

THE GATE OF HAZARD 19

"Do you come from Mr. Silas Mayhew?"

"No, indeed. I am from Colonel Juan Livenza, at your service, senor." This with more shrugs, bows, and smiles.

"Thank you, but I don't know any Colonel Livenza. I can, however, call on him; shall we say, to-morrow?"

"I was to say that the Senorita Sarita Castelar wishes to see you urgently. My instructions are, however, not to press you to accompany me if you are unwilling; but in that case to beg you to name the hotel to which you go, and where Colonel Livenza himself may have the honour of waiting upon you."

"I still don't understand," I replied. I did not; but the mention of the name of Sarita Castelar made a considerable impression upon me.

"It is my regret I can explain no more. I thought perhaps you would know the urgency of the matter, and that it might be the result of the telegram. But I am only a messenger."

"Telegram?" I cried, catching at the word. Could my father have had important news about the Castelars after I had left and have telegraphed to Madame Chansette to have me met? It was possible, for he knew my route and the time I was to arrive. "What telegram do you mean?" I asked.

"Alas, senor, I know no more than I say. I presume it is the telegram announcing your arrival. But I do not know. If you prefer not to come, it is all one to me. I will say you are going to what hotel? I was told it was very urgent. Pardon me that I have detained you."

"Wait a moment. You say the matter is urgent for to-night?"