensuing season—made no effort whatever to preserve their garments from contamination.

"That gros-grain of Mrs. Espinosa's will be absolutely ruined, Rose," Mrs. Gamboge declared, speaking in the suppressed voice that most people seem to consider necessary when airing their private sentiments in the presence of other people who do not understand a word of the language in which the private sentiments are expressed. "Mine is bad enough, though I'm doing everything I can think of to save it. Do just drop behind me a little and see if I'm making a very shocking exhibition of my ankles. I'm afraid that

I am, but I really can't help it. These Mexican ladies seem to think no more of getting dusty than if they all were dressed in calico. I can't understand it at all."

The Señora Carillo certainly paid no attention whatever to the increasing dustiness of her gown. Her early venture in matrimony had not been of an encouraging sort, and since she had come into her estate of widowhood her tendency—as Violet in her free but expressive southwestern vernacular probably would have stated the case—was to "stand off" mankind generally. It was a surprise to herself when she discovered that so far from finding this good-looking young *Americano* repulsive, she positively was attracted by him. For one thing, he struck her as differing in many ways from her own countrymen; and she had an instinctive feeling that the unlikeness was not merely superficial. She was sure that his scheme of life was a larger, broader scheme than that which she had known, and there was a genuineness in his deference to her as a woman that contrasted

both forcibly and favorably with certain of her past experiences.

In point of fact this Mexican young woman had begun life by being a little out of harmony with her environment. She did not know very clearly what she wanted, but she knew that it was something quite different from that which she had. It was this feeling that had led her to select Violet Carmine for a close friend. She was not at all in sympathy with Violet's most radical tendencies; but she found in Violet a person, the only person, who was not shocked when she stated some of her own small convictions as to what a woman's life might be. Even to this friend she had not told that it was her hope, should she ever marry, to be the companion of her husband—not merely his handmaiden, in the scriptural sense. And she was glad now that she had been thus reticent, for her hope by no means had been realized.

After that very disillusioning venture into the holy estate of matrimony, this poor Cármen found herself entirely at odds with her-

self and with the world. Had she lived a generation earlier she would have become a nun. It was a subject of sincere sorrow to her that nunneries had been abolished in Mexico by the Laws of the Reform.

It was only natural that there should be a certain feeling of pleasure mixed with her feeling of astonishment at her present discovery of a man for whom she had at once both liking and respect. It was agreeable, she thought, to find that there really was such a man in the world. But beyond this very general view of the situation her thoughts did not go. It made very little difference to her, one way or the other, this discovery. The man was a foreigner, and an American at that —and Cármen had a good strong race hatred for the Americans of the North—come into her country only for a little while. Presently he would go home again; and that, so far as she was concerned, would be the end of him. In the meantime she would please herself by studying this new specimen of male humanity. It was well to hold con-

verse with a foreigner, she thought; it enlarged one's mind.

So, lagging a little behind the rest of the party, and chatting in a manner somewhat light to be productive of any very marked mental improvement, they walked westward through the straggling streets of Tacubaya —past low houses with great barred windows, past high-walled gardens, the loveliness of which was only hinted at by outhanging trees and climbing vines and by the glimpse in passing to be had through the iron gates —over to and out upon the hillside above the Molino del Rey. They stopped beside the little pyramidal monument that commemorates the battle. The rest of the party had gone on a few rods farther; for Don Antonio, with true Mexican courtesy, had acted upon his instinctive conviction that beside this monument was not a place where a party of right-thinking Americans would care to halt.

Below them, embowered in trees, was the old Mill of the King that Worth's forces car-

ried that September day forty years ago; beyond rose the wooded, castle-crowned height of Chapultepec; still farther away were the towers and glistening domes of the city and the great shimmering lakes, and for background rose the blue-gray mountains above Guadalupe in the north. To the east, over across Lake Chalco, towered the great snow-peaks of the volcanoes.

"Upon my soul, I wish I had been born a Mexican," said Pem, drawing a long breath.

"Because the Mexicans happen to be possessors of a fine landscape? That is not a good reason. There are better things for a people to have than landscapes, Señor; and some of these better things, if I am rightly told, your people have."

"It is possible—but at present I cannot recall them to my mind. Just now I can think of nothing finer than this view—excepting the happy fact that the Señorita has done me the honor to lead me to it."

"I could wish that you would not speak in that fanciful manner. It is in the custom of

my own country, and I do not like it. I have been told that the Americans do not make fine speeches, and I shall be glad to know that it is so."

Pem was rather taken aback by this frank statement of very un-Mexican sentiment.

"The Señorita, then, does not approve of the customs of her own people, and is pleased to like the Americans? For the compliment to my countrymen I give to the Señorita my thanks."

"I do not like your countrymen. I hate them."

"And why?"

"Is not this an answer?" Cármen replied, laying her hand upon the battle monument.

Pem felt himself to be in an awkward corner, for the position that his Mexican friend had taken—while not, perhaps, in the very best of taste—was quite unassailable. As he rather stupidly stared at the ugly little monument, thus pointedly brought to his notice, he felt that it did indeed represent an act of unjust aggression that very well might make

Mexicans hate Americans for a thousand years.

"As to the customs of my countrymen," Cármen continued, perceiving that the particular American before her was very much embarrassed, and politely wishing to extricate him from the trying position that, not very politely, she had placed him in, "some of them are very well. But this of making fine speeches to women is not well at all. Do the men have this foolish custom in your land, or is it only that while in Mexico you wish to do what is done here?"

It was a relief to have the subject changed in any way, but the new topic was one not altogether free from difficulties. Mr. Smith never before had been called upon to defend the utterance of a small gallantry upon ethical and ethnological grounds; still less to treat the matter from the standpoint of comparative nationalities.

"It is my impression that I have heard of handsome speeches being made upon occasion by American men to American women," he

replied. "Yes, I believe that I am justified in saying positively that speeches of this sort among us may be said to be quite every-day affairs. May I ask why the Señorita objects to them? They strike me as being harmless, to say the least."

"They are idle and silly. It is the same talk that one would give to a cat. I do not know why a woman should be talked to as though she had nothing of sense. It is true, she cannot know as much as a man; but she may ask to have it believed that she knows more than a cat, and still not claim to be very wise. And so, if the Señor will permit the request, I will beg that he will keep his handsome speeches for those who like them and that he will say none to me at all.

"See, our friends are coming toward us, and we will go back to the town. And the Señor will pardon me if I have been rude. I should not have said what I did about Americans. I find now that they are not all bad." There was more in the look that accompanied this utterance than there was in the words.

"I have not had a very happy life, and sometimes, they tell me, I forget to be considerate of others and am unkind. But I have not meant to be unkind to-day."

The last portion of Cármen's speech was hurried, for the party was close upon them, and they all were together again before Pem could reply.

Nor did he have another chance to continue this, as he had found it, notwithstanding the awkward turns that it had taken, very interesting conversation. Cármen stuck close to her aunt, and was almost silent, as they walked back to the garden; and she contrived, as they returned by the tramway to the city, to seat herself quite away from him in the car.

Since she so obviously had no desire to speak further, Pem felt that he would be pleasing her best by engaging the estimable Doña Catalina in lively talk. This was not a difficult feat, for Doña Catalina was a miracle of good-natured loquacity, who, in default of anything better to wag her tongue at, no doubt would have talked with much anima-

tion to her shoes. In view of the fact that he scarcely had been able to get in a word edgewise, he was rather tickled when this admirable woman, at parting, commended him warmly for having so well mastered the Spanish tongue. Pem ventured, at this juncture, to cast a very slightly quizzical look at Cármen, and was both surprised and delighted by finding that his look was returned in kind.

"A Mexican woman who doesn't like pretty speeches, and who has such a charming way of qualifying her hatred of Americans, and who can see the point of a rather delicate joke," thought Pem, "would be worth investigating though she were sixty years old and as ugly as the National Palace. And Cármen"—this was the first time, by the way, that he had thought of her as Cármen—"I take it is not quite twenty yet; and what perfectly lovely eyes she has!"

At dinner that night Mr. Smith was unusually silent. When rallied by the lively Violet upon his taciturnity he replied that he was rather tired.

VI.

THE BATTLE OF CHURUBUSCO.

WHEN the American party played the return match, as Rowney Mauve, who had cricketing proclivities, expressed it, by giving their Mexican friends a breakfast in the pretty San Cosme Tivoli, Cármen did not appear. She had a headache that day, her aunt explained, and begged to be excused.

Rose commented upon this phase of the breakfast with her usual perspicacity. "I think that it all is working along very nicely, Van, don't you?" They had strolled off together and were out of ear-shot of the rest of the party.

"What is working along nicely? The breakfast? Yes, it seems to be all right. The food was very fair, and our friends seemed