POOR DOCUMENT

MC 2033

The Missourian

By Eugene P. Lyle, Jr.

Copyright by Doubleday, Page & Co.

CHAPTER XL.—(Continued.)

The Missourians looked at one another and were reluctant. They hated to forego a battle. But it takes two sides to make one. Not outlawed, not even threatened, they had no excuse to hold against the Liberals.

"But," said Crittenden, "as an ally of this sister Republic, we'll still have out fighting."

"Well," demanded Driscoll, "what will you ask for?"

"Our Cordova lands back, after we've won them from the Empire."

"And," put in Grinders, "equality. We want republican equality."

"Then we'll all be privates?"

"No sir-ee, by cracken! Equality high up, that's what! We'll be colonels, breveted colonels, every last one of us—Colonel Driscoll, Colonel Grinders, Colonel Brothers and Sisters, Colonel—"

"That's easy," said Driscoll smiling. "Now I'll go and fix it up with General Pavon, before he gets away."

. . . To conclude this chapter on the Missourians' Republic, there is yet a word, which perhaps is also explanation of the saddened change that had come over Din Driscoll since that night the battle with Don Rodrigo. It must be remembered that the peerless lad had just won his old comrades to the Mexican Republican cause. While yet rejoicing that here he more than made good the three hundred Liberals he had helped to capture when a captain under the Empire, he found that he had only cast his recruits out of the pale of law, first against the Empire, and then against the Republic. . . . Then he proposed their own republic, and for themselves they took Tampico from the French. But why? What was the real object in Driscoll's innermost thought? The suspicion arises. Was it to win a peace-offering wherewith to make friends again with the Liberals Such an explanation of his otherwise wild scheme is but a theory, but the theory fits, for John D. Driscoll, though as reckless as any and quick for any forlorn hope, was, when a leader, scrupulously practical.

The above suggestion, moreover, is apropos in these later days, when the Tampico Republic has become to be folklore throughout Missouri, and when our cousins, the Kentuckians, even those proud colonels by acclamation, cannot rank beside these five hundred colonels scattered over the sister state; so that, when a stranger questions a Missourian answers: He a colonel? Why yes, of course, sir. And, by God sir, a Tampico colonel, too! Yes, one of the five hundred!" and the stranger's eyes bulge as he takes off his hat.

[The deposition of Meagre Shanks ends here.]

CHAPTER XLI.

Royal Resolution.

". . . O restless fate of pride,
That strives to learn what Heaven resolves to hide."—The Iliad.

On returning to the capital, Jacqueline did not once set foot in any Imperial palace, but she established her own salon of a grande dame, and there installed herself mid a simple elegance. What was left of the mortgaged chateau in the Bourbonnais went to pay for it. Jacqueline would accept not a louis out of Napoleon's Black Chest. A French gentlewoman she impoverished herself to work for France. And when, a little later, Napoleon dishonored his own name and that of France in his dealings with Maximilian, she thanked the instinct that had kept her free. Puddles muddied one's skirt so! The valiant maid broke her sword. She would serve no longer. At least, she was quite certain that she would not.

Napoleon's shame lay in this. Maximilian had accepted his harsh ultimatum regarding the Mexican customs, and in return for such humiliation he depended on the presence of the French troops for yet another year. But the United States threatened war, and Napoleon cringed. He would withdraw the troops immediately. He would abandon Maximilian, treaty or no treaty. Thus the quiet forces on the American Legation at Paris battled against the proud House of Orleans. The princess of that House failed. She could not save her husband's throne, and her own. Her mind gave way. She became a raving maniac. So much for Charlotte's mission.

With the news Maximilian was a broken man. He seemed to remember his promise to rejoin her in Europe, for he set out coastward and left the marshal a letter that was virtually his abdication. Yet in the Hot Country he stopped for his health. An Austrian frigate waited for him. But behind him was his capital. Would he return History will never know, perhaps, the soul-desparing network of intrigue and counter-intrigue that wound and tightened about the young sapling roots that would strike deep in an unnourishing soil and become a dynastic oak. The rabid clericals, who were Maximilian's ministers at the time, thought their puppet gone, and in terror of an avenging Republic they resigned. But Bazaine, urged to it by Padre Fischer, prevailed upon them to remain, and Fischer gave his word that the puppet would not escape. So France lost another chance to take back the Mexican Empire, and thereby pave a way out of her shame. For while Maximilian recuperated, he reconsidered. Clerical generals assured him of armies, the ministers talked cloquently of treasure from the Church coffers. The fat padre manipulater generals and ministers and Emperor. He was supreme. None might come near the royal ear except at his pleasure.

It was at this time, about the first of the year, some six months after Charlotte had sailed to Europe, and only a few weeks before the French would do the same, that one evening Jacqueline's footman brought her a plainly sealed envelope, without crest, without writing. She tore it open, and started as she looked at a simple autograph on the card inside.

"His—this gentleman, Tobie, you admitted him?"

The well-trained servant stood impassive. "What would madame have?" he replied. "The man walked in like a lord, keeping his face hid in a cloak. But if madame—"

"Was there a carriage?"

"No, madame, but I noticed a saddle horse a little distance, held by a mounted soldier with a carbine. But if madame—"

"He is in the drawing-room, then?"

"Oui, madame, and without removing his Mexican sombrero. But if madame desires that this citizen find himself—h'm—pressed to go—"

"Tobie! No, on the contrary, you will permit him to wait undisturbed, until I come."

A few minutes later Jacqueline beheld a tall figure in elegant charro garb striding the length of her salon. As she entered, her guest threw off sombrero and Spanish cloak, and revealed the drawn and troubled features of the Emperor of Mexico.

"Your Majesty has returned to His capital!" she exclaimed. "Then it is true—"

"That I shall cling to my play-empire? But I do not know yet, mademoiselle, I do not know yet. If I did, I should not be here, here in your house for the first time, and against your wishes—"

"Will Your Highness be seated?"

Maximilian flung himself wearily into an armchair. The fire of the enthusiast had died out of his eyes, and the fire of fever had left him faded. They reminded one of the blue of old-fashioned china.

"But why—" she began.

"Why come to you, you mean? I don't know; instinct, I suppose."

"Isn't that rather vague? Your Imperial Highness returns to the City, to his palace—"

"Not to his palace, mademoiselle, not while it would seem a mockery of my poor imperial state, but to an hacienda in the suburbs. If I enter my Mexican palace again, it will be because I have decided to remain an emperor."

"And for the reason that you have not so decided, you do me the honor—"

"I do myself the service, mademoiselle. I can bear this torment of indecision no longer, and you can help me, for you, dear lady, see clearly where the vision of others is distorted. The enthusiasm of the others is unsafe. Yes," he sighed, with a little superior air of resignation to all human foibles, "those on whose loyalty I can depend are indeed few, but I am thankful that among them are my ministers, and my faithful secretary, Father Augustin Fischer—"

"Then why, in heaven's name, does Your Highness come to me?"

"Instinct, or—perhaps it's mania. Something has forced me to learn what you would say."

Jacqueline's foot—a small digression, at most—was slippered in blue, and this she pillowed on a cushion of red. And on another cushion she settled her elbow; and the sleeve of the chemisette, or blouse, or whatever the high-necked filmy white garment was, fell away, revealing a rounded forearm clasped in a band of gold. And resting her chin on her thumb, she regarded the young prince thoughtfully. In her look there may have been a sedate twinkle of amusement, but all was gently, pityingly sympathetic.

"Let me know," she said, "more of the doubts that trouble Your Highness."

Unerringly she touched the right chord. Doubts, yes, doubts of a broken dreamer. Illusions shattered as bubbles. A dweller in an ideal shadow, believing that subjects needed only lofty phrases, Maximilian was finding himself tragically maladjusted to the modern day in which he lived. But as the words tumbled from his lips in the passionate relief of unburdening, it quickly appeared that his misgivings arose only because he had fallen short of Dark Age standards. He recalled bitterly how, unlike the illustrious among his ancestors, he had not stirred until others had won his crown for him. But destiny was kind. He had the chance for redemption. To hold his empire now depended on him alone. He would mount his horse, give to the light a true Hapsburg blade, and valiantly ride forth to conquer or perish, and in any hazard be worthy of his House.

Then, without abrupt change, he talked of Austria's late woes. Had he but commanded his country's ships at Lissa! Could he but have risked his life at Sadowa! And moreover, he was still needed over there. But in some quick recollection a moisture dimmed the blue eyes. He drew from his vaquero jacket a dispatch. It was from Franz Josef. If Maximilian returned to Austria, the message ran, then he must leave behind the title of Emperor—leave behind even the title!

"And will that hurt so much?" asked Jacqueline.

The Ritual again! For it a man withheld asylum from his brother.

"Is there no mother," cried the exasperated girl, "to spank both your Majesties?"

"'Tis of Her Serene Highness—" Maximilian began with dignity.

"Highness? Yes, I forgot, but not high enough to chide majesty, though she be a mother."

"Yet she has only just warned me of her deep displeasure if—No, her message shall wait. I wish to hear first what you think. Tell me, shall I go, or shall I stay? Tell me, tell me, and why!"

Feverishly the man craved one frank word. There was in his look the prayer of a desperate gambler who watches a card poised between the dealer's fingers. Jacqueline had one answer only. But exactly how to express it, lest she be wrongly taken, made her pause.

"In the first place," she began slowly, "there is only a single consideration involved, and in that lies the solution of Your Majesty's doubts. I mean the consideration of honor. Now if Your Highness is—whipped off his throne—that is ignominy—But wait, wait, I am not through. I—"

"Almost my mother's words!" he cried triumphantly. And with a hand that trembled, he got out the letter from that Archduchess Sophia who had given one son a crown and loved this other as her darling.

"'Rather than suffer humiliation by a French policy,'" he read from her letter, "'stay, stay, though you be buried under the walls of Mexico!'"

"But—" Jacqueline interposed. She had been taken amiss after all.

"You too bid me stay," he insisted. "But I might have known. I might have known. One who never erns said that this would be your counsel. The Padre is wonderful—wonderful!"

Father Fischer, of course! What else? How consummate was the snake in his cunning! He counted on honesty and nobility in another, though having none himself. He knew Jacqueline. He thought that, both good and frank, she must advise the Emperor as his mother had done. Accordingly, when Maximilian became afflicted with doubts, the priest allowed him to go to Jacqueline. She would be an accomplice despite herself. Only his judgment did not go quite far enough. Jacqueline had not spoken all her mind.

Imperiously she compelled Maximilian's attention. "I said ignominy, yes," she persisted, "but I would have added that honor—the modern and the decent—and the only courage, lies in facing this same ignominy. Listen. If the least of impure ambition enters in your decision to remain, then for each death in the civil war that must result, Your Highness may hold himself to account, and so be held by history. Now," she went on, unmoved by the fact he had winced, "the question remains with Your Highness—does aught besides honor hold you to stay?"

To himself he answered as she spoke, and guilt confessed mounted his brow.

"But there," she said, "Father Fischer will interpret the will of the Almighty. Before Your Imperial Highness retires tonight, my words will be forgotten.

The lash fell on flesh already raw and smarting. To predict that he would change yet again, when to change he branded himself a wilful murderer—no! That was more than he could endure. She must not think that of him. He held out his hand. "Jeanne!" he murmured imploringly.

"Don't!" she cried, "Don't call me that!"

Then she bit her lip, and her fury turned against herself. "Jeanne" was feminine and French for "John," which was masculine and—American. This important discovery she had made months ago when riding beside a man whose horse was "Demijohn." As a girl in love, she had found a cozy joy in their names being the same. But for that very reason any recollection of it, since then, was the less to be borne.

Blushing indignantly, she saw that Maximilian was regarding her with a puzzled expression. Manlike, he referred it to himself, and suddenly, he too started. Only once before had he addressed her thus familiarly, which was during that memorable afternoon beside the artificial lake at Cuernavaca. Here, therefore, must lie the association that caused her agitation. Yet, since that afternoon, she had permitted no reference to their interview, unless to raise her brows quizzically at his continued presence in Mexico. But now, what of the self-betrayal into which he had just surprised her? It could not but be connected with that other time when he had murmured her name. There was, however, no conscious vanity in the remarkable explanation. It was remorse. He thought of Charlotte, his wife. And this other woman, had he wronged her also? For during the past weeks of trouble he had forgotten that he had loved her, and she had not forgotten. In two such facts, falling together, was the wrong, and one that a woman scarcely ever forgives, as he had had reason to know.

"I could not help supposing, mademoiselle," he ventured diffidently, "that what you said at Cuernavaca was inspired by—by no feeling toward myself. I could suppose nothing else in the light of your utter indifference since then, and—and your aversion for my very presence."

Jacqueline laughed pleasantly. "In that Your Highness deceives himself. I did then, as I do now, feel for Your Highness enough to wish him safely out of Mexico."

"Charity, then?"

She did not protest.

"As I thought," he said. "There was no feeling in—in—"

Jacqueline raised her eyes and met his frankly.

"When a woman feels in the sense you mean, sire," she said, "then she does not make an empire, even the Austrian Empire, a condition. If the man in question has no more than his horse, his pistols, even his pipe, then the woman—" But she stopped abruptly.

"With you," he granted honestly, "it was not a matter of personal ambition either. But if neither of these, then what—Now I see!" he cried. "A state reason! A decoy, to tempt me out of Mexico! Yes, yes, now I see!"

"Is is good to know," said Jacqueline, not ungratefully, "that Your Majesty at least, if no other, can see a high motive in my self abasement."

"Now what can she mean by that?" he demanded of himself. "What other, in particular, thinks hard of her that she should care?"

Eloin was the only other man who could have seen them, there at Cuernavaca. No, little it mattered to her what Eloin thought. But—yes, there was another. There was the American who had intruded and wanted to save his empire. Maximilian recalled now her change to bitterness after the American had left and a moment ago he had seen the identical pain of self-contempt tug at her lips. And yet once she had left the American to die. But Maximilian answered even that objection. Leaving him to die was a necessity for her country. And the sacrifice had gone farther. It had not faltered before the self-degradation of which she had just spoken.

The admiration in his eyes grew. The chivalry in his race awoke within him, and exalted him. He felt himself become the true knight, in the purity of devotion to a woman—a gentleman, as real chivalry would have the term. Poor man and poet, he felt even the impulse to bend the knee and crave as a boon some risk of life in her service, without thought of boon thereafter—a knightly impulse nearly obsolete in chivalry, if ever customary. But he knew now that the impulse was really possible, and the proof was this: that the constraint between them had vanished, that soon he was talking with her easily and naturally.

For Jacqueline also the air had become blessedly pure, and deeply, gratefully, she breathed of it. Because now she talked with one whose respect was a fact, who knew her for what she was, and during a moment's space she was happy, with the happiness of delusion. It seemed that other men, that one other man, might one day know her too, and give her his esteem. But the phantasy passed. The knowledge must forever be restricted to the man before her, and for him she did not care.

Maximilian, very strangely, was thinking of the very self-same thing. Here was a service in her behalf already offering. If he could cause that other man to know? But it was out of the question. Men may convince one another of a woman's guilt, and only to easily. But of her innocence? No, it was absurdly out of the question. Besides, next day the true knight would be starting back for Europe. Had he not just decided?

CHAPTER XLII.

Interpreter to the Almighty.

". . . and could make the worst appear
The better reason."—Paradise Lost.

After half an hour's sharp canter, Maximilian dismounted at Le Teja, his suburban hacienda. He had come quickly from Jacqueline's, for his heart was light. The stress and storm of wavering were ended at last. Soon now he would be at Miramar, at beautiful Miramar, overlooking the sea, where Charlotte awaited him, but knew it not. And by love and tender care he would coax her back to sanity. Ah, no, the pure joy of living was not done for them yet!

"Desire Father Augustin to attend me in my private cabinet," he said to the first lackey.

The huge priest came on the instant. He bore a candle in one fat, freckled hand, and above its light the dull flesh of his face shone yellow. His head was as ever pear-shaped with its heavy, flabby jowls, and in the apex the two little beads of eyes leaped adventurously at sight of the prince.

"I am here, sire," he said purringly. "Your Majesty, then, wishes me to prepare for his return to the imperial palace tomorrow?"

"No, father," His Majesty answered stoutly, though not without an uneasy glance. "Tomorrow I set out for the coast. The Dandolo is still there at anchor. You will give the necessary orders to my Hungarians, who will be my escort."

Fischer opened his lips, to close them. The involuntary creasing of his brow smoothed at once. Maximilian, who had dreaded argument from this man, breathed easier. But of course any man would give way when a Hapsburg had irrevocably made up his mind. The padre laid down the candle, and interlaced his bloated fingers over his paunch in an attitude of sleek calmness. He was smiling and fawned meek anxiety to second his patron's least wish.

"Your Imperial Majesty's wisdom, I see, is not a thing to be turned by the fraulein?"

"On the contrary, Mademoiselle la Marquise d'Aumerle counseled my departure, not my remaining."

The fingers tightened slightly over the bulge of the sutane. "She then presumed to differ from Her Serene Highness, Your Majesty's mother?"

"My mother would counsel the same, were she in Mexico. I thank you, padre, that I went to see the only one who could so take my mother's place, because now, at last, I know what I must do."

The priest took a long breath, and drew back, mentally, to some vantage point whence he could survey the field and plan his campaign anew. He nodded humble acquiescence, but the small bright eyes seemed to gorge themselves on the prince. Maximilian stirred restively. One has seen a lion watch the trainer's whip, as though he wondered that a creature with only a whip should yet, in some way, compel him to do this or that. Before an obscure adventurer the monarch hastened to justify his abdication. But it did not make him easier because the padre listened so obsequiously, with never a quiver before the horror and misery pictured. He only listened, this man of God, noting it all deferentially, item by item, with a smiling gesture that he heard and understood, and was quite ready for the next. Maximilian became aware at last of his own low stooping. And that moment he stopped abruptly.

"The Lord reward Your Majesty's tender heart," now spoke the priest, "and may the reward be such as a ruler should expect from his God!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Maximilian in impatient anger. "Have all the barbarities of civil war no power to move you? Do I not know that the savagery has already begun?"

The curate crossed himself. In humility he would bear the charge of hardness of heart. "Power to stir me?" he repeated. "If Your Majesty would think on his power to bring this same savagery to an end! That is his reward offered by Haven, the reward of bringing holy peace to a stricken land."

"Did I not come for that? You only remind me how I have failed."

"And why, sire? Because your instruments were not blessed. The French oppressed the Church as well as the people. But now the French are leaving. It is the hand of Providence."

"She said he would interpret the will of Heaven!" Maximilian exclaimed.

The priest heard, stammered, and went to wreck miserably, as a hypocrite unmasked knows that his next word must sound like hypocrisy. How slyly she had checkmated him! Forseeing his thrust, she had countered his every shift of cunning through this feeble fencer before him. And the mistake he had made, in sending Maximilian to her! For a moment the expression of the apostate Lutheran was very ugly in its baffled rage. But he was too wise a trainer to lose patience utterly. He realized instead that the struggle was harder than any he had yet had with his royal dupe, since now his real antagonist was the young Frenchwoman.

"I? I interpret the word of God?" He said it very humbly, with bowed head. "Alas, Your Majesty knows I am the last to presume to that. But there are those who can.

There is the Holy Father in Home, who is infallible. I only know that he told Your Majesty's servant, myself, that a ruler blessed by the Church is an instrument of God. But if the ruler turns his back ere his work is done—"

Maximilian's nostrils were dilating strangely, and the consumate tempter hurried on. He exalted the grandeur of the Emperor's task, yet craftily made success appear simple and easy. The forces of "the arch-rebel Benito Juarez" were concentrated in "a horde of impious thieves calling themselves the Army of the North." But Miramon, His Majesty's own general, was hastening to meet them. One decisive battle, and there would be no more rebels. The nation must then recognize that the Empire had sustained itself without French aid.

"Of course a few lives will be lost," he quietly sneered, "and we who do not understand may grieve for them, but the ways of Heaven, for its own ends, are inscrutable. Your Majesty knows that others before him, his ancestors, have had to wade through the blood of God's enemies. But Your Majesty's glorious ancestors were fulfilling their destiny. And why should not you, also, sire, you who are the child of destiny?"

It was a magic word. Fischer knew his man devilishly well.

"But how can I tell," Maxmilian demanded petulantly, "that my destiny really lies in Mexico?"

"Then your destiny, sire, must lie in Europe, in Austria," was the priest's astounding concession. "After all, a prince's intuitions, being given him by divine revelation, can alone be his guide."

Maximilian's eyes flashed.

"Then I abdicate—herewith!"

Fischer meekly assented.

"There are rumors, nay, more than rumors," he mused aloud, "that a strong hand is needed in Austria. I repeat only what all Europe says boldly, that Franz Josef cannot long hold his throne. Yes, yes, sire, but do not stare so!—Yet the crown prince is a child. Who then shall be regent? Who but—"

"Enough, enough, I say! Now look to my orders. We start tomorrow."

The secretary beamed unctious joy that his master had so decided, and was bowing himself out, when abruptly he paused, "Oh, I forgot, a packet for Your Majesty."

Maximilian took the missive. It was not heavy. It did not seem as heavy as Fate, not as heavy as a coffin.

"This is an old date," he said in a puzzled way. "See, the postmark, 'Brussels, Sept. 17.'"

"It just came by courier from Vera Cruz, being sent via New York no doubt accounts for the delay."

Maximilian sighed. Even the post no longer considered royalty. Packets had taken on leisurely habits since the Empire's crumbling—or since the secretary's ascendency. He broke the seal with tremulous fingers. The thing must tell him of Charlotte.

"From Monsieur Eloin," he said.

"But he—he does not send bad news, nothing, sire, of Her Imperial Highness?"

Well enough did that soul of mud know the letter's contents. Well enough he knew that Eloin himself could waste no time on an insane woman. Their chances of future position were in too critical a state. And the packet was designed for just such a crisis as the present.

Maximilian read excitedly. He was swept along as by a torrent. Fixed on him were the small bead eyes of the priest, darting a light, like a flame on oil. And when the Emperor gasped quickly and sprang to his feet with hands clenched in the manner of a strong man, the priest was ready.

"Good news, then?" he cried. "What fortune! Now Your Majesty will hurry the faster to Vienna?"

Maximilian gave him a glance, as though he were dense to think so.

"Here, read, read it!"

M. Eloin, sycophant, courtier, had never sung for his royal patron a roundelay more pleasing than his prose of the moment. It caused to vibrate the very heart chords of the susceptible prince. There were subtle appeals to spite ungratified, to wounded pride, to ambition, to honor. The letter ran:—

. . . Nevertheless, I am convinced that to abandon the throne now, before the return of the French army, would be interpreted as an act of weakness. . .

If this appeal (to the Mexican people) is not heard, then Your Majesty, having accomplished his noble mission to the end, will return to Europe with all the prestige that accompanied his departure; and mid important events that are certain to happen, he will be able to play the role that belongs to him in every way. . . .

And then the supreme refrain:—

In passing through Austria, I was able to bear witness to the general discontent that reigns there. Yet nothing is done yet. The Emperor is discouraged; the people fret and publicly demand his abdication; the sympathies for Your Majesty are spreading visibly throughout the entire Empire; in Venetia a whole population wishes to acclaim its former governor. . . .

Thus it was that Eloin pilfered Jacqueline's lever, and thus he used another fulcrum, as he had promised Charlotte he would. By pandering to Maximilian's Austrian ambitions, he showed the weak prince how they could yet never be realized if prestige were lost in Mexico. To keep this prestige, to increase it, Maximilian must prove to Austria that he could hold the empire he already had, and that without foreign bayonets. He had only to stay a short time after the French should evacuate. And then, within a few months, a few weeks, he might lay down the sceptre voluntarily, to take up the one awaiting him across the ocean.

"We will leave here in the morning," cried Maximilian—"no, tonight, at once!"

"For Vera Cruz, sire?" queried the padre.

"No, for my capital, for my palace! And father, allow no one to mention abdication to me again. My decision to stay is irrevocable."

The padre promised faithfully that he should not be disturbed, and this was one promise that the good padre kept.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Alone Among His Loving Subjects.

"And Jove himself shall guard a monarch's right.—The Iliad.

Early one morning a month later, a solemn little group of uniformed men climbed to the roof of Buena Vista, the imperial wedding gift to Marshal Bazaine, and nerving themselves, pulled down the Tricolor. France, a Napoleon, were again leaving the New World. It was Evacuation.

The Army of the Expedition came tramping down the Paseo. There were heavy Dragoons and Cuirassiers, on majestic chargers. There were light Chasseurs and Lancers, on fleet Arabians that had often proved themselves against the Mexican pony. There was the clanking of steel, and the flash of helmets through the dust. The imperial eagles, gilded anew, were poised for flight back to their native aeries. Lower in the earthly cloud bobbed the tasseled fez of the bronzed Zouave, and the perky red pompon on the fighting cap of the little piou-piou. With the steady beat of the march, the pantalons rouges crossed, spread, crossed, spread, like regments of bright, bloody shears. The bands played. And yet it was not a martial scene. Feet, not hearts, lifted to the fife's thrilling note. Nor was the multitude that thronged the wide avenue a fiesta populace. It looked on stolidly, without a huzza, yet without a hiss. Enthusiasm in either sense would have been relief, but the Mexicans assisting at the bag and baggage of an invader were as unmoved as those other spectators, the colossal figures in the glorietas; as the two Aztec giants, leaning on their war clubs; as Guatemotzin, with high feathered crest and spear aloft, foreboding as in life to the European conqueror; as Columbus, who, having himself suffered, gave now no sign of remorse for the blows which this new hemisphere gave the old; as Charles IV. on his iron horse, who had bargained with a former Napoleon to be called Emperor of America, and who, unlike Maximilian, had wisely surrendered such a crown.

Cavalry, infantry, cannon, wagons; on they came through the city and past the Zocalo, under the Cathedral towers, under the lifeless, shuttered windows of the Palacio. Here in the Zocalo, in the central plaza, the sometimes first lady of Her Imperial Majesty's household sat in her barouche, and opposite her a pretty girl, and she was talking with an officer of Chasseurs d'Afrique whose horse was restive, and all the while there was the rumbling of wheels, the tread of feet, and the ring of hoofs.

The sometime first lady was saying good-bye to the officer, as she had already to many another gallant chevalier pausing beside her carriage. But for her it was farewell to all her countrymen there, to the little piou-pious most of all, and her gray eyes were frankly moist.

"And now they are going," she mused aloud, "really going, because, parbleau, a monsieur in Washington says they must."

"I wish to heavens," swore the young officer gloomily, "some monsieur would say as much to you! See here, we'd give you and Mademoiselle Berthe enough room on the ship for a barracks, if you'd only come. There's a many less welcome," and he jerked his head toward a stream of vehicles straggling among the troops. They were filled with Mexican aristocrats whose doubtful titles had been revived by the Empire, all eagerly accepting French transport out of their native land.

Jacqueline laughed. "They're so afraid of the Liberals, they will forget their escutcheons. So of course they've forgotten the bouquets. You should have seen the garlands, Michael, that heralded our grand entry here. Oh, la-la- We paid for them ourselves. Thus arrived the Drapeau Civilizateur de la France. And now behold the departure. Not the cost of a violet to spare from Napoleon's strong chest! He mais, hear that tune! It's 'Leaving for Syria,' the thing decreed into our national hymn. For once I'm glad, glad it's not the 'Marseillaise.'"

"Mademoiselle—dear friend," spoke the slow-thinking Michel, "you do not wish to answer my question. Why do you stay behind, alone? Why? Nothing good ever happens to anyone in this country, and who can tell what might happen to you when the army is gone? Come now," he went on, forcing some bluff cheer into his fords, "Jeanne d'Aumerle, your friends want you out of it. . Fall in with us, here, now. Let me give the order, 'Cocher, a Paris!—Voila, what more's to be done"

Indeed, what more simple? Or more to be desired? Yet there was nothing she desired less. She thought of what she had found in Mexico, and must leave behind. It was a dead thing, true, and already buried. But—the grave was too fresh as yet. However, the real reason for he staying involved something else.

She made no reply, for at the moment a strange voice, with a jagged Mexican accent and a thin insidious inflection, broke in upon them, and startled them all three.

"Nay, Monsieur le Duc," it began, rolling the title as a morsel on the tongue. "Your Grace would deprive us of too much honor. Why, indeed, should mademoiselle not remain among us?"

Turning quickly, Jacqueline beheld the stranger's black eyes upon herself. He, too, wished to know why she stayed in Mexico, but in his sharp, shifting look there was a penetration quite different from that of the guileless Michel. He bestrode a magnificent horse that seemed made for armor, whereas he himself would surely have been crushed under so much as a Crusader's buckler. Being so very small, and perched so very high, he cut a ludicrously martial figure with his plumed hat and epaulettes and gold buttons and braid and medals and exquisitely mounted sabre. It was not a French uniform that he wore, but Mexican Imperial, and stupendously ornate. And within the brave array, he was such a little, little man!—insignificance glorified into caricature.

But the pigmy was not altogether on parade. He had that morning been receiving arsenals and fortresses from the French; in short, the keys of the Empire. For he was Commander in Chief of the Imperial armies, was the species of manikin. And ugly? He was a man of lifted upper lip under a bristling moustache, a man of fangs, a wee, snarling, strutting, odious creature of a man. A deep livid scar split his cheek and would not heal. Instead of arousing sympathy, it proclaimed him rather for the scratches he gave to others. For he was that Mexican of infamous name, the Leopard. Once he had looted the British Legation. Another time he massacred young medical students attending the wounded of both sides. There were stories of children speared and tossed in ditches. Yet certain priests blessed his ardor as defender of the Church. Maximilian had sent him on a mission to Palestine, since he was abhorrent to the armies. The valley of Mexico shrank from his brutal proclamation demanding submission. "Mexicans, you nnow me!" so ended the snarl. He gathered forced loans. He drafted peons, though they were exempt. He emptied the prisons, and convicts he sent in chains as recruits for the Imperial garrison. In such a fashion Leonardo Marquez began his duties as generalisimo of the Empire.

"Your Excellency is most kind," said Jacqueline, for no other reason than to annoy him by changing from French into his own language.

"On the contrary," returned Marquez, "I am flattered that you will be here to observe how we, alone, shall crush the rebels. Your countrymen, senorita, happily leave plenty of them. But I cannot believe that this is why you remain."

"Make her tell you, then," interposed the helpless Ney. He was utterly at sea. There was a trial of strength on between these two, but how or for what was quite beyond him.

Jacqueline pushed back the Persian shawl she wore—this fifth day of February was the Mexican springtime—and settled herself to the contest in earnest. "I fear," she began slowly, "that my motive in staying can hardly be intelligible, unless, perhaps, Your Excellency knows why I came to Mexico in the first place. No senor, that blank smile of yours will not serve. Your Excellency cannot feign ignorance of public gossip."

"Of course, I have heard that—"

"To be sure you have," she returned dryly, "and you might add that I failed, since Maximilian has not yet abdicated. But Your Excellency is not one to imagine that the end can be long delayed."

She, too, was searching for a motive, his motive in the interview.

"The Mexicans alone will sustain our patriotic ruler," stoutly declared the generalisimo. "But let us suppose, merely for pastime, that His Majesty does abdicate. What then? What profit to France, since at this moment, before our eyes, her army is leaving?"

Jacqueline smoothed the ruffled pleats on her full gray skirt. They looked like an exaggerated railroad on a map, and doubtless needed smoothing.

"And remotely supposing," she said, "that our army might come back again?"

Then, in a flash, she raised her eyes, and surprised the start he gave. But she laughed at once, and at him, for taking her nonesense as serious.

"No," she exclaimed, "Your Excellency can more easily recall Santa Anna from his island exile."

(To be continued.)

IS CALLED TO SACKVILLE METHODIST CIRCUIT

Rev. J. L. Dawson Transferred to Conference from Newfoundland—Rev. H. Miller, Also.

Montreal, Que., March 30.—(Special.)—The transfer committee of the Methodist church yesterday transferred Rev. J. L. Dawson, of Newfoundland, to New Brunswick, on June 21, and Rev. Hugh Miller, of Newfoundland, to New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island forthwith. President Lodge of the New Brunswick conference was among those present.

Rev. Mr. Dawson referred to in the despatch has been called to the Sackville circuit. He is a native of Prince Edward Island and a graduate of Mount Allison University. He has been about thirty years in the ministry.

During the most of that time he has labored in Nova Scotia filling the pulpits of some of the finest churches there. Four years ago he was called to the congregation of Gower street church, St. John's (Nfld.), which is the foremost church of the denomination in the colony.

He married Miss Lockhart, whose family were formerly prominently connected with Centenary church, this city. Rev. Mr. Dawson is a very scholarly man, a forcible and eloquent speaker and he has filled all his pulpits with great acceptance.

Rev. Mr. Miller has not yet been called to any church.

It's Governor Fraser Now.

Halifax, March 30—Hon. D. C. Fraser was sworn in as lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia at 11 o'clock this morning, in the council chamber, in the presence of a large assemblage.

The oath was administered by John G. McGee, clerk of the privy council, who arrived from Ottawa last evening.

Rev. A. M. Walker, of the Unitarian church, will go either to Charleston or Walpole (N. H.) within a week or so.

SUDDEN DEATH OF CHARLES VANWA

Well Known Woodstock Merci Only Ill Twenty Minutes—Fun of Elizabeth Day.

Woodstock, N. B., April 1—(Spec. — Charles Vanwart, one of our oldest and most respected residents, died very suddenly last night, aged 76 years. For a man of his age he was enjoying good health up to the last. He was in his store about 9 o'clock when he was taken ill and removed to his dwelling, which is just above the store, where he died twenty minutes later.

He was born in Hampstead, Queens county, but was a resident here for 30 years and for some years in Waterville, this county. Mr. and Mrs. Vanwart have been married 53 years. He is survived by his wife and two daughters, Miss Drucilla Vanwart and Mrs. G. A. White, both of this town. In politics he was a Liberal and in religion a deacon of the United Baptist church. Religious services will be conducted by Rev. Mr. Currier at 2 o'clock on Tuesday afternoon and the burial in the Methodist cemetery. Mrs. Ed. Grass, of Waterville, is a sister; B. Vanwart, of the North End, St. John, is a brother, and one brother and two sisters reside in Hampstead, Queens county.

The funeral of Elizabeth Day, who died at the residence of A. J. Marsten on Friday night, aged 79 years, took place this afternoon and the interment made in the Methodist cemetery, Rev. G. A. Ross officiating. She was the only surviving daughter of Daniel Day, one of the town's first inhabitants, and was a prominent worker in the Methodist church and teacher of the Sunday school for many years.

NOVA SCOTIA HEBREW MARRIAGES ILLEGAL?

Recent Ceremony at Glace Bay by Groom's Father Discloses Peculiar State of Affairs.

Glace Bay, N. S., March 30—A certain amount of fractional feeling among the Hebrews of the town, who number nearly 400, has led to the revelation of a most peculiar state of affairs. A couple of evenings ago a prominent Hebrew was married to his fiancee, a New York Jewess, the ceremony being performed by the groom's father instead of the Rabbi. This is sometimes done according to Jewish law, the legal marriage frequently taking place by a clergyman or magistrate subsequently. It has developed since that the Rabbi here is not ordained, and there is no ordained Rabbi in Cape Breton. This man, however, has married many Hebrews here, and none, so far as known at present, have been subsequently united according to the laws of the land. Children born of these unions are, it is claimed, illegitimate, and have no property rights under the law. The Hebrew population is much excited over the matter and the groom mentioned has been endeavoring since to get married before a magistrate, but without success. Circumstances call into question whether any Hebrew marriages in the province are legal. Outside regular Christian clergymen the statute makes special provision for the Salvation Army, but none for the Jews. The so-called Rabbi engaged here inspects meats for Hebrews, but several of the Jews assert positively that he cannot perform a legal marriage, not being endowed with powers.

FIERCE BATTLE BETWEEN FRENCH MINE STRIKERS AND SOLDIERS

Paris, March 31.—The miners' strike throughout the coal region has resumed serious proportions. Many riotous scenes were enacted last night and today, during which the cavalry repeatedly charged the strikers, injuring a number of them. The troops also suffered severely. Large reinforcements have been distributed at the centres of disorder.

The strikers, estimated at 39,000, and divided into bands of from 500 to 2,000 men, are parading the region and threatening workmen who refuse to join them. Many of the bands carry red flags. The most serious affray took place near Lens, where a mob besieged the house of Jules Capron who had refused to quit work. On appearing in his door way Capron was pelted with stones, whereupon he fired with a shot gun into the crowd, wounding a striker named Botel, who later died. The mob, which numbered 2,000 strikers, then sought to capture and lynch Capron. Two squadrons of hussars attempted to convey Capron to a place of safety, and a fierce battle between the strikers and troops resulted. Capron was removed to the jail at Bebune. Many persons on both sides were injured during the fighting.

A report was in circulation during the day that a live horse had been found in the pit and near it the bodies of five men who had died within twenty-four hours. The truth of it was disproved tonight by men who returned after an all day search and reported that they had found no trace of man or beast alive.

The strikers tonight captured several non-commissioned officers who were bearing reports to the general but the soldiers were rescued by patrols.

Thinks He Belongs in St. John.

A man who is believed to be George Cary, of this city, died in the Waverly House, Bangor, last Friday morning. He arrived in the hotel Thursday night and gave the name of Frank Kelly. He went to bed with another man whose name has not been learned. On Friday morning it was found that he was so sick as to be unable to rise. A doctor pronounced the case to be one of congestion of the brain. A priest was also sent for. The unfortunate man died at 7 o'clock. His name is believed to be George Cary, as he wrote a letter to James McLaughlin, of this city, Thursday, signing that name. He had $20.65 and a gold watch. Coroner Finnegan decided that no inquest was necessary. The body will be held till some instructions are received from the dead man's relatives. He is described as having a sandy complexion and a red moustache. He is supposed to have come out of the woods last week.

Queens County Divorce Case.

A Boston despatch reports that Mrs. Josephine Williams is a petitioner for a divorce from Henry L. Williams. They were married at Hampstead, Queens Co. (N. B.), May 19, 1887. Mrs. Williams alleges that her husband deserted her in 1901. The case will be heard early in May.

At Chubb's corner Saturday, Auctioneer Lantalum sold the Anning property, 185-189 Union street, to John K. Storer for $5,031.