

had been as a living wall around the girl was broken. One of her slaves fell down, struck by a stone. Her scream, though shrill with sudden fear, was faint amid the discordances of storm and fight ; yet two of the combatants heard it, and rushed to the rescue. And now Hualpa's hand was on the fallen carriage—happy moment ! “ *Viva á Christo ! Santiago, Santiago !* ” thundered Alvarado. The exultant infidel looked up : right over him, hiding the leaden sky,—a dark impending danger,—reared Bradamante. He thrust quickly, and the blade on the lance was true ; with a cry, in its excess of agony almost human, the mare reared, fell back, and died. As she fell, one foot, heavy with its silver shoe, struck him to the ground and would that were all !

“ *Ola, comrades !* ” cried Alvarado, upon his feet again, to some horsemen dismounted like himself. “ Look ! the girl is dying ! Help me ! as ye hope for life, stay and help me ! ”

They laid hold of the mare, and rolled her away. The morning light rested upon the palace feebly, as if afraid of its own revelations. On the causeway, in the lake, in the canal, were many horrors to melt a heart of stone ; one fixed Alvarado's gaze,—

“ Dead ! she is dead ! ” he said, falling on his knees and covering his eyes with his hands, “ O Mother of Christ ! What have I done that this should befall me ! ”

Under the palanquin,—its roof of aromatic cedar, thin as tortoise shell, and its frame of bamboo, light as the cane of the maize, all a heap of fragments now,—under the wreck lay Nenetzin. About her head the blue curtains of the carriage were wrapped in accidental folds, making the pallor of the face more pallid ; the lips so given to laughter were dark with flowing blood ; and the eyes had looked their love the last time ; one little hand rested palm upward upon the head of a dead warrior, and in it shone the iron cross of Christ. Bradamante had crushed her to death ! And this, the crowning horror of the melancholy night, was what the good mare saw on the way that her master did not,—so the master ever after believed.

The pain of grief was new to the good captain ; while yet it so overcame him, a man laid a hand roughly on his shoulder, and said,—

“ Look thou, Señor ! She is in Paradise, while of those who, at thy call, stayed to help thee save her but seven are left. If not thyself, up and help us ! ”

The justice of the rude appeal aroused him, and he retook his sword and shield, and joined in the fight,—eight against the many. About them closed the lancers ; facing whom one by one the brave men died, until only Alvarado remained. Over the clashing of arms then rang the 'tzin's voice,—

“ It is the *Tonatiuh* ! Take him, O my children, but harm him not ; his life belongs to the gods ! ”

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