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back like a vision of the Sabine rape, with an air so masterful that no one interposed or questioned.

The colonel knew exactly what to do when he had laid his wife on his sofa; and in a few minutes she raised vague eyes.

"Well, Lena," he said huskily. She stared at him, then closed her eyes again with a little moan.

"Oh, my brain—my brain!" he heard her mutter.

"Lena! Lena, old girl! It's me," he cried, gripping her hands. She stared at him wildly, from the wet, beaming blue eyes to the fantastic hair above.

"Well, for—the land's—sake!" came slowly from her pale lips. "Where did you come from? And what on earth have you done to yourself?"

Then the colonel sat down beside her on the sofa and told her the whole story. "I just couldn't have you see me like that, Lena. I was afraid you'd want to back out of your bargain," he explained, humbly, at her protests. "I meant to surprise you, but not just this way!"

Her eyes traveled from his face to the weird nimbus of hair without a glimmer of amusement.

"Well, I guess if you can stand me in curl papers—" she exclaimed. "As if I cared how you looked!"

When he came to Will's part in the affair her eyes snapped and she sat up with a tightened mouth.

"That just settles him," she declared. "He turned up quite by accident—at least, Maudy seemed surprised. Of course, I wasn't going to countenance anything till I heard from you; but I

was getting real favorable. And then for him to turn around and treat you like that! It was too bad!"

"Well—but—Lena," said the colonel slowly—"things looked pretty bad for me. I guess any man would have thought like he did. And when I saw it made him mad and disgusted—hang it if I didn't begin to like the fellow! It's principles we want for Maudy, Lena."

She shook her head decidedly. "He hadn't any business to think such things of you," she reiterated. "I'll never give my consent, and I don't think you ought to give yours."

"I won't do anything you don't like," conceded the colonel.

An hour later two figures, guilty and breathless, came hurrying down the street. The colonel, who was at the window, glanced at his wife, but made no sign. The two looked into the cafe, then laughed in evident relief.

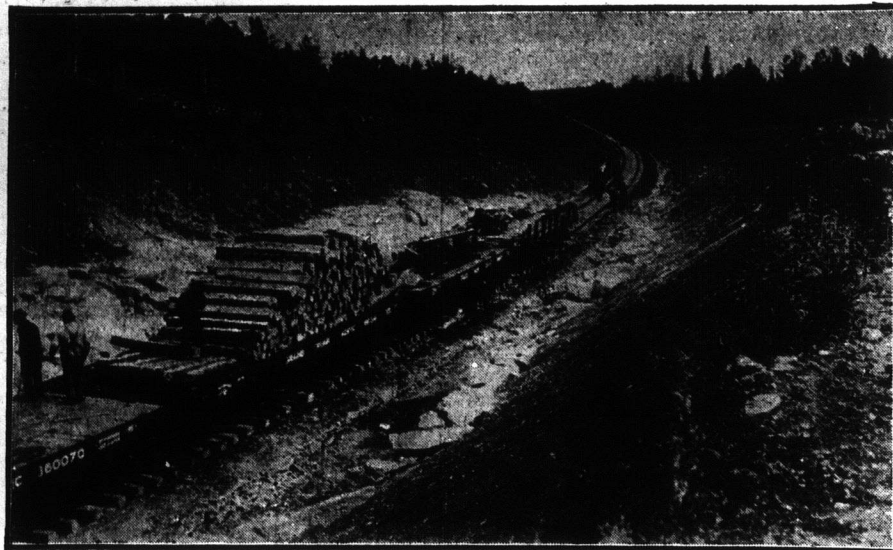
"Of course she went home. I might have known she would," he heard Maudy say.

"We ought not to have forgotten her," said Will. "But how could we help it—this once?" He held out his hand to her, and she placed hers in it, and they stood so in the deserted street, looking into each other's eyes. Then they walked slowly off together.

The colonel went over and stood by his wife.

"Say, Lena, I guess we better give our consent," he said. "You know—well—Maudy!"

And Lena for the first time smiled upon him.



Track laying on Transcontinental Railway. East of Winnipeg.

The Story of the Crimson Pearls

By Virginia Leigh.

Half a dozen of us were seated in the smoking car while the snow plows were working away with might and main to release us from the drift, we of the West bound express.

Under our circumstances people became acquainted without formality; we had been exchanging experiences, when a call was made upon the traveller for a story, as neither he nor the captain had yet entertained. He sat for a few minutes in deep thought, then gave a short laugh. "I don't suppose you fellows will believe my story, but at any rate I shall give it to you as it was told to me in France."

"Many years ago there lived in Brittany a nobleman named Count Paul Varglamie. He had a noble estate, and accordingly many friends; he was a wild young blade, though a kind hearted one; if anything could take his attention from his own pleasure, it was his love for antiquities; it might have been called his redeeming trait had not one of his tours turned out so badly."

"He was collecting relics of the European Moors, when one day he chanced to form the acquaintance of a Spanish girl called Zepha. I do not recollect her family name, but as it has no connection with my story I shall pass on. "Count Paul was as handsome and

dashing a fellow as could be found among all the French nobles, who prided themselves upon their fine, courtly manners. He flirted desperately with the Donna Zepha, who was by no means his inferior in degree, although her family had become impoverished in the wars."

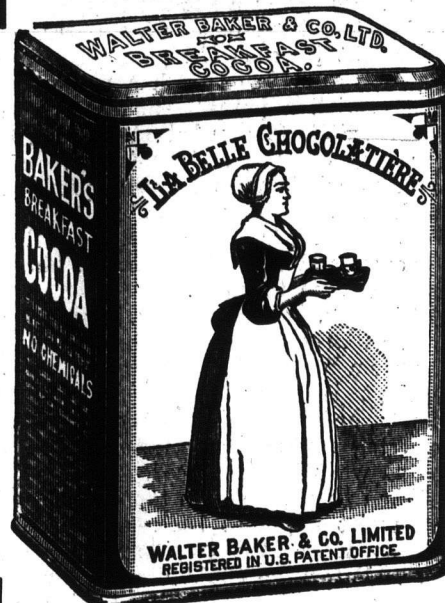
"She was an orphan, whose sole companion was a faithful old servant, who had taken her when a babe from her dying mother's arms."

"One day, as the two happy lovers walked through the wood, they stopped by a spring which bubbled from beneath a giant tree."

"Does Senor know the story of the fire well?" she asked, looking into the spring. He answered in the negative.

"Tradition says that when fire was first stolen from Heaven for man, Zeus was so angry that he first shot a dart at the offender, and seeing that it did not kill, but took root and grew, he caused this spring to burst forth in a vain endeavour to quench the stolen fire; the tree there is the dart shot by Zeus; one of my ancestors threw herself into this well and was drowned because she found she did not possess her husband's love; it is said that whoever sees his own reflection in there at midnight on Good Friday need never fear either fire or water."

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