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## XLVIII.

It was thus that Ashley Ward and his bride beheld them in after years, — years during which he had returned to the United States to take part in that great conflict which had been raging there while he had been gaining experience in the irregular and inglorious strife in which his zeal for liberty had been stimulated by private aims. The purity of his patriotism was unstained, however, by any less glorious motive; and during the last two years of the Civil War for the Union there was none who fought more valiantly than he, nor one who laid down his sword with a more just renown, to dedicate himself to the profession which in the lack of fortune was both his choice and a positive need.

That Ward should renounce the fortune of John Ashley was an actual grief to Herlinda and to Chata herself, but he would have it so; and even Mary Ashley was pleased it should be, although, as she said, her niece was already most absurdly wealthy in right of the Garcias for a girl of such retired and humble tastes, — one whose only extravagance was in her charities. Mary Ashley found in the love of Chata — she soon abandoned the attempt to call her by the stately name of Florentina — a recompense for the scrupulous conscientiousness which had led her to seek the supposed wife and possible child of her brother.

It was not until after the Pope had ratified her marriage that Herlinda Ashley visited the home of her husband's family. After that she returned at intervals while Chata was being educated as her aunt desired. During that time Gonzales, from whose hand Herlinda had received the Papal edict, was fighting anew the battles of freedom on his native soil; and by his side, doing gallant deeds unstained by crime, was Leon Vallé. But when the short-