A CHILEAN GIRL'S HEROISM

CHAPTER I.

At the approach of Christmas tide in the year 1890 the republic of Chile was the hotbed of a growing revolution. Nobody was yet able to predict when the critical moment of the outburst would arrive, but that the long suppressed, bitter resentment against the dictatorial mandates of the president would sooner or later make itself felt by a general uprising of the indignant populace was the conviction of everybody. Grave doubts and fears were entertained by the adherents of the Balmaceda party as to the results that might ensue to the government while the country was writhing in the throes of a revolution.

None of the officials at Santiago and Valparaiso dreamed at the time of a possible revolt of the entire naval forces against the president's government, as proved to be the case later, but it was by no means a secret that men standing high in social and business circles, among them several millionaires, sided with the opposition party, which also had the support of the leading clergy throughout the republic.

Notwithstanding the oppressive feeling of uncertainty and suspense, there was the usual display of gayety and mirth at Christmas, which is generally well observed in all Spanish-American republics, the festivities lasting several days. Valparaiso, largely peopled with foreign residents of many nationalities, always presents a gay and festive aspect at this most beautiful season of the year—early summer in those latitudes—when strawberries, cherries and other early fruits are abundant, and it was likewise so on this occasion. The gathering gloom and dark forebodings of the near future were for a time forgotten and their shadows were not permitted to spread over the city to mar the people's holidays. Society did not deviate from the time-honored custom of merry-making and feasting, forgetting in its gay whirl "war and rumors of war," and the poorer classes of the people exhibited the usual exuberant spirit in their frolics.

In the various "plazas" tribunes and platforms had been erected for the participants in the national fandango, where to the rhythm of "Sambo Quaker," "El Gato" and other hilarious melodies, performed on the numerous guitars and banjos, with tambourine and castanet accompaniment, the dancers tripped the light fantastic toe. Gayly festooned and decorated booths were scattered across the wide expanses of the plazas, in which were served the miscellaneous favorite viands of the country. Between the din of music and the noise of the fandango were heard the shrill notes of the vendors, offering their stock in such high-praising phases as, "Tortillas mui bonito y caliente, cazuela de galina bien sabroso, huevos cozido, pescados fritos, humito caliente," etc., while "chicha," the native cider, vino mosto and aguardiente flowed like water all night long.

The Plaza Arturo Pratt, directly in front of the mole, named in honor of the martyr-captain of the Esmeralda, who was decapitated on board the Peruvian ram Huascar during the Chile-Peruvian war, and whose splendily executed monument adorns the center of the large square, was brilliantly illuminated on Christmas eve, and through the large open windows of the intendencia, across the plaza, streamed a blaze of light from the spacious apartments within. A grand ball and dinner was in progress at the intendencia, to which had been invited the "elite" of the city's society. Wealth and fashion, youth and beauty were assembled, whirling in the mazes of the dance. The intendente, Don Oscar Vidal, who was of Swedish descent, had been an admiral in the Chilean navy, and still enjoyed the honorary title in his present capacity. He was a warm friend and staunch adherent of President Balmaceda, and had invited a number of distinguished officers of the army and navy, among them several Englishmen, to attend the ball, hoping by this coup d'etat to enlist their personal friendship and gain their loyal support of the government in the impending crisis.

One of these officers, a young naval lieutenant, an Englishman, Clifford Wythe by name, who was attached to the staff of Capt. Jorge Montt, afterward president of Chile, of the crusier Blanco Encalada, was seated in a bay window of the salon, in company with a young lady to whom he was betrothed. The girl, whose name was Herminia, a typical Spanish beauty, with long, wavy black hair and black eyes, was the daughter of a wealthy Chilean merchant, a widower named Andrade, and her betrothed was very proud of her. Clifford's mind was preoccupied that night. He scarcely listened to the light banter of the beautiful girl by his side. Something that he wished to confide to her was weighing heavily on his mind, but it was necessary to conduct her to a more secluded spot, where they could converse without being overheard or interrupted, and he was anxiously waiting for an opportunity to offer itself. At last, during a momentary lull in the dancing, while refreshments were being served, he communicated to the girl his desire to speak to her privately for a moment, telling her that he had something of the greatest importance to both, to impart to her. After a while Herminia managed to elude the vigilance of her chaperone, and when dancing began again she slipped through an ante-chamber into the conservatory, where by a preconcerted signal her lover was already awaiting her. After seating themselves in the recess of a balcony that overlooked the broad plaza at their feet and the starlit bay beyond, Clifford without wasteful and unnecessary preliminaries, commenced to unburden his mind.

"Querida," he began, "before I confide to you a most weighty secret, you must promise me to keep it locked in the deepest recesses of your bosom. Aye, but don't look at me, dearest, as though I were a villain about to confess some great crime. Tell me that I can trust you; that you will be discreet and not betray our cause."

"I don't in the least comprehend, Clifford," replied the girl, "what you mean by our cause. Why all this mystery?"

"The mystery will be cleared," said the young officer, "as soon as you promise, by all that is sacred, to keep secret what I wish to tell you. Promise, Herminia, that even if you break all connections with me, hate me, as your father will no doubt in the near future, you will not disclose, for the present at least, what I wish to confide to you."

"I promise, Clifford, in the name of the Holy Virgin!" solemnly answered the girl, making the sign of the cross.

"Know then," proceeded her lover, "that in a few days hence our fleet you see now anchored in yonder bay will be no longer at the disposal of the dictator, but will act in opposition of the strongest kind, if necessary, to the forces which he may still have the power to influence in his favor and put in the field against us, the opposition party, to which I, by my rank and station in the service, rightfully belong. Sweetheart, our cause is a just one, our motto will be the old time-honored one of the great Nelson: 'For liberty and beauty.' Your father, your sister and all your friends will scorn me, term me a revolutionist, a rebel and what not, and will forbid and bar all intercourse between us in the future; but you, guerida, say that you will not forsake me, but stand by me in the coming struggle. Who can tell? It may be but a brief one; the fortunes of war may be on our side, the hateful government existing now may be overthrown, and then all will be well at last and your people may become reconciled and be willing to forgive me. Now that you know all, dearest, what is your answer to my pleading? I long to hear from your sweet lips that you will be true to me at all times, come what may in future."

Herminia's love for her betrothed was too sincere and deep-rooted to allow her for a moment only to consider any obstacle which might arise to mar her happiness. It mattered little to her whether Clifford would be considered a rebel by her father and sister; in her eyes he was a hero, and in every way worthy to receive the love of any pure and noble woman.

Seeing the anxious, imploring look in her lover's eyes when he finished pleading his cause and begged for her answer, Herminia, instead of replying, gently placed both hands on his shoulders and leaning forward imprinted an affectionate kiss on his forehead. This was answer enough for the gallant young officer; he was assured that the girl loved him truly and would not forsake him. Clasping her to his breast in one long, fond embrace and tenderly kissing her, Clifford whispered: "Come, sweetheart, we will be missed. Let us go back now."

Passing again through the conservatory on their way back to the ball room, Clifford stopped for a moment at a fountain, around the basin of which clustered masses of flowering forget-me-nots. Hastily plucking a few sprays of the tiny blossoms, he pressed them between the girl's slender fingers and softly whispered: "Herminia, this may prove our last meeting by ourselves for quite a while. Think of me sometimes during the days before us, and keep these humble flowers to remind you of this night and of my pleading, parting prayer—'forget-me-not.'"

CHAPTER II.

Festivities similar to those of Christmas ushered in the new year—1891—at Valparaiso, and as the turmoil gradually subsided and the city assumed again its usual everyday aspect, the smoldering fires of discontent were again stirred within the breasts of the people, and the one absorbing topic of their thoughts was to seek prompt and speedy redress of their grievances against the government by means of open revolt. Before the middle of January was reached a decidedly turbulent element was rampant, notably among the lower classes of the populace, and the government was forced to adopt stringent measures to suppress the riots, which became of frequent occurrence. The police forces throughout the city were doubled, and after dark mounted squads patrolled the streets and broke up all gatherings and assemblages in the open squares.

Early one morning in January the intendente was startled out of his slumbers by the information, transmitted to him by the captain of the port, that the whole naval squadron was leaving the bay without orders whatsoever from the naval authorities on shore, which unwarranted breach of discipline lead to no other surmise than that the fleet contemplated commencing hostilities against the government of the republic. Military and naval officials in the city who sided with President Balmaceda were dumfounded at the dire calamity that was threatening the government, for it was soon ascertained that the men-of-war were cruising a short distance off shore, commanding the entrance of the bay, and might easily, if so inclined, run the gauntlet of the few small forts and bombard the city after a proclamation to the foreign residents.

The news spread like wild fire among the populace, and large crowds began to assemble on the mole and adjacent streets. Adherents of the opposition party began to celebrate by freely imbibing in liquor and soon shouts of "Viva la opposicion!" were heard, as the "peons" in their befuddled condition began to mingle with the crowd. The better element of the people, however, remained orderly and quiet, for it was not safe to utter expressions of sympathy. The police and government spies were on the alert and arrests might follow promptly.

The only foreign man-of-war in port at the time was the British corvette Champion. Two old wooden vessels, one used as a school ship for the cadets from the naval college, the other as a store ship, were the only government vessels left at anchor in the bay by the squadron, which was composed of strong and well equipped iron battleships and cruisers, built in England. The Almirante Cochrane, Blanco Encalada, Esmeralda and others were of their number, all carrying heavy armaments. During the forenoon steam launches from the fleet, manned by well-armed crews, entered the bay and captured several large lighters, which were towed alongside of the school ship, where all the hammocks and clothes of the cadets were confiscated and loaded into them, the youngsters being told to repair ashore in the best manner possible and report themselves at the naval college. All the stores from the store ship were likewise loaded into the lighters, which were then towed out of the bay towards the squadron.

Crowds of peons and people of all classes and standing went out in the bay in all manner of craft for the purpose of offering their services as volunteers in the ranks of the opposition forces, and, as may be imagined, they were gladly accepted and forthwith transferred on board the men-of-war, where they were uniformed and well provided for. Money in plenty was at the disposal of the naval squadron, Don Augustin Edwards, the rich banker, and other prominent millionaires were aboard the different vessels of the fleet, and it was easy for the opposition party to defray all expenses and offer tempting inducements to the men serving their cause, feeding and paying them well and regularly, which was the reverse with the soldiers of Balmaceda's government, who were ill-fed and poorly paid and would desert whenever an opportunity presented itself.

On the second day of the insurrection, at an early hour in the morning, while the boats of the various butchers and ship chandlers who supplied the merchant shipping were out in the bay to deliver the meat, vegetables, etc., they were surprised by the armed boats of the squadron, which confiscated all their supplies and carried them aboard the men-of-war, to the great discomfiture of the butchers and their customers. Nothing had been done so far by the government to interfere with the movements of the insurgents, but when later in the day the boats again entered the bay for the purpose of securing more volunteers, they were fired upon from the mole, where a detachment of soldiers had been stationed with two Gatling guns behind a high barricade of sand bags. The boats returned the fire and after having secured another batch of volunteers, of whom several were wounded in the melee, beat a hasty retreat. Strict orders were now issued by the captain of the port to all masters of merchant vessels, forbidding all communication between the shore and the shipping. All the boats of the "fleteros" were laid up, and the crews aboard the vessels in the harbor had to subsist on salt provisions for the while. The Champion's boats were the only ones permitted to land on the mole. On steamer days strict surveillance was exercised over all passengers entering or leaving the port by the steamers of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, which sail under the British flag and were allowed to enter the port. All the steamers of the Chilean company were chartered by the government to serve as troop ships and transports, after being furnished with armament. Reinforcements of troops arrived from Santiago to defend the city against attack, and recruiting was carried on by the government throughout the country, meeting with small results, however. The fortifications of the bay were supplied with heavier ordnance, and the beach as far as the mouth of the harbor was patrolled night and day by armed forces. Notwithstanding these precautions, the oppositionists succeeded in capturing several of the Chilean company's steamers, some small tugs, and even the captain of the port's steam launch.

The first fatalities occurred when an armed tug of the insurgents entered the harbor one day and opened fire on coaches in which a regiment of soldiers were being conveyed from the railway station to the mole. Three soldiers and several horses were killed outright, and a couple of drivers severely wounded. For the purpose of enlisting the sympathies of the populace, the authorities got up a most imposing military funeral procession at the burial of the dead soldiers, but the public spirit ran high in favor of the opposition party, and no grief or mourning was evinced; the streets through which the cortege passed were silent and deserted.

Those of the newspapers that sided with the government now took up the gauntlet and declared in flaunting language in their columns that it was high time something was done to suppress the rebellion. One periodical, only lately organized, and bearing the name of "El Recluto" (the Recruit), was particularly vehement in its denunciations of Montt, the clergy and the whole opposition party, and declared in emphatic terms that the whole naval squadron ought to be forthwith blown up by means of torpedoes. Declarations like these helped to rouse the slumbering spirit of the government to action, but it was necessary to use the greatest discretion, for it was well known in Valparaiso that the commander of the Champion and Capt. Jorge Montt, of the cruiser Blanco Encalada, who was commander-in-chief of the whole insurgent fleet, were intimate friends, having been at college together in England, and that the insurgents were informed of everything that was going on in the city, as the Champion frequently left the bay for a cruise outside, where visits were exchanged between the two commanders. On one occasion the Champion went to Coquimbo, and, Montt's squadron now being unable to receive information of what was transpiring in Valparaiso and Santiago, this was thought a glorious opportunity for the government to put into execution the following plan: It was decided to tow out of the harbor at night a raft to which several large sized torpedoes would be appended, to be detached at a favorable moment and sent under the stern of the Blanco Encalada, which was always on guard in the offing of the bay, blowing up that vessel with all on board. It was thought that this would bring a crisis in the situation, as not only Montt, but many others of the ringleaders of the revolution would be put out of the way, and the other vessels might submit to terms of surrender. No fears of a betrayal of the plan to the enemy were entertained, for it was utterly impossible for a boat to leave the shores of the inner harbor and communicate with the squadron, the sharpest vigilance being maintained at all times. It was not known how soon the Champion would return, and preparations were at once begun to put into execution the designs of destroying the cruiser.

CHAPTER III.

In the Andrade household the news of the insurrection of the fleet had created the greatest surprise to all except one of its members. Herminia, not wishing to arouse the suspicions of her father and her sister Alvina, assumed some outward show of uneasiness and concern, but in reality the girl was calm and collected, because she had been prepared for the event long before hand. She believed, as did thousands of others at the time, that in the end the party to which her betrothed belonged would come out victorious, and the only anxiety she felt was lest something dreadful and unforeseen should befall Clifford. When alone she prayed devoutly to the Virgin for her lover's safe return. Her father persisted that henceforth she must break all connections with "that gringo," whom he termed a foul traitor to the country of his adoption. Herminia merely vouchsafed the reply that she would be true to her lover at all times and under all circumstances, at which old Andrade frowned, declaring in loud tones that his doors would be barred to her should she ever attempt to clandestinely marry "that recreant gringo."

The preparations for the torpedo attack were completed in one day and the same evening the local press gave a detailed account of the whole arrangement. Old Andrade and his daughter Alvina, while reading the papers, were discussing what effect the dire news would produce upon Herminia upon her return home, for the girl had been out visiting some friends during the afternoon, and when she finally arrived they were surprised that she was already aware of the whole situation. On her return home she had bought a copy of the Recluto from one of the newsboys who in shrill notes were offering the "extras" of the evening edition on the streets, and which she now held opened in her hand. As calm and unmoved as the sphinx was the girl, to all outward appearance, but the inmost depths of her heart were stirred with overwhelming emotions. Her ardent nature rebelled against the contemplated designs of the people of her own race against one another, and she was determined to save at all hazards not only her betrothed, but every soul on board the doomed ship, and was also willing to sacrifice her own life in the attempt if need be.

Partaking of but little food at the late dinner that night, and speaking only in monosyllables, she early left the company of her father and sister and retired to her own rooms. Entering her bed chamber, she locked the door and, dropping on her knees in front of the bed, she buried her feverish head in the depths of the pillows and prayed long and fervently to the Virgin. "Oh, Holy Mother of God," she sobbed, "in Thy great mercy show me the proper way and means to save those poor souls from the clutches of satan, and I promise Thee faithfully to devote my life hereafter to the poor and afflicted." Then, suddenly recalling the parting words of her lover—"forget me not"—she drew from her bosom the tiny sprays of the now faded flowers, and, pressing them to her lips, exclaimed: "Clifford, I have never forgotten you, and if the good God gives me strength to perform my task all will yet be well."

The plan upon which the brave girl had resolved could not be acted upon until everybody in the house had retired for the night, for she knew that to be seen going out alone at this late hour would arouse suspicions. Sitting down at an open window in her sitting room she let the cool breezes fan her aching temples while she gazed out into the beautiful starlit night and upon the blue waters of the bay beyond. When at last assured that everything was quiet, the girl donned a dark shawl, which she drew closely over her head and about her features, after the custom of the country, and having put all her jewelry and what money she possessed into her pockets, she crept softly along the corridor, past her sister's bedroom, and down the stairs into the spacious hall, where she noiselessly unlocked the huge front door and passed out into the street.

Stealthily wending her way through the almost deserted thoroughfares, unmolested and scarcely observed by the police, she at last reached the city limits and walked briskly out into the suburbs toward a long sandy plain, called La Playa Ancha. On this plain, which lies on a promontory south of the city and its bay, stands the lighthouse, and a few isolated dwellings, mostly humble fishermen's cottages, are also scattered about in irregular style.

In one of these cottages lived Manuel Lopez, a bright young fisherman, nicknamed "Chica," on account of his fondness for that exhilarating beverage, whose wife had been a domestic in the Andrade household before her marriage, and who was greatly devoted to Herminia, the latter having often befriended the couple in times of need. Having arrived at the abode of these people, Herminia softly tapped several times at one of the narrow windows, and finally succeeded in arousing the sleeping inmates and gaining admittance. Martha, the fisherman's wife, was thoroughly frightened and bewildered at beholding the pale, trembling girl in the middle of the night, but Herminia soon allayed her fears and assured her that no harm had befallen her, but that she had simply come to see whether Manuel would at earliest dawn pull her around the lighthouse point to the offing of the bay and alongside the cruiser Blanco Encalada in one of his small boats. She explained that it was impossible for any one to hire a boat in the inner harbor, and that she had an important message to deliver on board the cruiser.

Lopez was horrorstricken. He wanted to know why in the name of all the saints the dear senorita might possibly want to commit such folly as to go out in the middle of the night, unaccompanied by any of her friends, and for the purpose of making such a silly request. Did the dear child not know that to be seen going out to those "rebel ships" meant certain destruction, and did she really for a moment contemplate to find anybody foolhardy enough to undertake such a mission? Why, if the government found out the person attempting it, it meant death, perhaps, and who could tell that a boat approaching the cruiser might not be fired into and sunk? No, chiquita, not for all the money in the treasury at Santiago could he be persuaded to risk his life in such a crazy venture. The good soul knew perfectly well that the girl's lover was attached to the staff of Capt. Montt, and he naturally thought the girl was only love sick and yearned for an interview with Clifford before the fleet commenced hostile operations.

"Listen to me, Manuel," said the girl, when at last she was allowed to put in a word; "I am utterly determined, and since you refuse to go out with me I will go alone, but go I must and will. I cannot explain to you now the reason of my strange conduct. It may puzzle you and appear unbecoming to a girl of my station in life, but at some later date, perhaps, you will be convinced that you misjudged my action and that I only performed my duty, like a true Christian, toward my fellow beings. The whole affair may end in my utter ruin, but nothing shall deter me, and all I beg of you is to let me have one of your small boats at daybreak and give me a suit of your fisherman's clothes to don. They will fit me admirably."

Pulling from her pockets what money she possessed along with some valuable trinkets, she pressed the whole into Martha's hands, imploring her to intercede on her behalf. That good woman finally managed to bring her lord and master to terms, but both steadfastly refused to take more than the money, which amply paid for the boat that would be lost to them, for the girl declared she intended to remain on board the cruiser, if ever she were fortunate enough to reach there, until she could be landed at Caldera, where an aunt of hers was living. Only a short time remained until dawn, and it was necessary for Manuel to go at once and get a rowboat in readiness which was moored with his larger fishing craft in a little cove back of the lighthouse. When he was gone, his good spouse endeavored, by every possible ruse she could think of, to once more dissuade Herminia from her adventurous undertaking, but it availed naught, for the girl was not to be thwarted. The parting words of her lover—"forget me not"—kept ringing in her ears, and ever and anon she clasped her hands across her heaving bosom, where within the folds of her dress lay hidden the faded sprays of forget-me-nots.

After partaking of some mate (Paraguayan tea) which the good Martha had prepared for her, Herminia hurriedly divested herself of her feminine apparel and donned the coarse fisherman's garb, which was by no means ill-becoming to her supple figure. Her thick black tresses she plaited tightly in a knot at the back of her head, which she covered with one of Manuel's sou'-westers.

Manuel returned just before daybreak, and after bidding a cheery farewell to the weeping Martha, Herminia followed the fisherman lightly down the hill to the cove where the little rowboat was lying ready. Nobody was astir at this early hour, not yet 4 o'clock, to witness the proceedings of the pair, and after a hearty hand-shake with Manuel no time was lost by Herminia in putting off from the shore. It was a beautiful, calm morning. The sea was as smooth as glass, and it was an easy matter for the spirited girl to work the light oars. After rounding the point by the lighthouse, she pulled directly toward the offing of the bay, where could be seen the towering black hulls of the men-of-war. When drawing nearer Herminia descried a large white boat of the squadron coming directly toward her. For a moment her heart seemed to stop beating, but, instantly recovering her presence of mind, she proceeded to raise a long boathook, to which she attached a large white handkerchief, in the bow of her little craft, and kept on pulling in the direction of the approaching boat, which proved to be a cutter from the Esmeralda, out on picket duty. "Boat ahoy!" presently came the challenge of the coxswain, and the eight armed oarsmen stopped pulling. "Friend! Friend and supporter of the cause of the opposition, bearing an important message for Capt. Jorge Montt and for the whole squadron," answered Herminia promptly, and a moment later she was alongside of the cutter and the oars slipped from her grasp. From a pocket in her trousers she drew forth the copy of the Recluto containing the description of the torpedo attack arrangements, and presented it to an officer in the sternsheets of the cutter, to whom she also explained in broken sentences the purport of her mission and made known her sex and the reasons for disguising herself. Then suddenly all her strength and self-possession, which up to this moment had never failed, forsook her, and as amid a storm of applause and rousing cheers she was lifted into the stern of the cutter, God's mercy remembered her and in the black blank of a swoon she sank into oblivion.

CHAPTER IV.

Lopez' boat was set adrift, and the cutter with the brave, unconscious girl, through whose devotion the squadron was enabled to be on the alert against the attack contemplated by the foe for the ensuing night, at once headed for the Esmeralda, where on arrival the officer in charge reported to his superior the extraordinary intelligence which Herminia had forwarded. Stepping to the gangway, the commander took a hasty glance at the prostrate form in the cutter's stern, and a moment later rang out the sharp clear command of the boatswain: "Up second cutter! Man the boat's-falls," and when the cutter had been swung in the davits strong arms tenderly raised the still unconscious girl and bore her to a seat under the awning of the quarterdack, where the ship's surgeon applied restoratives and soon brought her back to consciousness.

As the news of Herminia's daring spread among the ship's company, the men became eager to gain a look of the adventurous girl, and the commander noticing this, gallantly escorted her to the railings of the quarterdeck and, making a short speech, introduced her to the assembled seamen, who broke out in lusty cheers and waved their caps, and as Herminia stood there, with uncovered head, the morning sunshine sparkling on the beautiful hair, her crowning glory, she looked a veritable goddess of Sirion.

After partaking of refreshments Herminia was conveyed on board the Blanco Encalada, the flagship of the insurgent squadron, and presented to the commander-in-chief, who warmly thanked her for the noble services rendered to him and all of his command, and summoning Clifford he left her to his care.

The latter could hardly believe his senses when he stood face to face with his betrothed and heard from her own lips the whole story. Tears streamed down his cheeks as he tenderly embraced this jewel of a woman, who had so nobly kept her promise to remember him at all times.

Signals were made to the other vessels of the squadron to weigh anchor at once, and, keeping well off shore, proceed northward as far as Coquimbo. Thus, for the present at least, the designs of the foe were frustrated, to the great chagrain of the government authorities, who discovered that the contemplated torpedo attack was a "ruse de guerre" that had failed.

The Blanco Encalada went to Caldera for the purpose of landing Herminia, who had a near relative living at that port, with whom she intended to stop until further developments. Clifford accompanied his sweetheart ashore and enjoyed a pleasant visit in her company at her aunt's house while his vessel remained in port. The captain of the port and the intendente deserted their posts when the cruiser first appeared off the mouth of the harbor, and the sleepy old town was guarded by only a few policemen.

After her return to Valparaiso the Blanco Encalada was fired into early one morning while lying in the offing of the bay by one of the forts. A shell from a large gun that had lately been mounted exploded in the after part of the vessel, killing nine men, which caused great indignation among the people on shore, but few of whom sided with the Balmaceda party now. The insurgents were positively denied a burial of their dead on shore by the authorities, but through the intercession of the Champion's commander a permit was finally extended them to land the dead bodies in one of the Champion's boats and have them sent to the cemetery by the local authorities. This event caused the insurgents to determine on retaliation, and shortly afterward a message, transmitted by the Champion's commander, informed the British consul that within twenty-four hours the city of Valparaiso would be bombarded by the fleet. The other foreign consuls were duly notified of this intention, as also were the city authorities. The merchant vessels were unmoored forthwith and hauled further up the bay, out of range of the enemy's guns, and all foreigners were ordered to repair on board the shipping, while the inhabitants were warned to seek safety in the hills back of the city.

The next day at noon the bombardment was to begin, but nothing came of it, for which the inhabitants were indebted to the Champion's commander, who in the nick of time persuaded Montt to abandon the plan of destroying the fine city. He advised him to capture the smaller northern ports first, and after having secured ample reinforcements, return, land a large body of men in the neighborhood of Valparaiso and march in and take formal possession of the city. This plan was adopted by the insurgent commander and proved advantageous, as plainly demonstrated by later events. The ports of Coquimbo and Caldera were easily taken by the squadron, and by the time Antofogasta was reached the government had dispatched several transports with troops to that place and to Iquique to oppose the insurgents. Many of the troops deserted and joined the ranks of the opposition, lured by the offers of good pay and substantial food, which they had never received while serving the dictator's government. At Iquique a fierce battle was fought, the government forces valiantly defending the port to the last until they were finally obliged to surrender.

The saddest calamity to the insurgents was the sinking of Montt's flagship, the noble Blanco Encalada, in Caldera bay by one of the new torpedo boats built in England, which arrived in Valparaiso during the revolution and while the squadron was in the northern ports. Two hundred persons lost their lives in this catastrophe. Capt. Montt, Clifford Wythe and some of the other officers were ashore sitting at a pending court-martial and thus escaped with their lives.

Gradually, but firmly, step by step, the insurgents gained their cause. One transport after another was captured, until there finally remained to the government only the swift steamer Imperial, which after being chased for fourteen hours by the Esmeralda made her escape. The steamer Maipu was taken out of Valparaiso harbor at night by a stratagem of the adherents of the opposition party, and turned over to them with all the troops on board.

At last there came the closing events of the insurrection, the landing of the forces at Quintero, the battles of Cocon and La Placilla, and when Balmaceda discovered, only too late, that everything was against him and that his cause was helplessly lost, in utter desperation he took his own life.

Herminia Andrade had watched the long struggle with the keenest interest, cherishing all the while golden hopes and indulging in bright fancies of the future, but alas, fate was against her. In an encounter at Quintero her lover, who had been attached to the Esmeralda since the sinking of the Blanco Encalada, was dangerously wounded and when his ship arrived at Valparaiso and the opposition party had taken possession of the city he was sent to the hospital. Herminia arrived from Caldera just in time to be at the bedside of her lying lover. All her tender care and nursing could avail nothing. Slowly but steadily Clifford sank, and the day after her arrival, early in the morning the fatal moment came.

Clasping the hands of the weeping girl, who was bending over him, he kissed her for the last time.

"Darling," he murmured in broken accents, "you have never forgotten me. May God bless you for all you have done for me, and be with you till we meet again beyond the river, where the darkness shall be over." The next moment Clifford Wythe lay dead.

In the Hospital de Caridad, in Valparaiso, among the Sisters of Charity, Herminia passes her time tenderly nursing the sick and afflicted, and none is more beloved and revered than she. The silent grief over the untimely death of her lover has made her reserved, and the traces of a troubled past are plainly visible in her still beautiful but pensive features.

In the window of her little room at the hospital she tenderly nurses pots of flowering forget-me-nots, in remembrance of the one she loved so well, and the tiny sprays, plucked by his hand on that memorable Christmas eve lie withered and faded between the leaves of her prayer book.

JOHN F. MICHAELIS.

AUSTRIA'S VILE PRINCES.

Not One of Those Near to the Throne Is Acceptable.

Vienna Letter.

Once more, since the death of Crown Prince Rudolph, the close attention of the Austrians and Hungarians is turned to the question of the succession to the throne of Austro-Hungary. The cause of it is the severe illness of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the presumptive heir. Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who on his trip around the world, in 1893, visited the United States and the World's fair in Chicago, is at present in Egypt, hopelessly suffering with consumption, like the heir to Russia's throne.

The semi-official press of Vienna says truly that now, among those members of the Hapsburg family who stand next to the emperor, there is not one whose succession to the throne could be considered by the nation as in the least desirable, or even acceptable. The emperor's brother, Archduke Charles Louis, for instance, is, although a perfectly respectable person, exceedingly unpopular. He is known as a narrow-minded, reactionary man, who detests any kind of progress and reform. The Hungarians, though faithful to Emperor Francis Joseph, surely would never submit to Charles Louis, and his advent on the throne would be threatening for the stability of the dual empire.

Archduke Charles Louis' youngest son, Otto, brother of the dying Archduke Francis Ferdinand, is another candidate for the throne. But Archduke Otto is the "black sheep" of the Hapsburg family. The conduct of this young prince would undoubtedly be amusing, if it were not so deplorable and disgraceful. Archduke Otto, now 30 years old, was married seven years ago to Princess Josepha of Saxony, a charming woman, who suffered pitiably by her husband's misdemeanors. Soon after his marriage, for instance, Prince Otto, who held then a commission in a cavalry regiment, invited several officers to his palace. After a hard drinking, he asked his guests to follow him upstairs to his wife's bedroom, in order to show them how an archduchess looked when in bed. They really went upstairs. But before the archduchess' door stood the chamberlain, Maj. Count von Duerkheim, an energetic officer, who unhesitatingly drew his sword and threatened to run it through any one, except the archduke, who attempted to pass. Upon Count Duerkheim's report Prince Otto was summoned before the emperor, and it is alleged that the monarch in a fit of fury slapped the young archduke's face. Another, not less disgraceful, illustration of Archduke Otto's conduct is the following fact:

One day while out riding in the country he met a peasant's funeral. He stopped it, ordered the coffin to be set down on the ground, and after his order was obeyed he jumped his horse several times over the coffin. This incident created such a scandal that it became the object of a discussion in the imperial parliament in Vienna, and the emperor imposed upon the archduke a close military arrest for several months.

Under such circumstances the brisk dislike of the Austro-Hungarian nation against the succession to the throne of either of those two archdukes can be readily understood. Consequently, Emperor Francis Joseph, having always at heart the welfare of his people, already has adopted measures to debar his brother and his nephew from the throne succession. At the same time it is said that the emperor took steps to assure the inheritance to the eldest son of his favorite daughter, Maria Valeria. As there is no law to prevent the emperor from nominating as his heir to the throne his young grandson Francis, this imperial resolution will undoubtedly be carried out and unanimously adopted by the people of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

THE NEW PHOTOGRAPHY.

A Strange Medium Which Produces Images of Hidden Objects.

London Letter in New York Sun.

The marvels of Prof. Routgen's new photography are even greater than those which I have described in recent dispatches. All the professor's experiments have been successfully repeated in London this week, and many of them were shown at the meeting of the Camera Club on Thursday. It proves that the strange medium which produces images of hidden objects on a photograph plate is not light at all. It is equally incorrect to describe it as electricity. It is some force or influence produced by Crooke's tube when excited in a peculiar manner, but it is not the visible light or glow which comes from the tube. That visible light has the same qualities as an ordinary light. The invisible new medium has not the same qualities. For instance, it will not penetrate clear glass. It must penetrate ground glass though more feebly than wood and other organic matter. Aluminum is far more transparent than glass. Even copper is less opaque than glass.

Mr. Swinton, the well-known electrical engineer, showed a large collection of these strange photographs which had been taken to the Camera Club. He employed a half horse power electric current, and passing it through an induction coil, loaded ten Leyden jars. The discharge from them was passed through a second induction coil by a secondary system by which Crooke's tube was excited. He said that he had only succeeded in this way, and had failed with Crooke's tubes excited by an ordinary induction coil.

He showed pictures of the skeleton of a living human hand, a purse containing coins in which only the coins and the metal clasp of the purse were reproduced, and other objects.

The method of procedure was simply to place the object to be photographed between Crooke's tube and the usual wooden case containing the sensitive plate in which the negative is placed when carried to and from the camera. The slide is not removed, and an exposure of from four to twenty minutes is required.

THE NEW WOMAN.

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TRAINS LEAVE SEATTLE—
For St. Paul and East, 4:30 p. m.
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*For Olympia and Gray's Harbor, 2:05 p. m.
*For South Bend, 12:20 p. m.
For Tacoma, 7:10 and 9 a. m., 12:20, 2:05, 4:30 and 10 p. m.

TRAINS ARRIVE AT SEATTLE—
From St. Paul and East, 2:35 p. m.
From Portland, 8:40 a. m. and 6:50 p. m.
*From Olympia and Gray's Harbor, 11:30 a. m.
*From South Bend, 6:50 p. m.
From Tacoma, 8:40 and 11:30 a. m., 2:35, 4:30, 6:50 and 9:20 p. m.
*Daily, except Sunday. All others daily.

Trains leaving Seattle at 9 a. m. and 2:05 p. m. make no stop between Seattle and Tacoma.

Trains leaving Tacoma at 10:30 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. make no stops between Tacoma and Seattle.

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