

CHAPTER XII

IT IS later by twenty years. All things have changed. Arguello is famed throughout the world. It has de luxe trains running to it; and two huge hotels; and a sublimated boarding house where by dint of waitresses in fancy costume, decorations of orange-yellow and black, and a haughty manner they can charge you three prices; and its former sagebrush heights are crowned with the humble cottages of the sniffy rich, and the gardens, and garages, and servants' quarters thereunto appertaining. You would never know Main Street, with its paving and its fancy concrete street lights, and its glittering exclusive shops ready equally to awe you or flatter you as long as they get to your pocketbook. Motors flash by on their way to country places that would have been prohibitively remote in the old days.

And certain things have gone. You will rarely now see an old-fashioned Mexican saddle; nor, indeed, many saddle horses. Yes, some people ride, to be sure. You will see them very correctly turned out, rising to the trot on the beach or along one of the back roads, generally with a groom pounding along behind. They are taking horse exercise. They know nothing about the old trails that lead, or used to lead, up into the fastnesses of the Sur; nor the trickle of water nor the smell of bay and the pearl blue deeps where the buzzards swing. Those things are too far away, they take too much time; nobody sees you and your clothes and your flat-country 's rig. Such an expedition takes an afternoon. There are too many things to do; too many people to see. Everybody entertains everybody else at the aforementioned humble cottages or at the Country Club; and afterward there must be bridge. Life has folded its wings. It struts about and preens; but it knows no more the wide spaces. Not one in a hundred of these people