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CONCLUSION.

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which, beginning with my African campaign, brought me down to the moment of telling I was in love. Such is the simple solution of the mystery; nor can I cite a more convincing evidence of the ennobling nature of the passion than that it made *me*, such as I was, tenacious of the truth.

Every succeeding day brought me into closer intimacy with the *Senhora*, and taught me more and more to value her for other graces than those of personal beauty. The seclusion in which she had passed her last few years had led her to cultivate her mind by a course of study such as few Spanish women ever think of, and which gave an almost serious character to a nature of more than childlike buoyancy. We talked of her own joyous land, to which she seemed longing to return, and of our first meeting beside the "*Rio Colloredo*," and then of our next meeting on her own marriage-day; and she wondered where, if ever, we should see each other again! The opportunity was not to be lost. I pressed her hand to my lips, and asked her never to leave me! I told her that, for me, country had no ties, — that I had neither home nor kindred. I would at that moment have confessed everything, even to my humble birth! I pledged myself to live with her amidst the sierras of the Far West, or, if she liked better, in some city of the Old World. I told her that I was rich, and that I needed not that wealth of which her uncle's covetousness would rob her. In fact, I said a great deal that was true; and when I added anything that was not so, it was simply as painters introduce a figure with a "*bit of red*," to heighten the landscape. I will not weary my *fair* reader with all the little doubts, and hesitations, and fears, so natural for her to experience and express; nor will I tire my male companion by saying how I combated each in turn. Love, like a lawsuit, has but one ritual. First comes the declaration, — usually a pretty unintelligible piece of business, in either case; then come the "*affidavits*," the sworn depositions; then follow the cross-examinations; after which, the charge and the verdict. In my case it was a favorable one, and I was almost out of my senses with delight.

The Bishop, with whom my acquaintanceship had never