

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N.B., WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 1905

THE FATE OF A CROWN

A STORY OF LOVE, INTRIGUE AND ADVENTURE

By SCHUYLER STAUNTON

Copyrighted 1905 by The Reilly & Britton Company and published exclusively in The Telegraph by special arrangement with the Canada Newspaper Syndicate.

SYNOPSIS

Robert Harcliffe, fresh from college and a member of a firm in New Orleans, of which his Uncle Nelson is the head, is sent by his uncle to Brazil to act as private secretary and confidential companion to Dom Miguel de Pintra, head of the revolutionary movement against Dom Pedro. Dom Miguel had been a good customer of the Harcliffes, and he and the elder member of the firm were fast friends. Liking the prospect of adventure, Robert consented to go.

On the voyage he encountered Valcour, a spy sent by the Emperor of Brazil, who knew that the American secretary was expected. This spy had decided that Robert was the person for whom he was looking and had planned to make way with him.

But the American cleverly threw him off the scent and reached Rio in safety. There he was, however, arrested, but on the way to the police headquarters his captor was murdered by Police Sergeant Marco, a revolutionist, and he was allowed to escape, finally reaching his destination through the assistance of many devotees to the cause. At the beautiful home of Dom Miguel he learned more of the revolutionary movement. He met the Senhora Lesba Paola, his host's niece; her brother Francisco—a man who puzzled him greatly—and Dom Miguel's daughter, Isabel de Mar.

The next morning he had an unpleasant experience with Madam Isabel, who had been acting as Dom Miguel's secretary, but

was relieved by him. The revolutionists did not trust her. Dom Miguel revealed to him the secret of a hidden vault where all the party's papers and treasure were hidden. While they were entering the vault with lights extinguished Madam Isabel suddenly appeared, struck a light and tried to discover how the lock was worked. The father seized her and, denouncing her as a spy, sent her from the room.

Meanwhile Harcliffe had been getting deeper in love with Lesba, and more deeply mystified by her brother, who was chief of Dom Pedro's police.

One night Dom Miguel aroused his secretary with the startling statement that Isabel had stolen the ring which was the key to the treasure vault. They captured her as she came from the vault with a bundle of papers. When Dom Miguel went to return them, she dashed a lamp into Harcliffe's face, locked her father in the vault and fled toward Rio. The secretary followed, but she eluded him, and caught a train at a distant station.

On the train she was stabbed to the heart, and the finger bearing the ring was severed from the hand. Harcliffe followed by the next train and was promptly "rescued" by revolutionary sympathizers. After exciting reports Harcliffe made his way back to Dom Miguel's residence, only to find the Emperor and a group of his friends there. In the chamber he found a man's body with the ring finger severed. Entering the house he was promptly made a prisoner.

watched them, drinking in at the same time the cool morning air.

There Lesba joined me, somewhat pale from her night's watching, and although as yet no word of explanation had passed between us, she knew that I no longer doubted her loyalty, and forbore to blame me for my stupidity in not comprehending that her every action had been for the welfare of the Cause.

At breakfast Pedro told us more of the wonderful news; how the Revolution had succeeded in Rio with practically no bloodshed or resistance; how Figueira had met the Emperor at the train on his arrival and escorted him, well guarded to the port, where he was put on board a ship that sailed at once for Lisbon. Indeed, that was to be the last Dom Pedro's rule, for the populace immediately proclaimed Fonseca dictator, and the patriot's dream of a Republic of Brazil had become an established fact.

Presently we passed into the outer room and looked upon the still form of Miguel de Pintra, the man to whose genius the new Republic owed its success—the great leader who had miserably perished on the very eve of his noble achievement.

The conspiracy was a conspiracy no longer; it had attained to the dignity of a masterly Revolution, and the Cause of Freedom had once more prevailed!

Taking Lesba's hand we passed the bodies of Castro and Captain de Souza and rained the yard, walking slowly along the road the skirted the forest, while she told me how Valcour had assisted her to escape from the chamber, that she might summon the patriots to effect our rescue. She had wandered long in the forest, she explained, before Pedro met her and assisted her to gather the band that had saved us. Yet the brave girl's grief was intense that she had not arrived in time to rescue her guardian, Dom Miguel, whom she so dearly loved.

"Yet I think, Robert," said she, with tearful eyes, "that uncle would have died willingly had he known the Republic was assured."

"He did know it," said I. "For a moment, last evening, he recovered consciousness. It was but a moment, but long enough for Pedro to tell him the glorious news of victory. And he died content, Lesba, although I know how happy it would have made him to live to see the triumph of the new Republic. His compatriots would also have taken great pride in honoring Dom Miguel above all men for his faithful services."

She made no reply to this, and for a time we walked on in gloomy silence.

"Tell me, Lesba, have you long had knowledge of Valcour's real identity?"

"Francisco told me the truth months ago, and that he loved her," she replied. "But Valcour was sworn to the Emperor's service, and would not listen to my brother as long as she suspected him of being in league with the Republicans. So they schemed and struggled against one another for the supremacy, while each admired the other's talents, and doubtless longed for the warfare to cease."

"And how came this girl to be the Emperor's spy, masquerading under the guise of a man?" I inquired.

"She is the daughter of Captain Mazanovitch, when her mother died, she took delight in instructing his child in all the arts known to the detective police. As she grew up she became of great service to her father, being often employed

upon missions of extreme delicacy and even danger. Mazanovitch used to boast that she was a better detective than himself, and the Emperor became attached to the girl and made her his confidential body-guard, sending her at times upon important secret missions connected with the government. When Mazanovitch was won over to the Republican conspiracy his daughter, whose real name is Gerolita, refused to desert the Emperor, and from that time on treated her father as a traitor, and opposed her wit to his own on every occasion. The male attire she wore both for convenience and as a disguise; but I have learned to know Valcour well, and have found her exceedingly sweet and womanly, despite her professional calling."

It was all simple enough, once one had the clue; yet so extraordinary was the story that it aroused my wonder. In the other country then half-civilized Brazil, I reflected, could such a drama have been enacted.

When we returned to the house we passed the window of Valcour's room and paused to look through the open sash.

The girl was awake and apparently much better, for she smiled brightly into the face Paola bent over her, and showed no resentment when he stooped to kiss her lips.

member that Fonseca and his old enemy Pexoto rode together in the same carriage, all fends being buried in their common triumph. The bluff general wore his most gorgeous uniform and the lean statesman his shabby gray cloak. And in my judgment the adulation of the populace was fairly divided between these two champions, although the Dictator of the Republic bowed with pompous pride to right and left, while the little man who was destined to afterward become President of the United States of Brazil shrank back in his corner with assumed modesty. Yet Pexoto's eyes, shrewd and observing, were everywhere, and it may be guessed that he lost no detail of the day's events.

Paola should have been in that procession, likewise, for the people fairly idolized the former Minister of Police, and both Fonseca and Pexoto had summoned him to join them. But no; he preferred to sit at Valcour's side in a quiet, sunlit room, effacing himself in all eyes but hers, while history was making in the crowded streets of the capital.

It required many days to properly organize a republican form of government; but the people were patient and forbearing, and their leaders loyal and true; so presently order began to come out of chaos.

Meantime Valcour mended daily, and the roses that had so long been strangers to her pale cheeks began to blossom prettily under the influence of Francisco's loving care.

They were happy days, I know; for Lesba and I shared them, although not so quietly. For the dear girl was all aglow with triumph of Liberty, and dragged me as her escort to every mass-meeting or festival and every one of the endless processions until the enthusiasm of her compatriots had thoroughly tired me out. The Liberty of Brazil bade fair to deprive me of my own; but I bore the ordeal pretty well, in Lesba's society.

Then came a day when I obtained my reward. Valcour had made a quick recovery, and now needed only the strengthening influence of country air; so one bright morning we all boarded a special train and traveled to Cayabá, reaching safely the de Pintra mansion in the early evening.

Nothing seemed changed about the dear old place, which I had already arranged to purchase from Dom Miguel's executors. Pedro had resigned his position as station-master to become our major-domo, and the thoughtful fellow had made every provision for our comfort on this occasion of our home-coming.

Captain Mazanovitch was with us. He had retired from active service to enjoy his remaining years in his daughter's society, and although he seldom allowed one of us to catch a glimpse of his eyes, the face of the old detective had acquired an expression of content that was a distinct advantage to us.

I had chosen to occupy my old room off the library, and early on the morning following our arrival I arose and passed out into the shrubbery. Far down the winding walks, set within the very centre of the vast flower garden, was the grave of Dom Miguel, and thither I directed my steps. As I drew near I saw the square block of white marble that the patriots had caused to be erected above the last

resting-place of their beloved chieftain. It bore the words

"MIGUEL DE PINTRA
Savior of Brazil"

and it was to this day the mecca of all good republicans.

Lesba was standing beside the tomb as I approached. Her gown was as white as the marble itself, but a red rose lay upon her bosom and another above Dom Miguel. She did not notice my presence until I touched her arm, but then she turned and smiled into my eyes.

"Savior of Brazil!" she whispered softly. "It is splendid and fitting. Did you place it there, Robert?"

"No," I answered, truly; "it was due to Pexoto. He claimed the privilege for himself and his associates, and I considered it his right."

"Dear uncle!" said she; and then we turned reverently away and strolled through the gardens. Every flower and shrub lay fair and fresh under the early sun, and we admired them and drank in their fragrance until suddenly, as we turned a corner of the hedge, I stooped and said:

"Lesba, it was here that I first met you, on this exact spot!"

"I remember," said she, brightly. "It was here that I prophesied you would be true to the Cause."

"And it was here that I loved you," I added; "for I cannot remember a moment since that first glimpse of your dear face that my heart has not been your very own."

She grew sober at this speech, and I watched her face anxiously.

"Tell me, Lesba," said I at last, "will you be my wife?"

"And go to your country?" she asked, quickly.

I hesitated.

"All my interests are there, and my people, as well," I answered.

"But I cannot leave Brazil," she rejoined, positively; "and Brazil needs you, too, Robert, in these years when she is beginning to stand alone and take her place among nations. Has not Fonseca offered you a position as Director of Commerce?"

"Yes; I am grateful for the honor. But I have large and important business interests at home."

"But your uncle is fully competent to look after them. You have told me much. We need you here more than ever!"

need you at home, for your commercial connections and special training will be of inestimable advantage in assisting the Republic to build up its commerce and extend its interests in foreign lands. Brazil needs you. I need you, Robert! Won't you stay with us—dear? For a time, at least?"

Well, I wrote to Uncle Nelson, and his reply was characteristic.

"I loaned you to de Pintra, not to Brazil," his letter read. "But I am convinced the experiences to be gained in that country during these experimental years of the new republic will be most valuable in fitting you for the management of your own business when you are finally called upon to assume it. You may remain absent for five years, but at the expiration of that period I shall retire from active business, and you must return to take my place."

On those terms I compromised with Lesba, and we were married on the same day that Valcour and Francisco Paola became man and wife.

"I should have married you, anyway," Lesba confided to me afterward; "but I could not resist the chance to accomplish one master-stroke for the good of my country." And she knew the compliment would cancel the treachery even before I had kissed her.

As I have hinted, these events happened years ago, and I wonder if I have forgotten any incident that you would be interested to know.

Dom Miguel's old home became our country residence, and we clung to it every day I could spare from my duties at the capital. It was here our little Valcour was born, and here that Francisco came afterward to bless our love and add to our happiness and content.

The Paolas are our near neighbors, and often Captain Mazanovitch drives over with their son Harcliffe to give the child a romp with our little ones. The old detective is devoted to the whole noisy band, but yesterday I was obliged to reprove Francisco for poking his chubby fingers into the captain's eyes in a futile endeavor to make him raise the ever-drooping lids.

The five-year limit expired long since; but I have never been able to fully separate my interests from those of Brazil, and although our winters are usually passed in New Orleans, where Uncle Nelson remains the vigorous head of our firm, it is in sunny Brazil that my wife and I love to live.

THE END.

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued.)

to the house and lifted a door from its hinges. Between us we bore it to the yard and very gently placed Valcour's slight form upon the improvised stretcher.

She moaned at the moment, and slowly unclosed her eyes. It was Paola's face that bent over her, and Paola that pressed her hand; so she smiled and closed her eyes again, like a tired child.

We carried her into the little chamber from whence Lesba had escaped, for in the outer room lay side by side the silent forms of the martyrs of the Republic.

Tenderly placing Valcour upon the couch, Pedro and I withdrew and closed the door behind us.

I had started to pass through the outer room into the yard when an exclamation from the station-master arrested me. Turning back I found that Pedro had knelt beside Dom Miguel and with broken sobs was pressing the master's hand passionately to his lips. My own heart was heavy with sorrow as I leaned over the outstretched form of our beloved chief for a last look into his still face.

Even as I did so my pulse gave a bound of joy. The heavy eyelids trembled—ever so slightly—the chest expanded in a gentle sigh, and slowly—oh, so slowly!—the eyes of Dom Miguel unclosed and gazed upon us with their accustomed sweetness and intelligence.

"Master! Master!" cried Pedro, bending over with trembling eagerness, it is done! It is done, my master! The Revolution is accomplished—Fonseca is supreme in Rio—the army is ours! The country is ours! God bless the Republic of Brazil!"

My own heart swelled at the glad tidings, now heard for the first time. But

over the face of the martyred chief swept an expression of joy so ecstatic—so like a dream of heaven, fulfilled—that we scarcely breathed as we watched the light grow radiant in his eyes and linger there while an ashen pallor succeeded the flush upon his cheeks.

Painfully Dom Miguel reached out his arms to us, and Pedro and I each clasped a hand within our own.

"I am glad," he whispered, softly. "Glad and content. God bless the Republic of Brazil!"

The head fell back; the light faded from his eyes and left them glazed and staring; a tremor passed through his body, communicating its agony even to us who held his hands, as by an electric current.

Pedro still knelt and sobbed, but I contented myself with pressing the hand and laying it gently upon Dom Miguel's breast.

Truly it was done, and well done. In Rio they were cheering the Republic, surrounded by only carnage the Revolution had involved, lay stilled forever that great heart which had given to its native land the birthright of Liberty.

Lesba had dressed Valcour's wound with surprising skill, and throughout the long dreary night she bathed the girl's hot forehead and nursed her as tenderly as a sister might, while Paola sat silently by and watched her every movement.

In the early morning Pedro summoned us to breakfast, which he had himself prepared; and, as Valcour was sleeping, Lesba and Mazanovitch joined me at the table while Paola kept ward in the wounded girl's chamber.

The patriots were digging a trench in which to inter the dead Uruguayans, and I stood in the doorway a moment and

watched them, drinking in at the same time the cool morning air.

There Lesba joined me, somewhat pale from her night's watching, and although as yet no word of explanation had passed between us, she knew that I no longer doubted her loyalty, and forbore to blame me for my stupidity in not comprehending that her every action had been for the welfare of the Cause.

At breakfast Pedro told us more of the wonderful news; how the Revolution had succeeded in Rio with practically no bloodshed or resistance; how Figueira had met the Emperor at the train on his arrival and escorted him, well guarded to the port, where he was put on board a ship that sailed at once for Lisbon. Indeed, that was to be the last Dom Pedro's rule, for the populace immediately proclaimed Fonseca dictator, and the patriot's dream of a Republic of Brazil had become an established fact.

Presently we passed into the outer room and looked upon the still form of Miguel de Pintra, the man to whose genius the new Republic owed its success—the great leader who had miserably perished on the very eve of his noble achievement.

The conspiracy was a conspiracy no longer; it had attained to the dignity of a masterly Revolution, and the Cause of Freedom had once more prevailed!

Taking Lesba's hand we passed the bodies of Castro and Captain de Souza and rained the yard, walking slowly along the road the skirted the forest, while she told me how Valcour had assisted her to escape from the chamber, that she might summon the patriots to effect our rescue. She had wandered long in the forest, she explained, before Pedro met her and assisted her to gather the band that had saved us. Yet the brave girl's grief was intense that she had not arrived in time to rescue her guardian, Dom Miguel, whom she so dearly loved.

"Yet I think, Robert," said she, with tearful eyes, "that uncle would have died willingly had he known the Republic was assured."

"He did know it," said I. "For a moment, last evening, he recovered consciousness. It was but a moment, but long enough for Pedro to tell him the glorious news of victory. And he died content, Lesba, although I know how happy it would have made him to live to see the triumph of the new Republic. His compatriots would also have taken great pride in honoring Dom Miguel above all men for his faithful services."

She made no reply to this, and for a time we walked on in gloomy silence.

"Tell me, Lesba, have you long had knowledge of Valcour's real identity?"

"Francisco told me the truth months ago, and that he loved her," she replied. "But Valcour was sworn to the Emperor's service, and would not listen to my brother as long as she suspected him of being in league with the Republicans. So they schemed and struggled against one another for the supremacy, while each admired the other's talents, and doubtless longed for the warfare to cease."

"And how came this girl to be the Emperor's spy, masquerading under the guise of a man?" I inquired.

"She is the daughter of Captain Mazanovitch, when her mother died, she took delight in instructing his child in all the arts known to the detective police. As she grew up she became of great service to her father, being often employed

upon missions of extreme delicacy and even danger. Mazanovitch used to boast that she was a better detective than himself, and the Emperor became attached to the girl and made her his confidential body-guard, sending her at times upon important secret missions connected with the government. When Mazanovitch was won over to the Republican conspiracy his daughter, whose real name is Gerolita, refused to desert the Emperor, and from that time on treated her father as a traitor, and opposed her wit to his own on every occasion. The male attire she wore both for convenience and as a disguise; but I have learned to know Valcour well, and have found her exceedingly sweet and womanly, despite her professional calling."

It was all simple enough, once one had the clue; yet so extraordinary was the story that it aroused my wonder. In the other country then half-civilized Brazil, I reflected, could such a drama have been enacted.

When we returned to the house we passed the window of Valcour's room and paused to look through the open sash.

The girl was awake and apparently much better, for she smiled brightly into the face Paola bent over her, and showed no resentment when he stooped to kiss her lips.

member that Fonseca and his old enemy Pexoto rode together in the same carriage, all fends being buried in their common triumph. The bluff general wore his most gorgeous uniform and the lean statesman his shabby gray cloak. And in my judgment the adulation of the populace was fairly divided between these two champions, although the Dictator of the Republic bowed with pompous pride to right and left, while the little man who was destined to afterward become President of the United States of Brazil shrank back in his corner with assumed modesty. Yet Pexoto's eyes, shrewd and observing, were everywhere, and it may be guessed that he lost no detail of the day's events.

Paola should have been in that procession, likewise, for the people fairly idolized the former Minister of Police, and both Fonseca and Pexoto had summoned him to join them. But no; he preferred to sit at Valcour's side in a quiet, sunlit room, effacing himself in all eyes but hers, while history was making in the crowded streets of the capital.

It required many days to properly organize a republican form of government; but the people were patient and forbearing, and their leaders loyal and true; so presently order began to come out of chaos.

Meantime Valcour mended daily, and the roses that had so long been strangers to her pale cheeks began to blossom prettily under the influence of Francisco's loving care.

They were happy days, I know; for Lesba and I shared them, although not so quietly. For the dear girl was all aglow with triumph of Liberty, and dragged me as her escort to every mass-meeting or festival and every one of the endless processions until the enthusiasm of her compatriots had thoroughly tired me out. The Liberty of Brazil bade fair to deprive me of my own; but I bore the ordeal pretty well, in Lesba's society.

Then came a day when I obtained my reward. Valcour had made a quick recovery, and now needed only the strengthening influence of country air; so one bright morning we all boarded a special train and traveled to Cayabá, reaching safely the de Pintra mansion in the early evening.

Nothing seemed changed about the dear old place, which I had already arranged to purchase from Dom Miguel's executors. Pedro had resigned his position as station-master to become our major-domo, and the thoughtful fellow had made every provision for our comfort on this occasion of our home-coming.

Captain Mazanovitch was with us. He had retired from active service to enjoy his remaining years in his daughter's society, and although he seldom allowed one of us to catch a glimpse of his eyes, the face of the old detective had acquired an expression of content that was a distinct advantage to us.

I had chosen to occupy my old room off the library, and early on the morning following our arrival I arose and passed out into the shrubbery. Far down the winding walks, set within the very centre of the vast flower garden, was the grave of Dom Miguel, and thither I directed my steps. As I drew near I saw the square block of white marble that the patriots had caused to be erected above the last

resting-place of their beloved chieftain. It bore the words

"MIGUEL DE PINTRA
Savior of Brazil"

and it was to this day the mecca of all good republicans.

Lesba was standing beside the tomb as I approached. Her gown was as white as the marble itself, but a red rose lay upon her bosom and another above Dom Miguel. She did not notice my presence until I touched her arm, but then she turned and smiled into my eyes.

"Savior of Brazil!" she whispered softly. "It is splendid and fitting. Did you place it there, Robert?"

"No," I answered, truly; "it was due to Pexoto. He claimed the privilege for himself and his associates, and I considered it his right."

"Dear uncle!" said she; and then we turned reverently away and strolled through the gardens. Every flower and shrub lay fair and fresh under the early sun, and we admired them and drank in their fragrance until suddenly, as we turned a corner of the hedge, I stooped and said:

"Lesba, it was here that I first met you, on this exact spot!"

"I remember," said she, brightly. "It was here that I prophesied you would be true to the Cause."

"And it was here that I loved you," I added; "for I cannot remember a moment since that first glimpse of your dear face that my heart has not been your very own."

She grew sober at this speech, and I watched her face anxiously.

"Tell me, Lesba," said I at last, "will you be my wife?"

"And go to your country?" she asked, quickly.

I hesitated.

"All my interests are there, and my people, as well," I answered.

"But I cannot leave Brazil," she rejoined, positively; "and Brazil needs you, too, Robert, in these years when she is beginning to stand alone and take her place among nations. Has not Fonseca offered you a position as Director of Commerce?"

"Yes; I am grateful for the honor. But I have large and important business interests at home."

"But your uncle is fully competent to look after them. You have told me much. We need you here more than ever!"

need you at home, for your commercial connections and special training will be of inestimable advantage in assisting the Republic to build up its commerce and extend its interests in foreign lands. Brazil needs you. I need you, Robert! Won't you stay with us—dear? For a time, at least?"

Well, I wrote to Uncle Nelson, and his reply was characteristic.

"I loaned you to de Pintra, not to Brazil," his letter read. "But I am convinced the experiences to be gained in that country during these experimental years of the new republic will be most valuable in fitting you for the management of your own business when you are finally called upon to assume it. You may remain absent for five years, but at the expiration of that period I shall retire from active business, and you must return to take my place."

On those terms I compromised with Lesba, and we were married on the same day that Valcour and Francisco Paola became man and wife.

"I should have married you, anyway," Lesba confided to me afterward; "but I could not resist the chance to accomplish one master-stroke for the good of my country." And she knew the compliment would cancel the treachery even before I had kissed her.

As I have hinted, these events happened years ago, and I wonder if I have forgotten any incident that you would be interested to know.

Dom Miguel's old home became our country residence, and we clung to it every day I could spare from my duties at the capital. It was here our little Valcour was born, and here that Francisco came afterward to bless our love and add to our happiness and content.

The Paolas are our near neighbors, and often Captain Mazanovitch drives over with their son Harcliffe to give the child a romp with our little ones. The old detective is devoted to the whole noisy band, but yesterday I was obliged to reprove Francisco for poking his chubby fingers into the captain's eyes in a futile endeavor to make him raise the ever-drooping lids.

The five-year limit expired long since; but I have never been able to fully separate my interests from those of Brazil, and although our winters are usually passed in New Orleans, where Uncle Nelson remains the vigorous head of our firm, it is in sunny Brazil that my wife and I love to live.

THE END.

It has been said
"SILENCE IS GOLDEN"
and there are a precious possession.
Try EDDY'S "SILENT" Parlor Match
We know the result.
SCHOFIELD BROS., Selling Agents, - St. John, N. B.

The Demand for

MANITOBA FLOUR

Has Been Steadily Increasing in the Maritime Provinces

The People Find That it is More Profitable to Purchase Flour Made From Manitoba Wheat

KEEWATIN

"FIVE ROSES" FLOUR

Is the Best Flour Made From Manitoba Wheat

It is Manufactured by the

LAKE OF THE WOODS MILLING CO., LIMITED