A STORY
—OF THE—
SPANISH INQUISITION.

WRITTEN FOR THE PRESS AND CAROLINIAN.

By Maria Blatterham Lindsey.

CHAPTER IV.—*Continued.*

"Who is it?" asked he eagerly, half raising himself on his elbow as he spoke, in order to get a fuller view of her face.

But the rosy hue had faded to a deadly pallor as she answered, "Ferdinand, I must not tell you, at least not yet, until," and she spoke with a strange reverence, "until I have ascertained His wishes."

Ferdinand regarded her curiously for a few minutes, but as she still went on with her work he lay back again and wondered.

It was that night that Inez, in the solitude of her upper chamber, bent beside her white little cot and poured forth her trusting heart for strength and guidance.

And the next day, as the still hush of evening came down, she told Ferdinand of her Lover, and what she had found him to be. "Not simply a stern, unforgiving God, only to be approached through saints and mediators; but the very Savior Himself, gentle and attentive now as when He healed the loathsome leper in the Holy Land, and able and willing to draw every trusting soul into closest communion with Himself." And Ferdinand listened with awed wonder, desiring even for himself this beautiful love, that Inez said "could make even the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

But he said nothing, until the young girl had finished her story, and then he only whispered, as she bade him good-night, "And I thought it was an earthly lover, Inez."

CHAPTER V.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

Meantime Isidore, naturally anxious about her lover, was turning for thought and light to the Gospel and Epistle that Inez had lent her. And very deeply and very earnestly she pondered what she read. Her soul had long been groping for day, and its cry had often unconsciously been for light, more light. And it was in those darkest days of Ferdinand's illness that she found that light, or rather that it revealed itself to her. She had prayed very earnestly for his recovery, and she had vowed that if God would hear her prayer and also reveal Himself more fully to her she would serve Him faithfully unto the end of her life. And her prayer was doubly answered. But it was by no sudden revelation that the full light came. The way that she had to tread was a very tedious one, and harassed by many doubts and fears.

And as time wore on Father Pedro grew very impatient. He still followed the solitary walks of Isidore, but more openly than before. He was beginning to think that his need for concealment was at an end, and his stately charge never shunned him now. She seemed to have become indifferent to his presence, as indeed she was. For Isidore was aware that the priest regarded her in no favorable light, and that she was an object of his suspicion. The knowledge had come upon her unawares, and strange to say it did not trouble her. Her heart was too full of Ferdinand and his illness, and her mind too intent upon the light she was so earnestly seeking, for any minor matters to cause her alarm. She was often in the retirement of her chamber, so often indeed as to excite comment. And thither one warm afternoon the priest followed her. It was a room very retired, situated in a remote gable of the house, and was only to be reached through a series of outer rooms and corridors, all of which bore witness to the refining presence of the daughter of de Castro, and were occupied by her maidens in various forms of employment. But Father Pedro passed through them without a word or look. He was apparently deeply absorbed, but the quiet manner fell from him like a cloak as he entered unceremoniously the presence of Isidore. She was seated in the wide, old fashioned, opening that let in light and air, and her fair head was slightly bent over a small volume of manuscript. It lay upon the sill, held in place by one slim hand, while the other rested beside her. She looked up slowly and quietly as the priest entered, and then as mechanically arose and folded the parchment neatly in her hands. There was no embarassment in her face or manner as she did so, yet the soft eyes had a new look in them as she bent them on the familiar's placid face.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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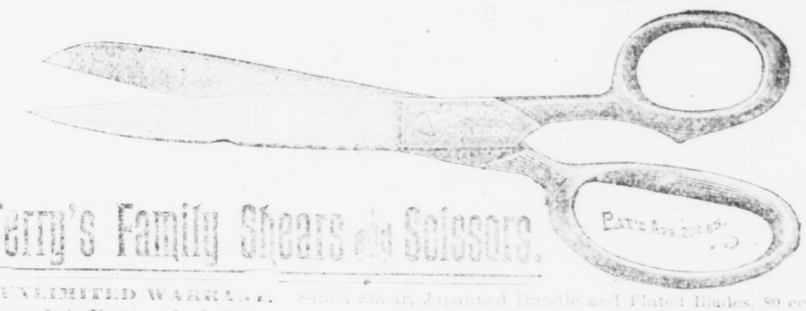

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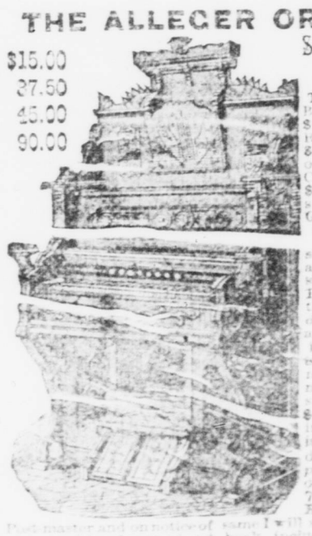

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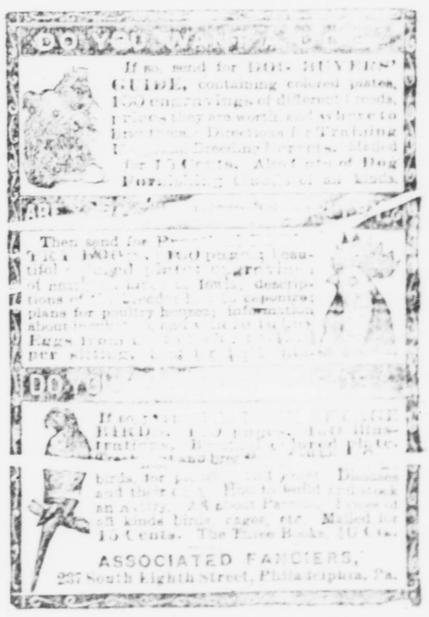

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