

mands of the church and the other a contract just among themselves. In it each should agree to release the other whenever called upon to do so.

"It would not bring about more divorces," says Doctor Dickinson, "on the contrary, I think it would have exactly the opposite tendency—each of the parties concerned would be keener about holding the other's affections. There would be less carelessness, less taking of things for granted, and less indifference in dress and manner among married folk.

"If a couple cannot agree there is the contract, and they can put it away and release it whenever the call is made for it.

"Too much freedom is sacrificed today. Men and women should lead their own lives, intelligently and normally. If they fall to get on, if one nags or bores or bothers too much, then there is the contract always available.

"And, besides, people are prone to do a lot of moping. They ought to buck up—begin to walk with their heads up and chests out, and they will soon see that possibly after all the seeming great tragedy they are living is merely a phase, an incident, of life."

Motherhood

The charming young matron, whose likeness, with that of her babe, appears on the first page of this issue, is Mrs. C. L. Hoover. The child, Lois, is six months old. Mrs. Hoover is the daughter of Rev. R. S. Lowrie, a retired Presbyterian minister, who lives with his family at 1025 South Fifteenth street. Mrs. Hoover makes her home with her parents. Her husband is in the government service in the Philippines as an inspector in the treasury department. His wife and child will join him in Manila in September of this year.

Mrs. Crawford—What are you going to do today?

Mrs. Crabshaw—I'd go shopping, only I find I haven't my car fare.

Keeps Others Quarreling

The much talked of and little known republic of Acre has given the statesmen and politicians of South America more concern and worry in the brief three years of its existence than any other bit of territory on the continent.

It has been pronounced dead times without number, but the trouble is it refuses to stay dead. Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia quarrel over it whenever internal troubles are sufficiently quiet to permit them to indulge in the luxury of international bickering.

Germany has long regarded it with a covetous eye, and has thus far been prevented from closing its mailed fist over the tempting plum by fear of the enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine.

The United States has been dragged into the controversy by the necessity of protecting the property rights of its citizens. It is therefore more than probable that we shall hear much of Acre in the twelvemonth to come, particularly as the Venezuelan imbroglio seems likely to bring much of the "unfinished business" of South America to the front.

The Acre district is the large triangle south of the Salmoens and west of the Madeira rivers. As shown on the maps, it is bounded on the south by Bolivia and on the west by Peru, separated from the latter country by the Javary river.

The Jurua and Perus rivers, important affluents of the Amazon, flow through its heart. Its area can only be estimated, but it probably exceeds 150,000 square miles, claimed by Brazil as part of the state of Amazonas. It is a land of great and sluggish rivers, of interminable swamps, of dark, untrodden forests, of fever, malaria, and deadly diseases, of hideous serpents, wild beasts, and untamed savages. It is no wonder that it was held of so little account that for decades the question of ownership troubled no one. Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia made claims and counter claims, but none of them wanted it badly enough to attempt to settle it.

Then came a band of adventurers, with

nothing in common but poverty, boldness, and a desire for wealth. Among them was an Italian, named Parravicini; the Brazilian, Gentil Norberto; Hipolite Moreiro, Edmonds Bastus, Colonel Alepandrinio Gir, Manuel Felicio, of unknown nationality, and a general riff-raff from all countries, the United States, Canada, and all over Europe.

These adventurers, however, were men of experience and knew the shortest road to wealth in South America. They had witnessed the sudden growth of Manaus, 2,000 miles up the Amazon, from an obscure and unknown cluster of native huts into a modern city of 50,000 inhabitants, with a commerce of millions of dollars annually. What did it? Nothing but rubber! What gold is in California and the Klondike; what oil is in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Texas, that rubber is on the Amazon and its tributaries.

Actuated by the hope of finding vast forests of untapped rubber trees in the district of Acre, the adventurers set forth on a journey that had never before been attempted by white men. Making their way up the Amazon beyond the farthest outposts of civilization, and then following the Jurua into the heart of the unexplored district they found their wildest hopes more than realized. Fierce tribes, known as Chunchos and the Huachaparis, beset them, but these were forgotten in view of the possibilities of wealth that were revealed.

In less than a year from the time the adventurous band set forth, dug-outs began to appear at Manaus loaded down with rubber from some unknown region near the frontiers of Peru. And by and by the news was sifted from the jargon of the Indians that manned the boats that the republic of Acre had been proclaimed. But little attention was paid to these reports in the turbulent capitals of Latin America, where a president or a dictator is born every day or two. The value of the territory was not yet sufficiently apparent to attract the cupidity of those who play the game of government for private advantage.

However, the rulers of Acre seem to have displayed more policy than might naturally be expected from so motley a band. They gained the good will of the natives; and persuaded them to engage

extensively in the business of tapping the rubber trees and collecting the crude rubber. Then outsiders from all over Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia began to flock in. The production of crude rubber rose from nothing in 1898 to over 1,000,000 kilograms in 1900, valued at \$2 per kilogram in the markets of Para.

Prosperity brought trouble to the newborn republic and its self-constituted rulers. Bolivia, Peru, and Brazil each suddenly awoke to the fact that international boundary lines in that particular neighborhood had never been defined; and each discovered that its title to the district was "incontestable." Troops began to move, and have been kept "moving" ever since. Sometimes Bolivia has occupied the disputed region, sometimes Peru, and more often Brazil. But through it all a semblance of an independent government has been kept up in some remote section of Acre.

Seeing that Brazil was in fair way to get the better of the argument, the Bolivian government granted a concession to an American syndicate during the present year, probably under the impression that the Washington government would maintain Bolivia's side of the three-cornered controversy in order to make good the claims of the syndicate. Among those interested in the exploiting of the

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The Humbert family, perpetrators of the cleverest swindle of the age, which is said to have netted them a clear \$5,000,000, although at last run to earth by the French police, may escape prosecution by their latest startling move. They declare that prominent government officials were connected with the colossal bunco game and threaten to reveal details that will convulse France with a greater scandal than that of the Panama canal unless their prosecution is dropped.