

Some Romantic History

Writing to the Pittsburg Dispatch under date of New York, July 31, Julius Chambers says:

"Now that we Americans are getting into such close touch with the Japanese it might be as well to recall the almost forgotten fact that the mikado ordered the beheading of one of the most beautiful and notorious women ever born in the United States. She was born at New Orleans according to the best authorities, in 1852, daughter of Beauvoir Roosier, a wealthy cotton planter. She was christened Marie Adele and received an excellent education. She appeared in New York in the early '70's and was the most beautiful woman of her day. She was to be seen every fine summer afternoon at Jerome park, where she attracted great attention. She lived in magnificent style, and her gowns excited the envy of many women. After being the central figure in several scandals here she fled to Paris. She had the handsomest turnout in the Bois de Boulogne and gave sumptuous luncheons and dinners. The Count Arthur de Portales, whose first wife (Miss Jenny Lind Halliday) had been an American girl, was fascinated by the remarkable beauty of the American with the creole complexion and on May 2, 1876, married her. She led him a merry dance. Before the end of the first year the count was involved in two duels. He had sufficient influence to obtain an appointment as an attache of the French legation at Tokio and carried his flirtatious wife thither. She ran away with a French naval officer, and the count having discovered that this beautiful creature had been married to another man when she became his wife he secured an annulment of the tie that bound him to her. She returned to Paris and led one of the wildest lives ever known in the realm of cocotte. She is the heroine of half a dozen novels of the period. She affected the literary circles, and her receptions in the splendid apartments in the Avenue Wagram just below the Arc de Triumph were highly entertaining. There was always gambling, and the guests were not expected to take any money away. If they won they must give it to the hostess or buy wine. The picture of that tall, olive complexioned woman behind the roulette table, where she presided like a queen rather than an adventuress, was one never to be effaced. I have seen Lily Langtry twirling the ivory ball at her cunning little red brick 'house in the yard,' on Twenty-third street, this city, but the memory is a very different one.

"After about five years of the wildest extravagance 'the countess,' as she insisted upon being called, fascinated another French diplomat, who married her and secured an appointment to the Japanese mission. The advent of this famous woman to Yokohama and Tokio where her reputation was still vividly memorable, has been described to me by an Englishman who was residing in Japan at the time. The two great cities were more agitated than over the birth of an heir to the throne. Flowers were taken to her hotel in jinrickisha loads. She was followed by crowds whenever she rode out. All manner of attentions were showered upon her. This time the lady set her eyes higher than the foreign naval officers and diplomatists resident at the Japanese capital. She actually ensnared the prime minister, much as Cleopatra captured Marc Antony. The Japanese aren't great sticklers for morality. They didn't find any fault with the chief adviser of the emperor hav-

ing a flirtation with a pretty American woman. The mikado, however, took a different view. He found that the prime minister neglected his duties to the empire. He sent for the husband of the dangerous woman and ordered him to send her out of the country. The French husband is said to have expressed the utmost regret that he could not comply with the imperial request because he had long before lost all control over the lady's action. She did as she pleased and would not brook the slightest dictation. An intimation was then sent direct to the woman that she must take her departure forthwith. She is said to have sneered at the imperial mandate. Worse than that she had the audacity to tell of the incident and to mock the messenger who had brought the verbal command.

"Meanwhile, the prime minister became so thoroughly infatuated that he overlooked the appointment of a lord high executioner or some official of the sort, and a batch of criminals escaped the justice that had been decreed them. The snickersneezes were so dull that the novices who undertook the decapitations made bad work of the job. This infuriated the mikado. He hadn't any boiling oil or molten lead handy for the prime minister, but he wrecked his vengeance upon the beautiful American adventuress. She was seized one night while a party of geisha girls were dancing for the entertainment of her infatuated statesman, and she was carried inside the walls of the prison, where her head was struck off with neatness and dispatch. Her body was buried and all traces of her obliterated. Her tragic death by direct order of the mikado did not distress her husband or her 'good angel.'

"The 'Countess de Portales' was not the only American adventuress who met death by official mandate of a sovereign. Several years later another woman was executed in Constantinople by order of the sultan of Turkey. She was decapitated and her body in a weighted sack was committed to the Bosphorus. This woman came from Philadelphia and was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister. The name is so well known in the Quaker city that it need not be mentioned here."

THE MORAL—BE A FOREIGNER

If the Panama canal zone is a domestic market the United States government must pay \$28 a ton for American steel rails. If the zone is a foreign market the government need pay only \$20 a ton for American rails. This is virtually the substance of a statement made by A. J. Hollis, editor of the American Manufacturer.

According to Mr. Hollis, the members of the pool have agreed to sell no steel rails in the United States for less than \$28 a ton. If they violate this agreement the purchasers of rails can exact a rebate equal to the reduction in price. As there have been 2,000,000 tons of steel rails ordered to date, the pool would be obliged to return \$16,000,000 if rails were sold to the United States government at the export price Mr. Hollis makes this significant remark:

If the rail pool can convince the American railroad officials that the Panama canal is outside of the United States there will be no foreign competition keen enough to secure a contract for a single ton of rails.

The pool is ready to underbid foreign competition if the government will protect the rebate agreement by defining the canal zone as territory outside the United States. In view of the supreme court's decision in the insular cases, this favor seems already to have been granted.

But what an extraordinary condition of affairs when industries pro-

ected by the United States government will practically agree not to rob it if the government will be discreet enough to pose as a foreign consumer!

Was there ever a more amazing commentary on the Dingley schedules?—New York World.

HELPING COLLEGES

The Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican reproduces The Commoner's editorial relating to college donations, and the joke Rockefeller played on President Hadley of Yale. In that editorial it was suggested that farmers, business men, professional men, and laborers make contributions to colleges. The Republican says:

"The suggestion is a good one, and there exists loyal college alumni bodies which frequently act on it in relation to their own particular colleges. The Harvard alumni have just made a noteworthy contribution to the institution's endowment through united effort.

"It will have to be recognized, however, that these large gifts from a few rich men are far better calculated to stop than to stimulate the small contributions of the many, whether among the alumni or the people at large. Here is one of the evils of these excessive individual accumulations of wealth—that no matter how generous may be their disposition in relation to the public welfare, they are sure to have demoralizing effect. The comparatively poor man, interested as he may be in the needs of an institution of learning, when he observes a Rockefeller or a Carnegie handing out millions of dollars offhand, will be moved to stand back and let the procession move on without him. 'What's the use,' he will say to himself: 'I cannot do much; let the rich fellows look after these matters; they have got a large share of the country's surplus wealth and the job properly belongs to them.'

"It is an unfortunate situation, but it exists to a greater or less extent. It tends to impair the wholesome habit of giving and destroy that democracy in the support of various public institutions which is so desirable, and, indeed, so essential to the preservation of the spirit of our institutions. As long as the constitution of industry makes possible and actual a diversion of a large fraction of surplus wealth into the hands of a few men who tower so far above the rest as do the Rockefellers and Carnegies, it will be an uphill, not to say an impossible, work to prevent the colleges and so on from looking to these men for their chief support; and the more these institutions stand as beggars at the doors of the multimillionaires, the more strong and general becomes the disposition of the average man to stand aside and let the overwealthy carry the burden, or join in the effort to load it upon them. There are large possibilities for the cultivation of a popular spirit of mendicancy in the existence and the parade of these immense individual fortunes."

OLD-TIME AMENITIES

There were giants in the days of eighty years ago, and the blows received and given were worthy of them. This is how the Examiner struck Blackwood's (and, incidentally, how Blackwood's struck the Examiner) in 1825: "No one needs to be told at this time of day that the conductors of Blackwood's are knaves; but what follows seems to prove that they are fools as well—which is more than the world has given them credit for." The same newspaper, quoting the Leeds Mercury on the subject of the John Bull (always a red rag to the Examiner) used the following choice expression:

"The reasoning of our provincial contemporary is at once perspicuous and unanswerable; but it is equally obvi-

out that in reference to the animals conducting the Bull * * * it is altogether supererogatory. The paper week after week presents a tissue of scurrility and petty attacks as inane and puerile in execution as malignant in object. * * * The notorious quack who is the principal compounder of these indefinable slanders is mightily offended that, being known, he is not allowed to pursue his labors in professional privacy. * * * He is a literary outlaw, and as such will be eternally treated by us as often as we deem any slander of his decoction to be unfair and venomous."—London Chronicle.

BLIND LEADING BLIND

A Scotch minister and his friend, who were coming home from a wedding, began to consider the state into which their potations at the wedding feast had left them.

"Sandy," said the minister, "just stop a minute here till I go ahead. Maybe I don't walk very steady, and the good wife might remark something not just right."

He walked ahead of his friend for a short distance, and then asked:

"How is it? Am I walking straight?"

"O, ay," returned Sandy thickly! "ye're a' recht—but who's that who's with you?"—Harper's Weekly.

APPROPRIATE

Motor Cyclist—I see that Muggins has named his automobile after his wife. Isn't that a queer proceeding?

Bicyclist—Not at all. He didn't name his machine until he discovered he couldn't control it. I think the name very appropriate.—Albany Journal.

"BEST EVER"

"It's a beautiful world!" exclaimed the caddie, enthusiastically.

"Yes," said Mr. Rockefeller, looking appreciatively about. "I don't know that I ever owned a better one."—Life.

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