POOR DOCUMENT

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The Missourian

By Eugene P. Lyle, Jr.

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CHAPTER XLVII (Continued)

Murguia clutched the ivory thing in his bony fingers.

"Maria, Maria de la Luz," he fell to murmuring, gazing upon the cross as though it were her poor crushed face. In the old days she had made him forget avarice or fear, and now, before this token of her, the hardness died out of his eyes and they swam in tears. Driscoll gazed down on him pityingly. The old man was palsied. He trembled. There passed over him the same spasm, so silent, so terrible, as on the night of her death, when he had sat at the court martial, his head buried in his arm.

"Rod said you would want it," Driscoll spoke gently. Then he moved away. An Imperialist officer was approaching over the field who would bring the help which Murguia refused to accept of the Republicans.

Driscoll looked back once. The Imperialist officer was carrying Murguia into the town. He was a large man, and had red hair. His regimentals were gorgeous. There seemed to be something familiar about him, too. Greatly puzzled, Driscoll unslung his glasses, and through them he recognized Colonel Miguel Lopez. Lopez, the former colonel of Dragoons, now commanded the Imperialist reserve, quartered in the monastery of La Cruz around the person of their sovereign. But Lopez had once condemned Murguia to death. A strange solicitude, thought Driscoll, in such a high and mighty person for a little, insignificant, useless warrior as poor Murgie. A strange, av ery strange solicitude, and Driscoll could not get it out of his head.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Of All News the Most Spiteful

"O poor and wretched ones!
That, feeble in the mind's eye, lean your trust
Upon unstained perverseness."—Dante.

Her gestures, her every word, were an effervescence. There was something near hysteria in the bright flashes of her wit. However gay, joyous, cynical, Jacqueline may have seemed to herself, to Berthe, terrified though the girl was, Jacqueline's mood was a sham.

"The frisson, oh, those few exquisite seconds of emotion, eh Berthe?" she exclaimed. "Pursued by robbers—the chase—the rescue—and the jolting, the joltng that took our breaths! Why, Berthe, what more would you have? Helas, to be over so quickly! And here we are, left alone in our coach, robbers gone, rescuers gone! Berthe, do you know, I believe they compared notes and decided we weren't worth it. But I should have thought," she went on in mock bitterness, "I should indeed, that at least our Fra Diavolo would have been more gallant, even if——"

"Even if?" prompted Berthe, then but her lip.

"Even—Oh Berthe, fi done, to catch me so because I was wandering!—even if one could expect no such gallantry from the Chevalier de Missour-i. There now, do you tell Tobie to drive on——"

"But mademoiselle——"

"Say 'Jeanne'," the marchioness commanded, stamping her foot.

"My lady," the girl persisted, but added with affectionate earnestness, "and my only friend, I was simply going to say that we are not deserted after all."

"But didn't I see him riding away?"

"Him, yes, but look out of the window. See, he's left six or eight—O—oh——"

It was a joyful cry, which got smothered at once in confusion. Turning quickly, Jacqueline beheld a little Bretonne with eyes cast down and cheeks aflame. Yet even then Berthe gave a cosy sigh of relief. There was cannonading not far away. They had just been taken by brigands, and as suddenly left alone on the road. Thus Jacqueline's company ever cost her many a tremor. Yet somehow one of those chevaliers de Missour-i needed only to appear, and she felt as secure as a kitten on the hearth rug. A chevalier de Missour-i had but now ridden up to the coach door.

"Berthe!" whispered Jacqueline severely, so that the girl thought her dress was awry. "Quick, tuck your heart away in your pocket. It's right there on your sleeve." Whereat Berthe employed the sleeve to hide her higher mantling color.

Jacqueline turned on the chevalier at the window, and surveyed his sleeve. It was covered with dust, but Jacqueline's big eyes could see through dust. She felt about her a subtle atmosphere that made her an outsider.

"Ah, Monsieur le Troubadour?" came her bantering recognition.

Mr. Boone's French crowded pleasantly to his tongue tip. "Mademoiselle," he returned, "and," he added, with an odd glance toward Berthe, "Madame l'Imperatrice, uh—how goes it?"

Jacqueline's lashes raised inquiringly, until she remembered how the lank gentleman before her, with the tender heart of a Quixote, had mistaken Berthe for the Empress, months before at the Cordova plantation. She liked him somehow better now for persisting in it.

"Her Imperial Highness," she explained, very soberly, "may deign presently to observe that you are here, monsieur, though, as you see, her thoughts are far away. However, if you can possibly give your own to a humbler person, to myself, dear Troubadour, I should very much like to know what is to happen next. Use fine words, if you must; even put it into verse, only tell me——" With an impulsive shove she flung open the door and stepped into the road. She could still see Driscoll's troop, or rather the cloud of dust, speeding toward Queretero, but her arm swept the horizon impersonally. "Only tell me," she demanded, "that's happening now, over yonder?"

"Pressing business, ma'am—mademoiselle, and," Daniel lied promptly, "Colonel Driscoll wished me to make you his excuses."

"The minstrels of old, sir," said Jacqueline, "usually accompanied their more gallant fibs with a harp."

Her vivacity was rising fast, and for some reason, Berthe darted an angry look of warning on Mr. Boone. But the poor fellow was blind to Jacqueline's jealousy of a distant conflict, and he blundered further.

"Jack Driscoll's just that way," he apologized for his friend cheerfully. "Abundat dulcibus vitiis—he's chuck full of pleasant faults. When there's a clash of arms around, let the most alluring Peri that ever wore sweet jessamine glide by, and—she can just glide. While with me——"

"I see. You have stayed. But I, too, like battles, monsieur. Tobie, get back up there with the driver. There's no admission charge, I imagine, to this battle?"

Boone gladly offered to take them for a nearer view, but he saw Berthe—his eyes were never elsewhere—shrink involuntarily.

"Stop, arrtaz! Hey there!" he ordered, and the driver stopped.

Jacqueline's pretty jaw fell in wonder. The natural order of things was prevailing over the artificial. Social status to the contrary notwithstanding, it was Berthe who commanded here, and not Mlle. la Marquise. But Jacqueline was happy in it, and perhaps a little envious too. Ah, those Missouriens! This one, who would rather stay than fight! And that other, who was now fighting for quite the opposite reason! They had a capacity for variety, those Missouriens!

It was much later, after a lunch from Jacqueline's hampers under the nearest trees, and after the distant fusilades had quieted to an occasional angry spat, that the ladies' escort of Gringo Grays, bearing a flag of truce, set out with their charge toward the town. Daniel rode beside the coach window, and the flaps of the old hacienda conveyance were drawn aside. He wondered how it happened that the hours had passed so quickly. He would not believe that his comrades had been fighting, that many of them had died, so blissfully fleeting were those hours to himself.

"It's all according," he mused profoundly.

And he could not help singing. He hummed the forlorn chanson of Joe Bowers of the State of Pike, which Bledsoe, then lying cold and stiff under a mountain howitzer, had so often bellowed forth.

"It said that Sal was false to me,
Her love for me had fled,
She's got married to a butcher—
The butcher's hair was red."

But he sung it as a plaint, yet not hopelessly, and Mademoiselle Berthe was the maid entreated of his melody.

The sharpshooters on both sides paused as the coach drove into the little sweet-scented wood that was called the Alameda, and the Missourians, with sabres at salute, transferred their charge to the Imperialists crowding around. Among the latter were some of Jacqueline's own countrymen, and those, in starvation and defeat, were as debonair as the cadets of Gascogne.

"A rose, mademoiselle," said one, bowing low. He had an arm bandaged, and his sword was broken. "An early merciful bullet plucked it for you, so that it fell unhurt, though the petals of all the others are scattered everywhere among the leaves, among the fallen branches, among the shattered statues of our classic grove here. See, like the rose I tender, you come among us poor broken soldiers of fortune. I think, dear lady, there will be those above to bless you for it."

Jacqueline smiled behind her tears. "Always a Frenchman, eh, mon lieutenant?" she said.

The fragrance of the place was smothered under gunpowder and sluggish fumes. The pleasant drives, the grass, the flowers, were trampled by gaunt soldiers bearing their wounded, but the young officer murmured on in the speech of the Alameda's one tife fashionable promenade.

"Who is that?" she interrupted.

She pointed over the heads around her to a man bearing someone off the late bloody field, and that moment staggering across the trenches into the Alameda. It was an act that moved her, for the rescuer was a richly uniformed officer, and the other but a common soldier. With Berthe close, behind, she alighted from the coach and hurried forward to help. The wounded soldier's face lay on the officer's breast, and she saw only his hair, matted and very white, from which a rusty brown wig had partly fallen. But more to the purpose she saw that he was bleeding, and the callous warriors there knew that the angels of the siege had come at last.

"Lay him in my carriage—but carefully, you!" she said, and was obeyed, while Berthe deftly fixed cloaks and blankets around the withered form. Someone mounted with Toby and the driver, and the coach rolled slowly away to the hospital, leaving behind the two girls staring at the richly uniformed officer, and the officer staring tenfold harder at them. He was a large man, with big hands and feet, and for a Mexican he had a mongrel floridness of skin. His cap was in his hand, and his hair was red and thin. Amazement and a startled prying anxiety choked his utterance.

"Now then, Colonel Lopez," Jacqueline addressed him calmly, "may I ask you the way? I have come to speak with Maximilian.

"La Senorita d-d'Aumerle!" he stuttered.

"Faith, no other, who is awaiting your pleasure, senor."

"You come from, from—Mexico?"

"But hardly to chat with you all the afternoon, caballero."

"From Mexico! From the capital!" he kept repeating. The man's finger nails cracked disagreeably, and his features worked in an extreme of agitation. He tried to fix his shifting blue eyes upon first one and then the other of the two girls, as though to ferret out what they must know. "You do bring news from there?" he said huskily. "What of Marquez? Is he coming? Shall we have the aid he went for? When——"

"Ah, the medal for military valor!" observed Jacqueline. "Indeed, mi coronel, all must acclaim your bravery, as well as—your loyalty. But take me to your beloved Prince Max, for I do assure you, senor, my news goes not without myself."

"He visits the hospital every day," Lopez advised reluctantly. "Perhaps if I should take Your Mercy there first——"

Passing on through the ravaged Alameda, they entered the streets of Queretaro.

"Hear!" Jacqueline exclaimed. "Such a quantity of vivas and clarins and national hymns and triumphant dianas, one would imagine, for example, that there had been a great victory?"

"Eh? Oh yes, or a hearty breakfast, senorita."

Which was more essential. And why not? Hope's bright hue blotted out emaciation. They had broken through to food that day. Bueno, could they not do it again? Old croons had returned to their stalls and accustomed corners in the market place, and as in days of peace were already squatted before corn or beans heaped on the stone pavement in portions for a quartilla, a media, or a real, as though the pyramids were not so pitifully little, as though the wholesale purchase were not made just that morning in heavy terms of blood.

Behind the ponderous Assyrian-like church of Santa Rosa, in the old, half ruined monastery and garden, was the hospital of the besieged. A stifling, fetid odor,far worse than of drugs merely,sickened the two girls as a foul breath when they passed with their guide between thick walls into the large, overcrowded rooms. Military medical service was not yet become an institution in Mexico, and this place was like some horrible antechamber of the grave. Every cot had its ghastly transient, and so had the benches, brought here from the different plazas. More and more wounded were arriving constantly, and those found to be still alive were laid on the flagstones wherever space for a blanket remained. But in spite of the morning's fight, in spite of almost daily skirmishes for weeks past, the sick outnumbered all others; and those who did come with wounds, and survived them, stayed on to swell the longer list. Men tossed in fever, craving what they might not have, a cooling draught, a proper food, and effective medicine, until, with waking, they craved an easier boon, and died. But the hospital fever, the calenturas, the gangrene, were not to be all. Out of the diseased air, mid the fumes of pious tapers, the spectre of epidemic was taking hideous shape over the many, many upturned faces. The spectre was the tifo, a plague more dreaded in high altitudes than black vomit in the low.

Jacqueline found Maximilian bending over a stricken cavalry officer. The Emperor was far from a well man, and his fair skin more than ever contrasted as something foreign and lonely among the swarthy faces on every side. His ostentation was simplicity, as befittted a monarch in camp. He wore neither sword nor star. His garb was plain charro, in which he often walked among citizens and soldiers, inquiring about rations, or requesting a light for his cigar, never minding if a shell burst and kicked dust over him, and always affable, always ready to smile and praise. It was a role that came naturally to his gentle soul. One would like to believe—if one could, alas!—that he had in mind no kingly precedent.

Pausing unseen, Jacqueline noted tears in the blue eyes as he pinned, some decoration on the officer's bloodstained shirt. A good heart, she thought, yet ever the prince. In his divine right was he even here, presuming to send a dying subject to the Sovereign in Heaven with a "character," with a recommendation for service faithfully done. His hands trembled from haste, for he would have the soldier appear before that dread Throne above as a Caballero of the Mexican Eagle. In pity for them both, Jacqueline asked hereself what precedence awaited the new Caballero of the Mexican Eagle in a Court, not Imperial, but Divine.

Jacqueline had not journeyed her perilous way out of simple friendship for a desolate prince, but could she have seen how his eyes lighted with gladness to behold one friend who remembered, in sweet charity she would almost have come for that alone.

"When Your Highness has finished here," she said, glancing at the inquisitive Lopez near her, "or wherever I can speak with Your Highness in private——"

There was beseeching in Maximilian's quick scrutiny of her face, as though the helpless messenger had aught of power over her tidings. "In—in a moment, mademoiselle," he said tremulously. "I always see the—new ones, before I go."

The "new ones" were still being brought in, until any first aid from the distracted surgeons was of the most casual—the ripping of bandaged cloth, a knot tied, and so on, on to the next. Followed by Lopez, the two girls, and several officers of the hospital staff, Maximilian passed from ward to ward. But Jacqueline's hand seemed always to be threading a needle, or holding a ligature, or lightly touching a hot forehead, and in every case the surgeon would nod quickly, gratefully, as to a fellow craftsman. Berthe the while gazed in tender wonder on her calm mistress, and nerved herself someway to help also.

And so they came to the withered form in brave red coat, and green pantaloon whom Lopez had carried off the field. One of the nurses had placed a handkerchief over his face, because of the stinging flies, but Jacqueline recognized the thin white hair and the twisted wig of the old man whom she had sent ahead in her coach. At first he seemed to be dead, for he lay very still on the floor, though a surgeon was probing his wound, and his blood was fast filling the bowl held by the nurse. But now and again, the straining cords in his emaciated wrist twitched with the protest of life. Maximilian stooped to raise the handkerchief. Lopez made a movement to prevent, but restrained the impulse as useless. And then Maximilian revealed the gaunt, leaden features of Anastasio Murguia, the father of Maria de la Luz.

Jacqueline fell back with bloodless lips. The father of that dead girl—and Maximilian! They were face to face, these two! But the Emperor's expression was of pity only. He sank to his knees, the better to make the wounded man understand the words of comfort on his lips. For Jacqueline, the horror of it chilled her. Surely, surely, she thought, the hidden tragedy must now unmask; because of its very awfulness, it must! That the prince should be thus, oblivious of such a knowledge, and yet kneeling there, made the scene ghastly beyond words.

"I remember him," said Maximilian softly, looking up to the others. "One of your orderlies, Colonel Lopez, I believe? Of course I remember him, for I see him often. He is always near me. Even today, on the llano, during the thickest of the battle, there he was at my stirrup, and there he must have fallen, in humble, unquestioning loyalty."

Jacqueline drew back in relief, and she imagined that Lopez did also. Maximilian had forgotten the hacendado utterly.

With a grunt of satisfaction the surgeon drew forth his forceps from the wound and dropped a bullet to the floor. Next he gently rolled the patient over on his back, and then it was that Jacqueline saw in Murguia's hand, in the hand that had been under him, a little ivory cross. Fainting, unconscious, he still clutched it, from Driscoll's leaving him on the battlefield until the present moment. By now the stains of his child's blood were washed away in his own. Jacqueline's quick eyes caught an inscription on the gold mounting, and leaning close she read the dead girl's name, "Maria de la Luz."

With the gripping of the bullet and its extraction, or possibly at the sound of a voice Maximilian's the old man's eyes opened, and held the Emperor's in a deathly stare. Jacqueline watched the piercing beads grow smaller and smaller in their cavernous sockets, and all the while they seemed to concentrate their intense fire. The others, except Lopez, thought it delirium, but Jacqueline would have named it the very blackest hate. "This man will live!" she said to herself, and shuddered.

Maximilian, seeing consciousness returned, spoke cheerily. "Ah, doctor, you will have him well and sound within a week, I know? Look to it, sir; a heroic veteran like this cannot be spared."

A strange distortion wrapped the visage of suffering. "Could that be a smile?" Jacqueline wondered. But the Imperial party took its leave, and the tragedy lurking beneath was not revealed, as yet.

Through the throng waiting outside the hospital to acclaim him again as a prince victorious, Maximilian led the two girls to their coach, and went with them to the convent of Santa Clara, where he asked that they be received as guests by the sisters. Here, in the comfortless parlor of the retreat, he learned the reason of Jacqueline's daring journey from the capital.

"I bring Your Highness," said she, "the most spiteful news my feeble sex can ever bring."

Again the involuntary plea for fair tidings swept his face.

"And, and that is, mademoiselle?"

"I told you so."

Maximilian's cheeks paled to the marble whiteness of his brow. He had just heard the answer to the one question, to the one hope, of all Queretaro.

"You, you mean Marquez?"

"Yes." And then she told him, and seeing how stricken he was, her exasperation at his vain incapacity changed to pity for his breaking pride—which may be called his breaking heart.

"But mademoiselle, I gave my empire into his keeping," he protested, as though such trust in a man of itself proved that man's constancy. But the messenger, but Truth, would not recant.

"Then," moaned the Emperor suddenly, "Marquez is not coming back?"

"Nor ever meant to, sire. Listen, Your Highness made him lieutenant of the Empire, and sent him to the capital for aid. Bien, he turned out the ministers. He broke into homes, and pillaged even the stanchest Imperialists. He heard that Puebla was besieged by a Liberal general, Porfirio Diaz, so instead of coming here, Marquez marches all his army down there. You will observe, sire, that he wanted the road kept open to Vera Cruz."

"But why? Tell me!"

"Ma foi, to sell the capital more easily. In any case to be able to save himself."

"Sell the capital?"

"Just a little patience, sire. Now what did Diaz do, but take Puebla by assault before Marquez could arrive? Then he turned on Marquez, and Marquez turned and ran. Oui, out, sire, he ran, ran like a little, ugly, skulking Leopard that he is. To cross a creek, he filled it with all the ammunition, and kept on running, leaving his army defenceless behind him. Groan if you must, sire; others have died in groans. But the Leopard had done this kind of thing before, it should have been remembered. He got back safely, though, and squandered the army that might have relieved Queretaro to do it. Mon Dieu, what the panic must have been! One entire battalion surrendered to fifty guerrillas. Yet the Austrian cavalry, the Hungarians, and some others fought with their sabres, and won victories, too. Helas, they only proved what might have been. They only proved how Marquez, if he had not hesitated, might perhaps have saved Puebla and destroyed the Liberals. As it was, they could only retreat, and hardly two thousand of them, ragged and bleeding and filthy, straggled back into Mexico during the next few days. Now they are besieged there. Oui, oui, besieged, by Diaz, by the army of the East, by twelve thousand Republicans, formerly called brigands. And inside is the Leopard, snarling as ever with his regency of terror. Oh no, he will not come to Queretaro. Bonte divine, he cannot. Nor would he. He still holds the capital—for sale."

"No, no, mademoiselle, there you wrong, his, surely. Or tell me, then, who would buy?"

"Probably no one. At least not Santa Anna. The buyer must have an army."

"My friend, this is cruel jest,"

"Earnest enough, parbleu, to make the Leopard forget Queretaro, once he was safely away."

"Then why doesn't he sell out to Diaz?"

Jacqueline's eyes snapped contemptuously. "Young Diaz," she replied, "is not a fighter to buy what he can take. It's only a question of a few weeks."

"Then by all that's mysterious, who would buy. I cannot."

"Of course you cannot. That is why Marquez wants you out of the way, sire. So he left you here. The Liberals will attend to that for him."

"Then who will buy? Who? Who?"

The blood shot into the girl's cheeks, and one small hand clenched tightly.

"France—possibly," she said.

The Emperor started as from an acute shock. His thoughts raced backward, then forward, gathering the whole heinous truth about the perfidy of Marquez.

"And I," Jacqueline added calmly, though she was still flushed, "I have forwarded his offer to Napolean."

"You, mademoiselle? You an accessory?"

"To Your Imperial Highness' downfall? Ah, no, sire! Your Highness is no longer a factor. Your August Majesty will be eliminated absolutely before Napoleon can reply to my despatch. As I said, the Liberals around Queretaro will attend to that. Your Highness has merely delayed the profit my country might have had from his abdication. Meantime Your Highness himself has made his own ruin inevitable. But I, sire, I would not see Marand he beyond the hope of coming to Your quez, nor receive a word from him, until we were actually besieged in the capital, Highness here.

A deep sigh interrupted her. "No longer a factor," murmured the Emperor. Thus quickly, then, could the world take up its affairs again after his elimination!

"Mademoiselle," he cried suddenly, generously, "you are—superb! Dear little Frenchwoman, you are, you are!"

"Poof!" said Jacqueline. "But don't you see, sire," she hurried on eagerly, "that we will have to fight the Americans? Yes, yes, then they can no longer say they drove us out."

"Indeed they cannot And I, among the first, and the most heartily, do wish you a warlike answer from that firebrand of a Napoleon. But tell me, why do you come to Queretaro? How did you come?"

"How? Easily. All the guerilla bands—except one, which I escaped—are concentrated eother here or with Diaz."

"And Marquez let you come, you who are so important to him now?"

"As though he could help it, parbleu! My message to Napoleon was in my own cipher, and after he had sent it by a scout to Vera Cruz, I informed him that in it I had directed Napoleon to send his answer to me at Queretaro. Otherwise Marquez would have kept me in prison rather than let me go. But as it was, he assisted me through the Republican lines by a secret way he has arranged for his own escape, if need be. So—"

"But why did you wish to come at all?"

"Ma foi, as if I knew! A matter of conscience, I suppose."

"Matters of conscience are usually riddles."

"Like this one? Bien, I am still trying to get Your Highness to leave the country. But this time, sire, it is to save you."

"To save me?"

"Of course, on account of France."

"Oh, on account of France?"

"Why else? If—if anything happens to Maximilian, France will be blamed. Oh why, why did you not escape this morning, while the road was open?"

For the first time during the interview the fire of high resolve leaped into the prince's eyes. "But could I, in honor?" he demanded sternly. "Think of the townspeople, abandoned to the Liberal fury. Their Emperor, mademoiselle, means to face the end with them, here, in Queretaro."

The dignity of his catastrophe was already beginning to appeal to him, to exalt him, even as the vision of a Hapsburg winning his empire had so often done before.

"But," protested the girl, "if they capture Your Highness, if they—if they hold you for trial?"

She stopped, for Maximilian was laughing, and laughing heartily. The idea of hands laid on him, an Archduke of Austria—ha, he was grateful to her. Its very absurdity has given him the first relaxation of a laugh in months.

"Nevertheless," persisted Jacqueline, whose heritage of a revolution was an obstinate bundle of these same absurdities, "nevertheless, I had hoped to save Your Highness with my news, since it is news that leaves no hope. Why not, then, escape? Treat for terms, do anything, only save your followers and—yourself, sire?"

But she found it impossible to sway him from this, his latest conceit. His new role, the more desperate it looked, only ensnared him as the more worthy. He contemplated the end serenely. As a military captain he was culling laurels against theatric odds. His heroic loyalty to a lost cause, with perhaps a little martyrdom (of personal inconvenience), how these would count and be not denied when he should return to his destiny in Europe!

His was even in a mood of consort with lofty traits in others, and in a kind of poetic ecstasy he thought of Jacqueline's steadfast devotion to her country's glory. And he was moved again by the vague, chivalrous longing to bend the knee to do her some knightly service. But—yes, he seemed to remember, there was such a service to be done, yet and yet—no, he had forgotten.

Then quite curiously, yet still without remembering, he dwelt in reverie on that man named Driscoll who had so filled the morning with valiant deeds.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Vendetta's Half Sister, Better Born.

"When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen."—Emerson.

Just outside Driscoll's tent, under the stars, a fragrant steak was broiling. The colonel's mozo had learned the magic of the forked stick, and he manipulated his wand with a conscious pride, so that the low sizzling of flesh and flame was as the mystic voice in some witch's brew. There were many other tents on the plain, a blurred city of whitish shadows against the night, and there were many other glowing coals to mark where the earth lay under the stars, and the witching murmur, the tantalizing charm of each was—supper. In this wise, and thinking themselves very patient, men were waiting for other men to starve to death. The besieged had tried, but they had not again cut through to food.

In Driscoll's tent there was a galaxy of woolen-shirted warriors, a constellation of quiescent Berserkers. For they were Missouri colonels, except one, who being a Kansan, required no title. There were tobacco-chewing giants, famous for expectoration. Except Meagre Shanks, who tilted his inevitable black cigar now turned one eye, now toward the other. Except the Storm Centre, who fondly closed his palm over his cob meerschaum and felt its warmth and seemed far away, a dangerous poet. Except Old Brothers and Sisters, most austere of Wesleyans, who had neither pipe nor quid. He was cleaning his pistols. They were men hewn for mighty deeds, but—cringe must we all before the irony that neither life nor romance may dodge—it was not a mighty deed which that night was to exact of them, which yet they were brave enough to do, though sorry the figures they thought they made.

Politics was their theme, since men, though busy with war and death, must yet relieve their statesmen, especially after supper, and neatly arrange the Tariff, Resumption, or whatever else. Like oracles the exConfederates held forth that the Yankees had only driven out the French to march in themselves, and so tutor the Mexicans in self-government. To which the Kansan ventured a minority opinion, though being thus a judge of the bench, as it were, he had no need of the oaths he took.

"Why God help me and to thunder with you, the United States ain't aiming at any protectorate. You unreconstructed Rebs simply can't and won't see good faith in the Federal government!"

"Carpet bags?" Driscoll murmured sweetly. It was the maj rity opinion.

"Yes sir'ee," and Daniel took the cue as a bit in the mouth, "there's blood on the face of the moon up there, acerrima proxi-morum odia, by God sir! Look at the troops at our elections! Look at the Drake Test Oath! Look at——" Mr. Boone was fast getting vitriolic, in heavy editorial fashion, when a famished face, a wolfish face, appeared between the flaps of the tent. "Look at—that!"

Politics vanished, war and death resumed their own.

The whole mess stared.

"Sthunderation, it's an Imperialist!" lisped Crittenden of Nodaway. He pointed at the newcomer's uniform, which was of the Batallon del Emperador.

"Well, bring him on in," said Driscoll to the pickets gripping the man by either arm.

"He was trying to pass through our lines," one explained. "And when we stopped him, he begged hard to be brought to the Coronel Gringo, that is, to you, senor."

The mess turned curiously on Driscoll. Why a half dead soldier of the Batallon del Emperador should have a preference as to his jailer was beyond them. But they were yet more puzzled to hear Driscoll address the prisoner by name.

"See here, Murgie," he said, "is this the occasion Rodrigo meant when he talked about my meeting you soon? Is it? Come, crawl out of the grass. Show us what you're up to. No, wait, feed first. There's plenty left."

But the old man had not once glanced toward the table. Whatever the pangs of hunger, another torment was uppermost.

"What do you mean by this," Boone demanded, as though personally offended, "you've got the hospital color, dull lead on yellow? Here, take a drink. Yes, I know, it's mescal, out-and-out embalmed deviltry that no self-respecting drunkard would touch, but Lord A'mighty, man you need something!"

Murguia shook his head irritably. Offers of what his body craved were annoying hindrances before the craving of his soul. He twitched himself free of the sentinals, and limped painfully to where Driscoll sat. He wore no coat, but his green pantaloons with their crimson stripes were rolled to the knee, and the white calzoncillos beneath flapped against his skeleton ankles. His feet were bare, the better for an errand of stealth in the night. He was a pitiful spectacle, yet a repulsive, and the Americans despised themselves for the strange impulse they had to kick him out like a dog. They watched him wonderingly as he tried to speak. He panted from his late rough handling by the sentry, and his half-closed wound gave excruciating pain. The muscles of his face jerked horribly, but his will was tremendous, merciless, and at last the cords of the jaw knotted and hardened.

"Tomorrow morn—morning," he began, "the Emperor will fight. It is arranged for—for daybreak, senores. To—to fight—to break through—to—to ESCAPE!"

"Why then," exclaimed Harry Collins, the Kansan, "good for him!"

The parson snatched off his brass-bowed spectacles, and his brow lowered fiercely over his cherubic eyes.

"And so you had to come and tell us?" he demanded.

But the traitorous old man had not the smallest thought of his shame, nor could have.

"You—you will let him escape?" he challenged them in frantic anger.

The mess stole abashed glances at one another. They would, they knew well enough, have to act on this information. But they were men for a fair fight, and they had no stomach to rob the besieged or a last desperate chance. For a moment they were enraged against the informer.

"We'll just keep him here," said one.

"Yes, til morning. Then he'll tell no one else, and we won't. Poor old Maxie!"

"Sure," ejaculated Collins, "give Golden Whiskers a show!"

(To be continued.)

BLOOD IMPURITIES

Three Things Cause Them.—One Thing Cures Them.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO.
34 Union St., Sept. 18th 1905.
It gives me much pleasure to certify that "Fruit-a-tives" have entirely cured me of a disagreeable skin disease.
I had a dreadful rash on my face, arms and hands, the rash was red and itchy and my face and hands were fearfully swollen. I had a pain in my back, and I was very ill. I was advised to take "Fruit-a-tives" to purify the blood and I am very thankful that I took this medicine. After I had taken one box of the tablets, I was much better, and when I had taken two boxes, the rash was entirely gone, the swelling in face and hands was gone, the pain in the back had left me, and I was quite well again, and my complexion is clearer than it has been for years. I want to thank "Fruit-a-tives" for this great cure—as before I used this medicine I had used many kinds of salves and took quantities of medicines but these did me no good. But "Fruit-a-tives at once seemed to do me good—and they entirely took away the fearful rash.
(Sgd.) Mrs. F. Mailhiot.

This case of Mrs. Mailhiot proves one great truth—that you can't CURE pimples, blackheads, blotches, red rash and other skin diseases with salves and ointments.

Simply because the disease is not with the skin but WITH THE BLOOD. The skin trouble is the RESULT of blood trouble.

"Fruit-a-tives" proves this because when salves and ointments are left off—and "Fruit-a-tives" taken to purify and enrich the blood, the skin diseases are cured to stay cured.

Pimples, red rash, eczema etc., come from disease of one of three organs—liver, kidneys or stomach. It may be all three—but certainly one. And this one affects the other two.

And there will be skin disease
—as long as the bowels are constipated
—as long as the kidneys retain urea or tisssue waste
—as long as the stomach does not digest food properly and the body is improperly nourished

Ointments won't cure—salves won't cure—soaps won't cure. Because the trouble is the BLOOD—not the skin. But "Fruit-a-tives" will cure—"Fruit-a-tives" do cure—because "Fruit-a-tives" PURIFY THE BLOOD.

"Fruit-a-tives" act on the liver—stimulate it to excrete more bile—and thus make the bowels move regularly every day. This rids the system of one source of blood poisoning. These famous liver tablets act on the kidneys—prevent the formation of excessive uric acid—and insure the kidneys being strong and healthy. They act on the skin—strengthen the glands and stimulate them to throw off the impurities which the blood brings to them.

With bowels, liver, kidneys, stomach and skin working properly—the blood is pure and rich—and there can be no pimples or blemishes to mar the complexion.

At all druggists or sent postpaid on receipt of price—
50c. a box or 6 boxes for $2.50.

Fruit-a-tives
or Fruit Liver Tablets.

Manufactured by
FRUIT-A-TIVES LIMITED, Ottawa.

CARNEGIE'S SCALE OF PENSIONS FOR COLLEGE PROFESSORS

New York, April 10—The trustees of the Carnegie foundation, who are charged with administrating $10,000,000, the gift of Andrew Carnegie to provide pensions for professors and teachers of institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada, met here yesterday and adopted a scale of pensions practically as outlined in the Federal charter of the foundation which was formally adopted at the meeting. The income from the fund will be about $500,000 a year and there are on file now two hundred applications from professors. It is expected the system will be in actual operation by June. The conference also defined what a college is, taking the definition of the State of New York as the basis, and described the requirements as to non-sectarianism.

No list of the institutions that will come under the rules was made. The rules as adopted by the trustees make the following provisions:

Any person sixty-five years of age and not less than fifteen years of service as a professor who is at the time of his retirement a professor in an accepted institution, shall be entitled to an annual retirement allowance as follows:

For active pay of $1,500 or less an allowance of $1,000 shall be granted, providing that no retiring allowance shall exceed 90 per cent of active pay.

For active pay greater than $1,600 the retiring allowance shall equal $1,000, increased by $50 for each $100 in excess of $1,000.

After twenty-five years' service, regardless of age, the retiring allowance was fixed as follows:

For active pay of $1,600, or less, a retiring allowance of $800 shall be granted, providing that no retiring allowance shall exceed 80 per cent of active pay.

For active pay greater than $1,600 the retiring allowance shall equal $800; increased by $40 for each $100 of active pay in excess of $1,600.

No retiring allowance shall exceed $3,000.

No person under the age of sixty-five, or who has served less than twenty-five years, shall be entitled to a retiring allowance, but the trustees may at their discretion pay any person otherwise eligible who has become incapable of discharging duties by permanent infirmity of mind or body, an allowance not exceeding that which he would be entitled to had he reached the age of sixty-five.

The definition of the character of the institutions that will be allowed to come under the rules is described as follows:

"An institution to be ranked as a college must have at least six professors giving their entire time to college and university work, a course of four full years in the liberal arts and sciences, and should require for admission not less than the usual four years of academic or high school preparation or its equivalent in addition to preacademic or school studies.

"A technical school to be eligible must have entrance requirements equivalent to those of a college in point of school preparation, and must offer courses in pure and applied science."

Sectarianism is described as follows:

"Any school whose charter, constitution or by-laws require teachers, students or trustees to be of a certain religious body, or where strictly denominational tenets or doctrines are taught, shall be deemed sectarian."

The applications of the various institutions for admission to the eligible list will be considered by the executive committee.

Among the college presidents in attendance were Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia; Charles W. Eliot, Harvard; Arthur T. Hadley, Yale; Jacob G. Schurman, Cornell University; L. Clarke Seelye, Smith College, and Woodrow Wilson, Princeton University. President Henry S. Prichett, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, presided. The first business performed was the formal change from the Carnegie foundation as incorporated under state laws, to the Carnegie foundation under a federal charter. The new incorporation was secured for the purpose of extending the limit of capitalization, which under the state law was limited to the $10,000,000 given by Mr. Carnegie. President William F. Slocum, of Colorado University, was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the death of President Harper, of Chicago.

A new steel for tools is being placed on the market; it can be hardened by simply heating it to a high temperature and allowing it to cool in the air. Tools made of this steel do not become soft through growing hot while being worked.

Indigestion

Stomach trouble is not really a sickness, but a symptom. It is a symptom that a certain set of nerves is ailing. Not the voluntary nerves that enable you to walk and talk and act—but the Automatic Stomach Nerves over which your mind has no control.

I have not room here to explain how these tender, tiny nerves control and operate the stomach. How worry breaks them down and causes indigestion. How misuse wears them out and causes dyspepsia. How neglect may bring on kidney, heart, and other troubles through sympathy. I have not room to explain how these nerves may be reached and strengthened and vitalized and made stronger by a remedy I spent years in perfecting—now known by physicians and Druggists everywhere as "Dr. Shoop's Restorative (Tablets or Liquid.) I have not room to explain how this remedy, by removing the cause, usually puts a certain end to indigestion, belching, heartburn, insomnia, nervousness, dyspepsia. All of these things are fully explained in the book I will send you free when you write. Do not fail to send for the book. It tells how the solar plexus governs digestion and a hundred other things every one ought to know—for all of us, at some time or other, have indigestion. With the book I will send free my "Health Token"—an intended passport to good health.

For the free book and Book 1 on Dyspepsia
The "Health Token" Book 2 on the Heart
you must address Dr. Book 3 on the Kidneys
Shoop, Box 11, Ra- Book 4 for Women
cine, Wis. State Book 5 for Men
which book you want. Book 6 on Rheumatism.

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Dr. Shoop's Restorative Tablets—give full three weeks' treatment. Each form—liquid or tablet—have equal merit. Druggists everywhere.

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No matter how old the blemish, how lame the horse, or how many doctors have tried and failed, use
Fleming's Spavin and Ringbone Paste
Use it under our guarantee—your money refunded if it doesn't make the horse go sound. Most cases cured by a single 20-minute application—occasionally two required. Cures Bone Spavin, Ringbone and Sidebone, new and old cases alike. Write for detailed information and a free copy of
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Ninety-six pages, durably bound, indexed and illustrated. Covers over one hundred veterinary subjects. Read this book before you treat any kind of lameness in horses.
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