

A Diplomatic Secret

By EDWIN D. TUCKER

Several gentlemen were discussing the affairs of Mexico, which were absorbing a great deal of attention, when one of them said:

"I have heard a curious story about Napoleon III's Mexican scheme repeated a number of times in different forms. I wonder which is correct."

"Do you refer," asked a white-headed octogenarian, "to the case of how the czar headed off the French emperor?"

"I do."

"Well, then, I can give you the true version of that story, for I was directly connected with what occurred."

"I was very young at the time, but not too young to be connected with the American legation at the court of St. James. One evening at a reception a member of the British cabinet accosted me, though I had had no introduction to him, and after a preliminary conversation on ordinary topics drew me into a small room where we were alone and said to me:

"You have been mentioned to me as a person fitted to be the repository of an important diplomatic secret—indeed, to carry out an important diplomatic move."

"He then pledged me to secrecy, impressing me with the importance of locking within myself what he was about to say to me, after which he proceeded:

"Our good queen, with her usual sense and foresight, is in favor of permitting our Americans to settle their quarrels among yourselves. The emperor of the French, who must be constantly diverting the mind of the various factions he rules from himself, has some scheme with reference to making a lodgment somewhere in North America. He is importuning us to join him in intervention with a view to separate the United States into two sections. We do not wish to antagonize him by a refusal, and we do not wish to enter into any arrangement with a view to interfering between the states.

"There is a power which would gladly block the emperor's game did that power know that the game was hatching. I refer to Russia. The czar since the Crimean war does not love France, and he does not love England. We cannot join Russia in a coalition to prevent intervention. Should the czar know that France is endeavoring to induce us to join her in her proposed scheme he would at once take measures to prevent it. This is exactly what we should like. It would render a refusal of Napoleon's request needless and leave us to remain neutral in American affairs.

"Diplomatic secrets sometimes leak out without any one being aware of where the leak is located. You and I know exactly where this leak is, and it must remain between you and me alone."

"You except President Lincoln, of course?"

"Of course I do not. There is but one person besides yourself who may know it."

"Mr. Seward?"

"No, the czar of Russia."

"The czar? How can I reach him?"

"That I must leave to you. Considering that you are a member of the American embassy here, I do not think you should have much trouble."

"But my chief, the American ambassador?"

"He, too, must remain ignorant. You must leave London without his knowledge."

"But the proof for the czar of the truth of my story?"

"I will furnish you with that."

"I left London the next morning before dawn armed with the proof that had been promised. My mother was at the time in Berlin, and I forged a telegram from her begging me to come to her if I expected to see her alive. This telegram I showed to my chief and was given a leave of absence. I did not go to Berlin, but I did go to St. Petersburg. On reaching the capital I went to the minister of foreign affairs, showed him papers substantiating my position with the American embassy at London and informed him that I had information concerning a canal to interfere in the affairs of the American republic, but that I was not permitted to submit it except to his majesty.

"The war between the American states was at that time engaging the attention of the world, and the czar was only too glad of information concerning it. He promptly accorded me a private interview and listened to me attentively till I had reached the end of my story, when he asked for my proofs. I produced them, and he was both surprised and convinced. He asked me how I came by them, and I refused to tell. That ended the interview."

"Returning to London, I reported to my chief that my mother's health was much improved, and I settled down to my daily duties. I met the cabinet member through whom the secret had leaked at a function and in a few words told him of my mission. He apparently did not expect that the czar would intimate to me what he might do in the premises.

"There began to be a feeling among the members of the diplomatic corps at London that some scheme would soon be inaugurated in the way of intervention in America. The rumors were presently verified by the arrival of an ocean steamer bringing the news of a Russian fleet having entered New York bay."

A Daring Escape.
General de Negrier was one of the French officers who succeeded in escaping from German custody in 1870. He was in Metz—and in hospital—at the time of the capitulation, but instead of constituting himself a prisoner he put on his uniform, mounted his horse and rode off as an independent gentleman. Before long he was stopped by a sentinel who demanded his papers, and, as he had no papers, he handed up his ticket of admission to the hospital. While the German was slowly spelling it out Negrier shot him through the head and galloped off, crossing the Belgian frontier, and recrossing it after a rest, to take part in the operations of Faidherbe's army of the north. It is not surprising that so resourceful a soldier got quick promotion and was successively the youngest colonel, the youngest general of brigade and the youngest general of division in the French army.—Westminster Gazette.

Primitive Fishhooks.
What sort of hooks did our ancestors, our really remote ancestors, use "when wild in wood the noble savage ran"? I am inclined to agree with the American view that the earliest type of hook, if hook it can be called, was a straight bit of flint buried in the bait. When the fish had swallowed the bit of meat, or whatever the bait was, the tightening of the line pulled the flint across its throat, and, as it struck there, the fish could be hauled ashore without more ado. Perhaps some bright innovator of that misty past one day tried a bit of flint which had a double curve like a pair of buffalo horns and found it effective, and perhaps out of that developed the genuine double hook, which seems to have been a very early form. And perhaps the single hook came into being because it was realized that one bend was as efficient as two for most purposes.—London Telegraph.

Historic London Street.
Friday street is one of the most interesting and ancient of the thoroughfares of London. As long ago as 1805 a reference to it appears in the city records, and even then it was probably old. Close by it stood the Nar's Head tavern, which is famous in history as the "pretended" scene of the consecration of Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The name of Friday street is derived from the fact that in medieval times many fishermen resided there and held their Friday market in the vicinity. By a strange contrivance of coincidence the Wednesday club met at a hostelry in the street, and there, in 1895, under the direction of William Paterson, discussed at great length the proposals which eventuated in the establishment of the Bank of England.—Pall Mall Gazette.

France's Foreign Legion.
The French Foreign legion, which is always the cause of so much bad blood in Germany, is the only regiment of its kind in existence. It dates from 1831, when France undertook the conquest of Algeria. It consists of two regiments, each four battalions strong, drawn from all the adventurers of Europe. It is popular not only because no questions are asked, but because promotion is open to all, within limits, and a certain number of the officers have risen from the ranks. All classes are to be found among its members and all nationalities, but the many Germans do not describe themselves as such—they are all Alsatians. The reason for its continued existence is that France cannot spare its men nor find enough who would leave the comforts of civilization for the wastes of Africa or the swamps of Tonkin.—Manchester Guardian.

Care of the Sickroom.
In taking care of an invalid it is a good idea to change the furniture around a little as one becomes so tired of the same furnishings in the same places. Be sure to coax all the sunshine in the room and allow fresh air to pass through often. Keep a patient's room tidy. Change your costume often just to make a little variety. Do not let bottles, half filled glasses, spoons, stand around; they may seem trifles to you who can get about, but are sometimes ennoying to one who is nervous. Not of small importance is the tray. Always have a clean cover—paper napkins are nice for the purpose. Use your best china. Serve hot things hot and cold things cold, not warm.—New York Sun.

Correctly Classified.
A Washington man who was being shown through one of the ancestral homes in the Shenandoah valley by an aged colored servant stopped before a portrait.

"What a fine painting!" he exclaimed.

"Why, that must be an old man, ter?"

"Excuse me, boss," said the retainer, "but you're mistaken. Dat's de picture of ole Missus Taylor."—Lippincott's.

"Old Nick."
Nickels and "Old Nick" are derived from the name of a Scandinavian demon, Nix, who, according to an old legend, is supposed to haunt the mines in which the metal nickel is found and it was long believed that he gave the hardness to the metal.

None of Them Horrid.
Miss Prim—Allow a horrid man to kiss me—never! Miss Peach—Neither would I; but, thank goodness, there isn't one among all my male acquaintances.—Boston Transcript.

There is no wrong a man can do but is a thwarting of the living God.

Why I Came to America

By JOSE HERRERA

"The reason why I came to America, my dear fellow," said one Spaniard to another, "is that I might get rid of friends who were liable to involve me in anarchical plots that are honeycombing the social condition of my country. Whether those working for something better than the present social status are right or whether they are wrong I don't pretend to say. What I do say is that I had no mind to be mixed up in their plans. One episode that came very near to me decided me to leave Spain."

"A friend of mine—we will call him Manuel, for I shall not give you real names of persons in the story I am about to tell—asked me to visit his summer home in the mountains lying directly south of Madrid. I accepted the invitation and found a colony of summer homes. I met a number of charming persons, but I will mention only two, both of whom are connected with my story. I will call one Concia and the other Inez. Manuel, it seemed to me, was on the verge of forming a union, but with whom I could not tell. Concia was a gentle little thing with—so far as I could discover—no other desire but to love and be loved, and if married would devote herself to husband and children. Inez, on the contrary, was full of grand theories, a radical by nature. I understood from Manuel that she was a disciple of one who was attempting to found a new school of morals. I did not believe that she was sincere. It seemed to me that in everything she did she had a sinister motive. Perhaps, I said to myself, she is attracted by the novelty of this man's ideas and deceives herself into the belief that it is sympathy with humanity that moves her."

"I was not long in discovering that these two girls were Manuel's good and evil geniuses. His heart when in a normal condition was with Concia, but he was influenced by Inez's views coming through Inez herself—that is, it was rather Inez than the views that moved him."

"Concia did not evince any concern as to this influence that Inez was exerting over Manuel. Not the least jealousy did she show when she saw the two together, but at times I thought I could detect the glimmer of a hidden fire. One day I made a remark to Manuel which would lead him, if he chose to do so, to confide in me the situation. He told me that he loved Concia, but that Inez, who was intellectually very much Concia's superior, inspired him to do great things for humanity. This gave me the cue. Concia was influencing him in one way, Inez in another."

"We all went back to Madrid together in the autumn, and one day Manuel stated that he was an active member of an anarchical society whose object was the elevation of the lower orders of humanity. He expected that in time poverty would be eliminated. His idea in confiding in me was to induce me to join his society. I told him that I preferred to live in an imperfect world rather than die to establish a perfect one. I knew that Inez had triumphed and Concia had been defeated."

"I kept away from him after that, for I feared he would become involved in some of those radical measures which thus far had been condemned by all but a small portion of the world's people, and I preferred to keep myself free from him that I would not suffer in case he got into trouble. It was lucky for me that I did, for one morning, looking out through a window, I could see excited crowds moving in the street and, leaning out, asked one passing what had happened. He told me that a prominent government official had been killed by an anarchist. When a special issue of the newspapers came out what was my horror to see the name of my friend Manuel given as the assassin."

"Manuel was tried and executed. It was not long after his execution that Inez began to spend money in a way that she had never spent it before. She was also seen frequently at court, and a general in the army became a tentative to her. Nevertheless she was not popular with persons of high degree with whom she was associating. I formed my own theory with regard to her, which was this: She had betrayed Manuel for money and influence."

"I wondered how Concia had taken her lover's death, but I was not one of her personal friends and did not feel justified in calling upon her at the time of her bereavement. I heard, however, that no one knew how she was affected by the tragedy."

"Another shock besides the assassination and Manuel's death awaited me. Taking up a newspaper one morning while at breakfast, I saw under large headlines a statement that Inez had been stabbed in her carriage while returning to her home from the opera. She had been escorted to the carriage by an official hired in favor of court who had closed the door. On arriving at her home it was found that the lady had been stabbed to the heart."

"I was doubtless the only man in Spain who knew—by inference—who had stabbed Inez. Fearing that the government might get a clew and I be summoned for a witness, I decided to get away as soon as possible. I left for this country the same evening."

"Thus far no clew to the assassin of Inez has been discovered. Concia, I

Energy and Work.
"What becomes of the energy of motion of a street car when suddenly stopped?"

Law—mass multiplied by velocity equals momentum. The mass of the car in pounds or tons multiplied by its specific speed in feet per second gives a product named foot pounds or foot tons. This momentum is expended at the instant of collision or impact in delivering a blow, as in the case of a cannon ball. If the body receiving the impact is movable part of the momentum will appear in it as motion. If immovable the car will be unshaken or move backward. And the molecules of the matter at point of impact will be increased in temperature and also be moved somewhat. This requires energy, and work has been accomplished from instant of collision until rest obtains. The answer is the energy of momentum is transformed into work.—Edgar Lucien Larkins in New York American.

Three Birthdays a Year.
There is apparently plenty of fun for the child in Sweden in the matter of birthdays, but the parent can hardly be expected to feel the same, for the children there do not confine themselves to one birthday, but they must have three. Of course the first one is the real birthday, and the other two are those whose names the Swedish boy or girl bears. For every day in the year of the Swedish calendar has its own separate name, besides the weekly names which other nations have. Sometimes if the parent gives the child a second name of a first one that cannot be found in the calendar, the child loses out on one birthday. A considerable protest must follow, so when the child becomes old enough to realize what he is missing, in the German calendar every day has a name also, but the observance of these days is not at all common in the latter country.

English Harvest Feasts.
The feasts that now take place at the close of the harvest season in England are small affairs compared with the old-fashioned harvest suppers held formerly. In some of the northern counties the farmers would give chums of cream, and it was served out in cups to the laborers. Nowadays a glass of ale or cider is the substitute for the old time feast. In some parts of the north of Ireland the ancient custom still lingers as "the chum supper." A very old custom is the baking of a large cake by the farmer's wife. This is cut up and served out to every one, including children, accompanying the "horkey cart" into the farmyard. The "horkey cart" was the cart on which the last load of the season was drawn to the farm.—London Answers.

Distinctive Dress in England.
At Courts' bank the clerical assistants must all wear frock coats, and no one in the employment of the bank is allowed to go about with his trousers turned up. At Hoare's bank it is the custom of all those employed to wear white ties. Members of the legal profession observe the etiquette of their calling by abstaining from the wearing of light or fancy colored clothes and always wear silk hats. The bodies of some Presbyterian churches in England wear dress suits instead of the Anglican cassock. Some brewers' workmen and draymen wear scarlet knitted wool nightcaps. In fact nearly every trade and profession has its own conventional and unwritten laws concerning the dress of its members.—London Globe.

Business and Poetry.
Not every one can successfully combine banking and literature, as did Lord Avebury. William Sharp (John MacLeod) attempted it when a clerk in the London office of the Bank of Melbourne, with the result that the manager quickly gave him choice of accepting an agency in an out of the way place in Australia or quitting the service. Sharp took French leave for a day in order to think the matter over and went into the country to hear the cuckoo. Next day the manager demanded angrily why he had been absent from his post. Sharp explained, "We can't do with one who puts the call of a cuckoo before his business," said the chief coldly, and—Sharp left the bank.—London Chronicle.

Japan's Dummy Editors.
There is a peculiar person on the staff of some of the Japanese newspapers, known as the "dummy editor," whose sole duty it is to go to jail in the interests of the journal. Whenever a paper publishes something unfriendly to the government it is suppressed and the "dummy editor" sent to prison, while the real editor simply changes the name of the paper and continues to publish it as before.

Spider Charms.
Spiders, like worms and snakes, were formerly used as charms to cure disease. The spider was worn in a net which was suspended around the neck. When the spider died the disease, it was affirmed, died with it, according to the claims made.

Talked a Lot.
"I never say all that I think," she remarked.

"Then," he replied, being unwilling to miss the chance, "you must think an awful lot."—Puck.

Double.
"What vegetables serve a double purpose?" asked the teacher.

"Cucumbers," yelled the class.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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