

THE SAHARA'S FORMER EMPEROR IN EXILE HERE

Jacques Lebaudy Indulging in New York in Many of the Eccentricities Which Once Made Him Notorious in Europe.

Jacques Lebaudy, first Emperor of the Sahara, ruler of the Paris boulevards and one-time lover of the spectacular, has found New York a place where he can dodge the spotlight and yet indulge in many of the eccentricities which made him notorious in France and elsewhere on the Continent. As an asylum for rejected and dejected monarchs he prefers it to England, despite the popularity which that country has had among other deposed royal personages.

Strange as it may seem, in a city where publicity is the lot of doers of the unconventional the Emperor of the Sahara in the six years that he has spent in exile here has had many adventures which have escaped notice. Only at rare intervals has the figure of this fantastic Frenchman who not so many years ago excited the ribilities of Europe by his Saharan expedition been discerned in the life of the metropolis.

As was his wish when he came here an exile from France, but with money to burn, he has effaced himself, has joined the submerged tenth as it were. Just now he is living in a villa within a hundred miles of this city, enjoying himself and awaiting the outcome of the suit which he has brought against the Superintendent of Banks and the Carnegie Trust Company for an accounting of something like \$2,000,000, that being the value of property in France which he alleges the trust company was to dispose of for him. This suit was filed in the Supreme Court a week ago. It served to remind folks that the Emperor was still here.

Curiously enough, with the reappearance of Lebaudy in this fashion there was another reminder of his Saharan expedition last week in the death of Col. George Edward Gouraud, his associate in that enterprise and the Lieutenant-General of his Saharan forces. An adventurer like himself, Col. Gouraud after the expedition failed elected to remain in England and died of the influenza there as successfully as his erstwhile sovereign has done in this country.

The suit brought by Jacques Premier, as he used to sign himself on hotel registers, is really an echo of his Saharan expedition. It was in 1906 that Lebaudy, forced to abandon his scheme of empire in the desert owing to the refusal of the Powers to recognize his claims, determined to seek an asylum in the United States. Because of the treatment of some of his men France had become uncomfortable for him. In September, 1908, he issued a proclamation signed by his imperial hand which was sent to leading bankers abroad and which was the forerunner of his present suit. It revealed well the character of the deposed Emperor.

EMPEROR OF SAHARA.
Sale of all real estate situated in France belonging to his Majesty Jacques Premier. We have the honor to inform the general public that all the real estate located in France belonging to the above party, consisting of magnificent forests, beautiful domains, splendid houses in Paris, are offered for sale and will be sold within a short time, either privately or by public auction.

The owner is compelled to sell the above mentioned estates owing to the fact that since 1903 his property in France is virtually confiscated by the dishonest and unjust action of the French Government, assisted by rascal judges having no sense of justice.

The enormous income of the above estate is practically seized by a sort of official receiver, always ready to do all the dirty work of the courts of France, who has obtained a power of attorney by making false promises and has rewarded his mandatary by refusing even to communicate with him.

As to the conduct of our own lawyers in France, it is so scandalous that it would be useless to qualify it in polite language.

We need not say that in view of our experience with the French rascality we do not want to sell our property to Frenchmen.

We desire to sell either to Englishmen or Americans, Germans, etc., but under the circumstances we will only sell by contract made in England or in the United States of America, and all the consequences of these contracts will be subject to the jurisdiction of either the English or American courts.

We will only sell for cash, and we will only sign the contract after we have seen the price will have been brought to us in gold.

As to all the silly formalities of transfer of ownership on the books of records of the French Government we desire not to bother either ourselves, and it shall be the business of the purchaser to attend to them if he chooses to waste his time on the matter.



JACQUES LEBAUDY. From a snapshot.

We have the right to sell tracts of land or buildings located in any country without having to obtain the permission of the local sovereign, monarchy or republic, as the case may be.

As to our rights of ownership, they cannot be disputed, resulting as they do from banking transactions or from rights of inheritance, whose duty is to deliver copies of all their records.

Each house, forest, farm, etc., will be sold separately, in order to avoid if possible unnecessary complications.

All offers to be sent to one of the following addresses:

Jacques Premier, Bank of Montreal, New York City; London Joint Stock Bank, London; Caisse Générale de Reports et de Dépôts, Bruxelles; Bank of Africa, Johannesburg; Banco de Chile, Valparaiso.

It was after this proclamation that the emperor says he turned over the disposal of this property to the trust company which he is now suing. It is almost needless to say that his claim has been disputed by the receiver and the Banking Department.

Just why Lebaudy, after entertaining Europe with his escapades and playing the rôle of an opéra bouffe monarch, should have elected to retire into seclusion has long been a mystery. Not even his friends of former days have known in recent years the residence of the emperor. That he is living the life of a country gentleman in one of New York's suburbs will be news to many.

While the former ruler of the Paris boulevards is now seeking a fortune in the courts of this country, that does not mean that he is penniless. He has a large fortune yet. An investigation of the career of the ex-monarch of the desert in this country revealed that at the time Mr. Harriman was reported to be about to rehabilitate the Erie Lebaudy was shrewd enough to purchase a large block of Erie shares at from \$12 to \$15 a share, which he afterward disposed of at from \$30 to \$35 a share. Friends who have since heard of this are convinced that instead of its being evidence of unusual business sagacity it was only another evidence of his eccentricities.

The emperor, they say, had never bothered before with such a sordid subject as the stock market, and in a moment of ennui had undoubtedly done a little blind speculating. No Stock Exchange houses in New York will admit having been the bankers for his majesty in this large operation. Never has he been seen in Wall Street. What subterranean channels he used is one of the mysteries of his curious existence here.

A brilliant and unique individual is this Frenchman, and he comes of an eccentric family. It is just about twenty years ago since he and his brother Max, who was equally eccentric, inherited \$15,000,000 each from their father, the French sugar king. The Parisian wit dubbed him at once "The Little Sugar Bowl."

His brother Max and he were figures in the cafés of Paris, they spent their fortune. Max came near fighting a duel with the Prime Minister of France, and then got mixed up with a gang of blackmailers, and subsequently became the leading figure in a trial which was a cause célèbre. It was alleged that he had been persistently bled by these blackmailers. When Max died his fortune went to the widow and to Jacques. The great French airship makers, Paul and Pierre Lebaudy, are cousins of Jacques Lebaudy.

One of the first things Jacques Premier did upon seeking these shores in 1906 was to acquire the hotel habit. He would walk into a hotel wearing the seediest of clothes, but distinguished often by an ornamental band over his shoulder, indicative of his implied rank. With a flourish he would inscribe his name as Jacques Premier or some other title and secure a room. He would do this often at as many as six hotels the same day, spending a short time at each, and all the while keeping the bell boys running and without offering any gratuities. It is one of his rules never to give tips.

For a year or more the Savoy was his chief residence. One of his diversions there was to line up the bellboys before a table on which he would stack twenty dollar gold pieces in piles, the number of which corresponded to the number of the bellboys. After the latter had been commended to gaze on the money with the idea that it was coming to them, they would be abruptly ordered to disperse while Lebaudy raked in his gold.

On one occasion the Emperor called a messenger boy to his room and then escorted him into a clothing store catering to men of means. There he ordered the salesman to fit the boy out from head to

foot. The boy, with his eyes bulging, saw a complete wardrobe of the finest description laid out and tried on. Suddenly the Emperor, picking up his cane, and with a grimace, turned to the salesman and said: "Hurry up, I can't wait any longer," and hurried from the store, leaving the boy to be divested of his new wardrobe by the astonished and indignant salesman. Messenger boys have been summoned to form the imperial escort when Lebaudy decided to make an excursion abroad. On one occasion several years ago he had messenger boys lead a stallion up and down Broadway while he marched ten paces in the rear. If the messengers did not obey his commands and execute certain evolutions as he directed he dismissed them and sent for others to take their places.

At another time he dressed himself up as an Italian General and astonished people in one of the hotels. When the great Italian parade took place in honor of Columbus three years ago, Lebaudy, wearing the uniform of an Italian General, joined the procession and marched in a separate place which had been assigned to him as a person of high rank. Sending folks scurrying forth to change \$1,000 bills without giving them remuneration for their trouble has been another sport of the Emperor's.

From his refuge in this country it is said that he has at times assailed even Cabinet Ministers of France with cablegrams that ruffled their dignity. On one occasion, it is said, a Cabinet Minister was waked out of his slumbers to receive a cable message. Opening it, he read: "Secoudrel." It came from the exiled Emperor.

One of the first things he did upon arriving here was to rent a post office box, where he received from all over the world reports from his various emissaries and representatives. His mail, according to the post office people, was

Station to distribute in the subway micrograph sheets reading thus: TO ALL STRAY VAGABONDS AND GENERALLY TO ALL MEMBERS OF A STRAYING PUBLIC.

We have the honor to acquaint the public with some interesting facts in connection with the traction trusts (subway and elevated in New York City).

The above trust has no right whatever to enforce the crazy regulation by which each traveler is compelled to buy a piece of paper at a crowded window instead of simply dropping his nickel in a box where tickets are dropped.

Any one travelling on the above railroads as soon as he has paid his nickel is entitled not only to free access to all trains but also to courteous treatment from all employees.

Rhodes of northern Africa was what he planned to make himself at this time, and rumors of what he was about surprised many of his associates.

In all seriousness he planned far reaching irrigation projects for the reclamation of the desert, the establishment of enormous shipping and docking facilities and the creation of a large business enterprise. He appointed his own directors of the company and as a result got into trouble with the minority stockholders. His love for litigation quickly got him enmeshed in the courts of France, where

he always pleaded his own cases with unfortunate results.

It was when the French Government took the side of the minority stockholders that Lebaudy determined to found an empire himself free from the domination of courts and lawyers, where he himself should rule. He also planned to emulate another Parisian clubman who some time before had established himself as King of the Sedangs, his kingdom consisting of a little island called Teo-Man in the Indo-China seas. This clubman's conquest of the island and his subsequent royal state among its savage inhabitants long excited the admiration of the frequenter of the cafés like Lebaudy.

In arranging for his conquest of the Sahara Lebaudy took few into his confidence and the first news that his expedition had landed startled Europe. But it wasn't many days before surprise gave way to laughter.

Lebaudy's yacht the Frasquita was the nucleus of the expedition. It had long been his custom when wearying with life on the boulevards to take some of his companions and go off on a long cruise with a well stocked larder. In May, 1903, he quietly stocked his yacht not only with provisions but also with arms. Rifles, cartridges and machine guns were stowed away on her. Two smaller boats were secured to form the beginning of the Saharan navy. Agents of Lebaudy circulated in French seaports and enlisted a few men, but all told the expedition, it turned out afterward, did not number over fifty.

Before making a landing the boat put into Las Palmas in the Canaries and a few

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more men were picked up, while the Frasquita with the self-proclaimed Emperor on board waited in the offing. When all was ready the Emperor raised the new imperial standard showing three golden beads upon a field of violet and sailed towards the Moroccan coast. That part of the Dark Continent which Lebaudy had marked out for his future empire had not up to that time excited the cupidly of the nations to any great extent. It was just about as tough a portion of the earth's crust as one could select, a land absolutely destitute of vegetation. From the shore back into the interior stretched the desert. When over vessels had been wrecked there those of their crews unfortunate enough to land had been either murdered or carried off into the sandy wastes as slaves. Cape July marked the northern frontier of this Lebaudy empire and Cape Bojador the south. While nominally part of Morocco to all intents and purposes this stretch of sand belonged to none.

Off this coast there appeared one day

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Diversions Which Have Marked His Six Years of Residence in This City—His Opera Bouffe Attempt to Set Up a Desert Empire.

the emperor's expedition. Drawn up on the deck of the flagship was the landing force of ten men, whom Lebaudy, according to the accounts, airily reviewed and then gave his imperial commands. They were ordered to take Troja, he said, without delay. None of the expeditionary force, recruited in the French seaports, had ever heard of Troja. They asked the emperor where it was. He pointed to the horizon and curtly bade them execute his commands. Troja was to be the capital, the Paris of the desert, but it was for them to find it. As a matter of fact it existed only in the brain of Lebaudy.