

one of our riding excursions we were to secure the services of a Methodist minister in the adjoining county, and later, that of the Mission Padre—when the secret was out. 'I will gif her away,' said Enriquez, confidently; 'it will on the instant propitiate the old shadbelly who shall perform the affair, and withhold his jaw. A little chin-music from your oncle 'Arry shall finish it! Remain tranquil, and forget not a ring! One does not always, in the agony and dissatisfaction of the moment, a ring remember. I shall bring two in the pocket of my dress.'

If I did not entirely participate in this roseate view it may have been because Enriquez, although a few years my senior, was much younger-looking, and with his demure devilry of eye, and his upper lip close shaven for this occasion, he suggested a depraved acolyte rather than a responsible member of a family. Consuelo had also confided to me that her father—possibly owing to some rumours of our previous escapade—had forbidden any further excursions with me alone. The innocent man did not know that Chu Chu had forbidden it also, and that even on this momentous occasion both Enriquez and myself were obliged to ride in opposite fields like out-flankers. But we nevertheless felt the full guilt of disobedience added to our desperate enterprise.