

A DAUGHTER OF THE SIERRA

BY CHRISTIAN REID

Published by permission of the H. Harter Book Co., St. Louis, Mo.

CHAPTER XIII

INTO THE SIERRA

Why the deuce you should be in such a hurry to get away, Lloyd I don't understand. "I was just wondering if I should have to send and compel you to come and be thanked for the beautiful sketch of the quebrada you have sent me."

"I am glad if it is what you wanted, it did not satisfy me at all." "One always finds it difficult to be satisfied with one's work, does one not? I can account in no other way for your not being satisfied with this. You must pardon me for saying that it seems to me much better done than any of your other sketches, of which Mr. Thornton has shown me a good many."

"Has Thornton kept those fragments? Well, if this is much better, it must have been with me as with old Picot, the French carpenter: you put a spirit into us to make us do our best for you."

"I should like to put a spirit into you to make you do your best for yourself." "I am sure you would," he answered, smiling at her—they had by this time sat down in two large chairs facing each other. "I have never seen any one who evidently possessed more strongly the desire of helping lame dogs over stiles. But, you see, sometimes the dog is ungrateful."

"You are not that, I am sure, Mr. Lloyd." "And sometimes he is incapable of profiting by the assistance of the kind hand held out to him. That is my case. The time has gone by when I could care to do anything for myself. It is long since I have even particularly cared about making money, which is understood to be the first duty of an American. But I am going to mend my habits in that particular, at least. I am now on my way into the Sierra to take up some prospects."

"You are on your way into the Sierra?" She glanced at his horse and then across the valley at the eastern heights, where a trail wound upward like a thread to the pass between the crowding cliffs. "I wish I were going with you."

"Needless to say that I wish so, too." "That is more polite than true, I'm afraid. But I am determined to go some day. I shall make papa talk me over."

"You are going to see Dona Victoria some day, you know." "I hope so; but"—she leaned suddenly and eagerly forward—"are you going to see Dona Victoria now, Mr. Lloyd? Oh, you don't know how much I have been thinking, wondering how you would contrive to warn her!"

"This seems the only way," he said. "Of course I am not going to see Dona Victoria. I shall simply call at the mine and warn Don Mariano to be on his guard against possible surprise."

"How good, how very good of you to undertake such an errand!" "Don't give me more credit than I deserve. I am going to Urbeleja, as I told you, about some prospects; and to call at the Santa Cruz will not take me very much out of my way."

"I must believe you, I suppose; but I have my suspicions that the prospects come in very conveniently just now. And if you see Dona Victoria—"

"May I tell her that she owes the warning to you?" "I would prefer that she do not. I could not give the warning without betraying confidence, you know. As it is, my conscience is not at all easy about the matter."

"I am very glad to hear it. Tell me, then, exactly what you want me to say." "Something like this, I think: that you feel deep interest and sympathy in her struggle for her rights, and that you hope she will give attention to any advice I may offer her."

"Miss Rivers rose eagerly. "Come into the sala and help me write it," she said. "My Spanish is not faultless, and after 'My appreciable Senorita' I should be at a loss how to proceed."

Lloyd followed her willingly enough into the room she had made so pretty and homelike. He was not sorry to carry away a picture of her as she sat at the desk beside the window and wrote her note, with the light falling on the softly piled masses of her golden-brown hair and the gracious curves of her fair cheek. The few lines which she dictated were, however, soon written, the pale grey sheet, with its stamped monogram and faint violet fragrance, was put into an envelope, addressed to the Senorita Dona Calderon, and handed to him. And then it was time to go. He rose to his feet, slipping the note into an inner pocket; and as he did so his glance fell on his own sketch of the quebrada, which was placed above the desk. Isabel's glance followed his.

"You see I have it there," she said, "not only to admire, but to remember how near I was to being carried down into those dark depths. That is why I wanted the shadows of evening—the impression of awe; and you have given it so well. I can never look at it without thinking of the moment you snatched me away and the bulldozer crashed past us, brushing my dress as it went."

He could not resist the temptation to say: "I am glad you have it, then; for I shall know that you remember me sometimes, if I should not have the pleasure of meeting you again." She looked surprised.

"But surely you are not going to stay in the Sierra!" she exclaimed. "You will be back soon?" "Not very soon, I fear; and it can't be that Topia will keep you very long."

"You are as bad as papa. Topia will keep me for a long time yet; and, besides, I am going out into the Sierra. What is to prevent our meeting there?"

"Nothing, except that the Sierra is very wild, and like the sad-hearted Moor of 'La Golondrina.'"

"Voy a partir a lejanas regiones." "Well, I am going into the 'lejanas regiones' also," she said, nodding determinedly. "Some day when you have climbed a high mountain, you will find that I have been coming up the other side. We shall meet on the top. You will say: 'What! you here! And I would come!'"

"Hasten the day!" said he, smiling. "I shall look for you now on the top of every mountain I climb."

"I am sure we shall meet," she said confidently; "but meanwhile I hope you will come back and tell me how you have fared with Dona Victoria. I trust she will heed your warning."

"So do I, for her own sake. And now"—he held out his hand—"good-bye! I suppose I will find Mr. Rivers in the office?"

"If he is not at the mine. Good-bye!" She laid her hand in his. "And—what is it they say here?—Vaya Vd. con Dios!"

"Go with God!" The beautiful parting words still rang in his ears after he had climbed the steep heights and paused an instant at the summit of the pass for a last look at Topia, lying in its green valley three thousand feet below; and then rode onward into the fair, wild, sylvan ways of the great Sierra.

"On the day after Lloyd's departure from Topia, Armistead, in fulfillment of his expressed intention to obtain the assistance he needed from the Caridad people," paid a visit to Mr. Rivers and formally asked this assistance. The Gerente of the Caridad leaned back in his chair and looked grave.

"Well, you see, Armistead," he said, "with every disposition to obligate you personally, it is rather a delicate matter for us to touch. We are living and doing business in this country, and we can not afford to antagonize the feeling of the people. Now, I suppose I don't need to tell you that there's a pretty strong feeling about this Santa Cruz matter."

Armistead shrugged his shoulders. "That is to be counted on of course, where the claim of an alien and one against—women is concerned," he replied.

"Rather more than simply against women in this case, you know, my dear fellow," Mr. Rivers suggested. "I understand perfectly that it wouldn't do for you to give open assistance, and I am not asking anything of the kind. Armistead went on; but I am left in rather a difficult position by Lloyd's defection. He has such scruples, or such fears for himself, in the matter that he has refused to give me the help I need in getting together a force of reliable men to take possession of the mine; for I'm sure you'll agree with me that that is the best and quickest way to end the matter."

Mr. Rivers picked up a ruler and tapped meditatively on the desk before which he sat—for this conversation took place in the office of the Caridad.

"Perhaps so," he said guardedly. "It is a point on which I hardly feel

qualified to give an opinion. It's a peculiar situation,—very peculiar; and there are—many things to take into consideration. I would like to oblige you in any way possible, Armistead; but I really don't think it possible for us to take any part in the business."

"My dear sir," replied Armistead earnestly, "I don't ask you to take part in it further than to recommend some men for my purpose."

"But that's impossible, don't you see?—because the only men for whom I could speak are the men in our employ, and it would never do for any man connected with the Caridad to be concerned in this matter."

"In short," said Armistead, stillly, "it seems that I can not count on any friendly services from the Caridad. It's not exactly what I looked for—to have the cold shoulder turned to me by the representatives of an American company."

"I think that we have proved that there is no cold shoulder turned to you personally," Mr. Rivers answered; "and if your business here were of an ordinary character, the Caridad influence would help you with you. But you must recognize that that what you are engaged in is not an ordinary business, but is one in which so much feeling is arrayed against your claim, that I should seriously injure my company with the people if I lent you any assistance. You could not expect me to do that even if my own sympathy were with you—that is, with Trafford—in the contest; and, frankly, it is not."

Armistead rose to his feet, more angry than he wished to express. "I see that I have nothing to expect in the way of help here," he said, "so with apologies for having troubled you, I'll bid you good-day."

Mr. Rivers rose also, and laid his hand upon the other's arm. "Be reasonable, Armistead!" he urged. "You are a man of the world and you certainly must know that Trafford's conduct in this matter is inexcusable. We all like you but we can't possibly let our personal liking lead us into the least or, rather, into as dastardly a business as any man again I am speaking of Trafford—ever engaged in. But don't go off offended. Come into the house and see Isabel."

If Armistead had been capable just then of smiling, he might have smiled at the tone of the last words. "Come into the house and see Isabel," Mr. Rivers said, much to her delight, have offered a sugar-plum to an angry child; and with an absolute confidence too in the efficacy of the sugar-plum. But Armistead's feeling where too much ruffled to allow of his accepting the invitation. He curtly declined to pass into the patio, toward which Mr. Rivers' gesture invited him; and, turning his back on its possible seductions, walked out of the front door into the street—or, rather, into the road which became presently the main street of Topia.

Before he reached the first houses of the village, however, he met Thornton, who, followed by a *moseo* with a bag of coin carried on his shoulders as if it were a bag of grain, was on his way to the office; for this was pay-day at the Caridad, and on such days the merchants of Topia were frequently called upon to give up all their silver in exchange for drafts on Calacan and Durango. They were very willing to do so, since the drafts of the mine supplied an exchange which there was no bank to supply; and since the coin which they parted quickly found its way back through the hand of the miners, into their tills. As he met the man swinging at such a rapid pace down the road. "The express isn't due for five minutes yet. Dreaming, weren't you?" he added with a laugh as Armistead paused. Thought you were in the Land of Hurry again, I suppose, with a transaction of a million or so to be settled in five minutes over the telephone. See how much better we do Topia here!" And he waved his hand toward the *moseo*, who halted patiently with the heavy bag of coin on his bent shoulders.

"Send that fellow on! I want to talk to you," said Armistead, impatiently. "Go on to the office, Dionisio, and tell the Gerente that I will be there in five minutes," said Thornton in Spanish, and he was surprised if he doesn't see me for half an hour; the speaker added as the *moseo* went on. "Such are the blessings of being in that scrofulous land of the Land of Manana. And now what can I do for you?"

"A great deal, if you like," Armistead answered. "In the first place, what will you take to sever your connection with the Caridad and enter into my employ?" Thornton stared for an instant. "You aren't in earnest?" he said. "Do you suppose I ever jested on business?" Armistead demanded. "You have been so long in this wretched country that you've forgotten how men do business—at home. Of course I'm in earnest, and to prove it I'll make a definite offer. If you come to me I'll double whatever salary you are getting from the Caridad company, for as long a time as we remain in Mexico; and I'll take you to California with me when I go and find you a good position there. How does that strike you?"

"Rather overwhelmingly!" Thornton replied. "In fact, the effect is so great on a system which, as you remark, is somewhat debilitated by the methods of business of this country, that I—think I'll sit down."

He sank as he spoke, with an air of one quite overwhelmed, on the spreading roots of a large tree by the side of the road; and Armistead, frowning at this misplaced levity, followed his example.

"Don't be more of an idiot than you can help," he said, with the frank indignity of an old classmate. "This isn't a time for jesting, I want a man."

"I thought you had one. What has become of Lloyd?" "He has gone off into the Sierra."

"Not to help me in the business I am here specially to transact?" "And that is—"

"To get hold of the Santa Cruz Mine. You must know—it appears that everybody knows that."

"Ah! Thornton looked meditatively at the great heights towering before them. And why will not Lloyd help you in the matter?"

"For some private reason of his own—probably he is afraid."

Thornton shook his head.

BUCKS, DESPATCHER

By Frank H. Spearman

"I see a good deal of stuff in print about the engineer," said Callahan, dejectedly. "What's the matter with the despatcher? What's the matter with the man who tells the engineer what to do—and just what to do? How to do it—and exactly how to do it? With the man who sits shut in brick walls and hung in Chinese puzzles, his ear glued to a receiver, and his finger fast to a key, and his eye riveted on a train chart?"

The man who orders and annuls and stops and starts everything within five hundred miles of him, and holds under his thumb more lives every minute than a brigadier does in a lifetime? For instance," asked Callahan in that tired way of his, "What's the matter with Bucks?"

Now, I myself never knew Bucks. He left the West End before I went on. Bucks is second vice-president—which means the boss—of a transcontinental line now, and a great swell. But no man from the West End that calls on Bucks has to wait for an audience, though bigger men do. They talk of him out there yet. Not of General Superintendent Bucks, which he came to be, nor of General Manager Bucks. On the West End he is just plain Bucks; but on Bucks on the West End means a whole lot.

"He saved the company just \$800,000 that night the Ogallala train ran away," mused Callahan. Callahan himself is assistant superintendent and by all accounts soon will be superintendent.

"It is a good deal of money—\$800,000—Callahan, I objected.

"Figure it yourself. To begin with, fifty passengers' lives—that's \$5,000 apiece, isn't it?" Callahan had a cold-blooded way of figuring a passenger's life from the company standpoint. "It would have killed over fifty passengers if the runaway had ever struck 59, and there wouldn't have been enough left to make a decent funeral for the equipment, at least \$50,000. But there was a whole lot more than \$800,000 in it for Bucks."

"How so?" "He told me once that if he hadn't saved 59 that night he would never have signed another order anywhere on any road."

"Why? I asked, a little bit surprised. "Why? Because, after it was all over he found out that his own order was about 59. Didn't you ever hear that? I thought that by this time everybody had heard of that incident. Well, sir, it was Christmas Eve, and the year was 1884. Christmas Eve everywhere but on the West End; there it was no different from any other day—just plain Dec. 24th."

"High winds will prevail for ensuing twenty-four hours. Station agents will use extra care to secure cars on sidings; brakemen must use care to avoid being blown from trains."

That was about all Bucks said in his bulletins that evening; not a word about Christmas nor Merry Christmas. In fact, if Christmas had come to McCloud that night they couldn't have held it twenty-four hours; the wind was too high. All the week, all the day it had blown—a December wind: dry as an August noon, bitter as powdered ice. It was in the days of our western railroad-riding when we had only one fast train on the schedule—the St. Louis California Express; and only one fast engine on the division—the 101; and only one man on the whole West End—Bucks.

Bucks was assistant superintendent, and master mechanic, and train master, and chief despatcher, and store keeper—and a bully good fellow. There were some boys in the service; among them, Callahan. Callahan was seventeen, with hair like a sunset, and a mind quick as an airbrake. It was his first year at the key, and he had a night trick under Bucks.

Callahan claims it blew so hard that night that it blew most of the color out of his hair. Horses and cattle huddled into triendly pockets a little out of the worst of it, or froze mutely in pitiless fence corners on the division. Sand drove grinding down from the Cheyenne hills like a storm of snow. The streets of the raw prairie towns stared deserted at the sky. Even the cowboys kept their ranches, and through the gloom of noon the sun cast a coward shadow. It was a wretched day, and the sun went down with the wind turning into a gale, and all the boys in bad humor—except Bucks. Not

that Bucks couldn't get mad; but it took more than a cyclone to start him.

Phone Main 6249. After Hours: Hillcrest 8818
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Bureau of Information
Special Attention Given to Employment
Cast of Clothing Always in Demand
25 Shuter St. TORONTO
Office Hours 9 to 4

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

WATT & BLACKWELL
Members Ontario Association
ARCHITECTS
Sixth Floor, Bank of Toronto Chambers
LONDON, ONT.

M. P. McDONAGH
BARRISTER, SOLICITOR, NOTARY, ETC.
425 RICHMOND ST. LONDON, ONT.

U. A. BUCHNER
BARRISTER, SOLICITOR, NOTARY
SPECIALITIES:
Estates Collections Money Lended
428 TALBOT ST. LONDON, CANADA

FOY, KNOX & MONAHAN
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES, ETC.
Hon. J. J. Foy, K.C., A. E. Knox, T. Lewis, Messrs. K. L. Middleton George Keough
Cable Address: "Foy"
Telephone (Main 724)
Telephones (Main 728)

Offices: Continental Life Building
CORNER BAY AND RICHMOND STREETS
TORONTO

F. O. Box 2048 Phone M 4119
H. L. O'Rourke, B.A.
(Also of Ontario Bar)
BARRISTER, SOLICITOR, NOTARY
Money to Loan
Suite 6, Board of Trade Building
231 Eighth Avenue West
CALGARY, ALBERTA

DAY, FERGUSON & CO.
BARRISTERS
James E. Day
John M. Ferguson
Joseph P. Walsh
26 ADELAIDE ST. WEST
TORONTO, CANADA

Reilly, Lunney & Lann
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES
CALGARY, ALBERTA

DR. BRUCE E. SAID
Room 8, Dominion Bank Chambers
Cor. Richmond and Dundas Sts. Phone 8812

St. Jerome's College
KITCHENER, ONT.
Founded 1864
Excellent Business College Department
Excellent High School or Academic Department
Excellent College and Philosophical Department
Address:
REV. A. L. ZINGER, C.R., Ph. D., PRESIDENT

Funeral Directors

John Ferguson & Sons
180 KING ST.
The Leading Undertakers & Embalmers
Open Night and Day
Telephone—Home 373 Factory 848

E. C. Killingsworth
FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Open Day and Night
583 Richmond St. Phone 3971

When in Toronto visit the
Tabard Room
King Edward
Hotel
Breakfast 60c. to \$1.00
Lunch 50c. to 75c.
Dinner 60c. to \$1.50
Spreads Service
Romanelli's Orchestra

Father Finn's Latest Book

His Luckiest Year
A Sequel to "Lucky Bob"
Cloth, with Frontispiece
\$1.00 Postpaid
In this new story the vividly interesting young hero comes into his own at last, after a year of adventure in a large city.

By Christian Reid

A Daughter of the Sierra
367 Pages
60c. Postpaid
"The story of the Santa Cruz Mine is admirably told, and the denouement is just what one would wish."—Ave Maria, Notre Dame.

The Catholic Record
LONDON CANADA

NOW READY FOR DELIVERY

THE NEW CODE OF CANON LAW
Codex Iuris Canonici
Price \$4.50
Plus Postage 26c.
Catholic Record
LONDON CANADA