A Woman Intervenes

By ROBERT BARR.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

After the business of transferring the mine to its new owner was completed, John Kenyon went to the telegraph office and sent a short cable message to Wentworth. Then he turned his steps to the hotel, an utterly exhausted man. The excitement and tension of the day had been too much for him, and he felt that if he did not get out of the city of Ottawa and into the country, where there were fewer people and more

He Wrote a Second Letter Contradicting the Request of the First.

air, he was going to be ill. He resolved to leave for the mine as soon as possible. There he would get things in as good order as possible and keep things going until he heard from the owner. When he got to his hotel he wrote a letter to Wentworth, telling the circumstances under which he had secured the mine, rather briefly, and dealing with other more personal matters. Having posted this he began to pack his portmanteau preparatory to leaving early next morning. While thus occupied the bell boy came into his room and said: "There is a gentleman wishes to see you."

He imagined at once that it was Von Brent, who wished to see him with regard to some formality relating to the transfer, and he was, therefore, very much astonished, in fact, for the moment speechless, to see Mr. William Longworth enter and calmly gaze round the rather shabby room with his critical eyeglass.

"Ah," he said, "these are your diggings, are they? This is what they call a dollar hotel, I suppose, over here? Well, some people may like it, but I confess I don't care much about it myself. Their three or four dollar a day hotels are bad enough for me. By the way, you look rather surprised to see me. Being strangers together in a strange country, I expected a warmer greeting. You said last night in front of the Russell House that it would please you very much to give me a warm greeting; perhaps you would like to do so tonight."

"Have you come up here to provoke a quarrel with me?" asked Kenyon.

"Oh, bless you, no. Quarrel! Nothing of the sort. What should I want to quarrel about?"

"Perhaps you will be good enough to tell me why you come here, then?"

"Very reasonable request, very reasonable, indeed, and perfectly natural, but still quite unnecessary. It is not likely that a man would climb up here into your rooms and then not be prepared to tell you why he came. I came, in the first place, to congratulate you on the beautiful and dramatic way in which you secured the mine at the last moment, or apparently at the last moment. I suppose you had the money all along?"

"No, I had not."

"Then you came in to Von Brent just as soon as you received it?"

"Well, now, I don't see that it is the business of any one else but myself. Still, if you want to know, I have no objection to saying that I came to Mr. Von Brent's room at the moment I received the money."

"Really! Then it was sent over by cable, I presume?"

"Your presumption is entirely correct."

"My dear Kenyon," said the young man, seating himself without being asked, and gazing at John in a benevolent kind of way, "you really show some little temper over this affair of ours. Now here is the whole thing in a nutshell—"

"My dear sir, I don't wish to hear the whole thing in a nutshell. I know all about it. All I wish to know."

"Ah, precisely, of course you do, certainly, but nevertheless let me have my say. Here is the whole thing. I tried to—well, to cheat you. I thought I could make a little money by doing so, and my scheme failed. Now if any body should be in a bad temper it is I, not you. Don't you see that? You are not acting your part well at all. I'm astonished at you!"

"Mr. Longworth, I wish to have nothing whatever to say to you. If you have anything to ask I wish you would ask it as quickly as possible and then leave me alone."

"The chief fault I find with you, Kenyon," said Longworth, throwing one leg over the other and clasping his hands around his knee, "the chief fault I have to find is your painful lack of a sense of humor. Now, you remember last night I offered you the managership of the mine. I thought certainly that by this time today I should be the owner of it, or at least one of the owners. Now you don't appear to appreciate the funniness of the situation. Here you are, the owner of the mine, and I am out in the cold—'left,' as they say here in America. I am the man who is left—"

"If that is all you have to talk about," said Kenyon gravely, "I must ask you to allow me to go on with my packing. I am going to the mine tomorrow."

"Certainly, my dear fellow, go at once and never mind me. Can I be of any assistance to you? It requires a special genius, you know, to pack a portmanteau properly. But what I wanted to say was this—why didn't you turn around, when you had got the mine, and offer me the managership of it? Then you could have had your revenge. The more I think of that episode in Von Brent's office the more I think you utterly failed to realize the dramatic possibilities of the situation."

Kenyon was silent.

"Now all this time you are wondering why I came here. Doubtless you wish to know what I want."

"I have not the slightest interest in the matter," said Kenyon.

"That is ungracious, but nevertheless I will continue. It is better, I see, to be honest with you, if a person wants to get anything out of you. I want to know where you got the money with which you bought the mine?"

"I got it from the bank."

"Ah, yes, but I want to know who sent it over to you."

"It was sent to me by George Wentworth."

"Quite so, but now I want to know who gave Wentworth the money?"

"You will have a chance of finding that out when you go to England by asking him."

"Then you won't tell me?"

"I can't tell you."

"You mean by that, of course, that you won't."

"I always mean, Mr. Longworth, exactly what I say. I mean that I can't tell you. I don't know myself."

"Really?"

"Yes, really. You seem to have some difficulty in believing that anybody can speak the truth."

"Well, it isn't a common vice—speaking the truth. You must forgive a little surprise." He nursed his knee for a moment, and looked meditatively up at the ceiling. "Now would you like to know who furnished that money?"

"I have no curiosity in the matter, whatever."

"Have you not? Well, you are a singular man. It seems to me that a person into whose lap £20,000 drops from the skies would have some little curiosity to know from whom the money came."

"I haven't the slightest."

"Nevertheless, I will tell you who gave the money to Wentworth. It was my dear friend Melville. I didn't tell you in New York, of course, that Melville and I had a little quarrel about this matter, and he went home decidedly huffy. I had no idea he would take this method of revenge, but I see it quite clearly now. He knew I had received the option of the mine. There was a little trouble as to what each of our respective shares was to be, and I thought, as I had secured the option, I had the right to dictate terms. He thought differently. He was going to Von Brent to explain the whole matter, but I pointed out that such a course would do no good, the option being legally made out in my name, so that the moment your claim expired, mine began. When this dawned upon him, he took the steamer and went to England. Now I can see his hand in this finish to the affair. It was a pretty sharp trick of Melville's, and I give him credit for it. He is a very much shrewder and cleverer man than I thought."

"It seems to me, Mr. Longworth, that your inordinate conceit makes you always underestimate your friends, or your enemies either, for that matter."

"There is something in that, Kenyon; I think you are more than half right, but I thought, perhaps, I could make it advantageous to you to do me a favor in this matter. I thought you might have no objection to writing a little document to the effect that the money did not come in time, and consequently I had secured the mine. Then, if you would sign that I could take it over to Melville and make terms with him. Of course, if he knows that he has the mine there will not be much chance of coming to any arrangement with him."

"You can make no arrangements with me, Mr. Longworth, that involve a sacrifice of the truth."

"Ah, well, I suspected as much, but I thought it was worth while to try. However, my dear sir, I may make terms with Melville yet, and then I imagine you won't have much to do with the mine."

"I shall not have anything to do with it if you and Melville have a share in it. And if, as you suspect, Melville has the mine, I consider you are in a bad way. My opinion is that when one rascal gets an advantage over another rascal, the other rascal will be, as you say, 'left.'"

Longworth mused over this for a moment and said: "Yes, I fear you are right—in fact, I am certain of it. Well, that is all I wanted to know. I will bid you good-by. I shan't see you again in Ottawa, as I shall sail very shortly for England. Have you any messages you would like given to your friends over there?"

"None, thank you."

"Well, ta ta," and the young man left John to his packing.

When that necessary operation was concluded, Kenyon sat down and thought over what young Longworth had told him. His triumph, after all, had been shortlived. The choice between the two scoundrels was so small that he felt he didn't care which of them owned the mine. Meditating upon this disagreeable subject he suddenly remembered a request he had asked Wentworth to make to the new owner of the mine. He wanted no favor from Melville, so he wrote a second letter contradicting the request made in the first, and after posting it returned to his hotel and went to bed, probably the most tired man in the city of Ottawa.

CHAPTER XXVII.

This chapter consists largely of letters. As a general thing letters are of little concern to any one except the writers and the receivers, but they are inserted here under the hope that the reader is already well enough acquainted with the correspondents to feel some interest in what they have written.

It was nearly a fortnight after the receipt of the cablegram from Kenyon that George Wentworth found one morning on his desk two letters, each bearing a Canadian postage stamp. One was somewhat bulky and one was thin, but they were both from the same writer. He tore open the thin one first, without looking at the date that was stamped upon it. He was a little bewildered by its contents, which ran as follows:

"My Dear George: I have just heard that Melville is the man who has bought the mine. The circumstances of the case leave no doubt in my mind that such is the fact; therefore please disregard the request I made as to employment in the letter I posted to you a short time ago. I feel a certain sense of disappointment in the fact that Melville is the owner of the mine. It seems I have only kept one rascal from buying it to put it in the hands of another rascal. Your freiend, John Kenyon."

"Melville the owner!" cried Wentworth to himself. "Whatever could have put that into John's head? This letter is evidently the one posted a few hours before, so it will contain whatever request he has to make," and, without delay, George Wentworth tore open the envelope of the second letter, which was obviously the one written first. It contained a number of documents relating to the transfer of the mine. The letter from John himself went on to give particulars of the buying of the mine. Then it continued, "I wish you would do me a favor, George. Will you kindly ask the owner of the mine if he will give me charge of it. I am, of course, anxious to make it turn out as well as possible, and I believe I can earn more than my salary, whatever it is. You know I am not grasping in the matter of money, but get me as large a salary as you think I deserve.

"I desire to make money for reasons that are not entirely selfish, as you know. To tell you the truth, George, I am tired of cities and of people. I want to live here in the woods, where there is not so much deceit and treachery as there seems to be in the big towns. When I reached London last time I felt like a boy getting home. My feelings have undergone a complete change, and I think, if it were not for you and a certain young lady, I should never care to see the big city again. What is the use of my affecting mystery and writing the words 'a certain young lady.' Of course, you know whom I mean—Miss Edith Longworth. You know that I am, and have long been, in love with her. If I had succeeded in making the money I thought I should by selling the mine. I might have had some hopes of making more, and of ultimately being in a position to ask her to be my wife. But that, and very many other hopes, have disappeared with my recent London experiences.

"I want to get into the woods and recover some of my lost tone and my lost faith in human nature. If you can arrange matters with the owner of the mine so that I may stay here for a year or two, you will do me a great favor."

George Wentworth read over the latter part of this letter two or three times. Then he rose, paced the floor, and pondered over the matter. "It isn't a thing upon which I can ask anyone's advice," he muttered to himself. "The trouble with Kenyon is he is entirely too modest. A little useful self-esteem would be just the thing for him." At last he stopped suddenly in his walk. "By Jove," he said to himself, slapping his thigh. "I shall do it, let the consequences be what they may." And he sat down to his desk and wrote a letter.

"My dear Miss Longworth," it began, "you told me when you were here last that you wanted all the documents in the case of the mine in every instance. A document has come this morning that is very important. John Kenyon, as you will learn by reading the letter, desires the managership of the mine. I need not say that I think he is the best man in the world for the position, and that every thing will be safe in his hands. I therefore inclose you his letter. I had some thought of cutting out some part of it, but knowing your desire, as you said, to have all the documents in the case, I take the liberty of sending this one exactly as it reached me, and if any one is to blame, I am the person. I remain your agent. GEORGE WENTWORTH."

He sent this letter out at once, so that he would not have a chance to change his mind.

"It will reach her this afternoon, and doubtless she will call and see me."

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say she did not call, and she did not see him for many days afterward, but next morning, when he came to his office, he found a letter from her. It ran:

"Dear Mr. Wentworth: The sending of Mr. Kenyon's letter to me is a somewhat dangerous precedent, which you must, on no account, follow by sending any letters you may receive from any other person to Mr. Kenyon. However, as you were probably aware when you sent the letter, no blame will rest on your shoulders or on those of any one else, in this instance. Still, be very careful in future, because letter sending, unabridged, is sometimes a risky thing to do. All the same, you are to remember that I always want all the documents in the case, and I want them with nothing eliminated. I am very much obliged to you for forwarding me the letter.

"As to the managership of the mine, of course, I thought Mr. Kenyon would desire to come back to London. If he is content to stay abroad, and really wants to stay there, I wish you would tell him that Mr. Smith is exceedingly pleased to know he is willing to take charge of the mine. It would not look businesslike on the part of Mr. Smith to say he is to name his own salary, but unfortunately Mr. Smith is very ignorant as to what a proper salary should be, so will you kindly settle that question? You know the usual salary for such an occupation. Please write down that figure and add two hundred a year to it. Tell Mr. Kenyon the amount named is the salary Mr. Smith assigns to him.

"Pray be very careful in the wording of the letters, so that Mr. Kenyon will not have any idea who Mr. Smith is. Yours truly, EDITH LONGWORTH."

When Wentworth received this letter, being a man, he did not know whether Miss Longworth was pleased or not. However, he speedily wrote to John, telling him that he was appointed manager of the mine, and that Mr. Smith was very pleased to have him in that capacity. He named the salary, but said if it was not enough, no doubt Mr. Smith was so anxious for his services that the amount would be increased.

John, when he got the letter, was more than satisfied.

At the same time Wentworth had been reading his letters, John had received those which had been sent to him when the mine was bought. He was relieved to find that Melville was not, after all, the owner, and he went to work with a will, intending to put in two or three years of his life with hard labor in developing the resources of the property. The first fortnight, before he received any letters, he did nothing but make himself acquainted with the way work was being carried on there. He found many things to improve. The machinery had been allowed to run down, and the men worked in the listless way men do when they are under no particular supervision. The manager of the mine was very anxious about his position. John told him the property had changed hands, but until he had further news from England he could not tell just what would be done. When the letters came John took hold with a vim, and there was soon a decided improvement in the way affairs were going. He allowed the old manager to remain as a sort of submanager, but that individual soon found out the easy times of the Austrian Mining Company were forever gone.

Kenyon had to take one or two long trips in Canada and the United States to arrange for the disposal of the products of the mine, but as a general rule his time was spent entirely in the log village near the river. When a year had passed he was able to write a very jubilant letter to Wentworth. "You see," he said, "after all the mine was worth the £200,000 we asked for it. It pays, even the first year, 10 per cent on that amount. This will give back all the mine has cost, and I think, George, the honest thing for us to do would be to let the whole proceeds go to Mr. Smith this year, who advanced the money at a critical time. This will recoup him for his own outlay, because the working capital has not been touched. The mica has more than paid the working of the mine, and all the rest is clear profit. Therefore, if you are willing, we will let our third go this year, and then we can take our large dividend next year with a clear conscience. I inclose the balance sheet."

To this letter there came an answer in due time from Wentworth, who said he had placed John's proposal before Mr. Smith, but it seemed the gentleman was so pleased with the profitable investment he had made that he would hear of no other division of the profits but that of share and share alike. He appeared to be very much touched by the offer John had made, and respected him for making it, but the proposed rescinding on his part and Wentworth's was a thing not to be thought of. This being the case, John sent a letter and a very large check to his father. The moment of posting that letter was doubtless one of the happiest of his life, and this ends the formidable array of letters which appears in this chapter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Kenyon's luck, as he said to himself, had turned. The second year was even more prosperous than the first, and the third as successful as the second. He had a steady market for his mineral, and, besides, he had had the great advantage of knowing the rogues to avoid. Some new swindles he had encountered during his first year's experience had taught him lessons that he profited by in the second and third. He liked his home in the wilderness, and he liked the rough people among whom he found himself.

Not withstanding his renunciation of London, however, there would now and then come up a yearning for the big city, and he promised himself a trip there at the end of the third year. Wentworth had been threatening month after month to come out and see him, but something had always interfered.

Taking it all in all, John liked it better in winter than in summer, in spite of the extreme cold. The cold was steady, and could be depended upon; moreover it was healthful and invigorating. In summer John never quite became accustomed to the ravages of the black fly, the mosquito and other insect pests of that season. His first interview with the black fly left his face in such a condition that he was glad he lived in a wilderness.

At the beginning of the second winter John treated himself to a luxury. He bought a natty little French Canadian horse that was very quick and accustomed to the ice, because the ice of the river formed the highway by which he reached Burntpine from the mine. To supplement the horse he also got a comfortable little cutter, and with this turnout he made his frequent journeys between the mine and Burntpine with comfort and speed, wrapped snugly in Buffalo robes.

If London often reverted to his mind, there was another subject that obtruded itself even more frequently. His increased prosperity had something to do with this. He saw that, if he was to have a third of the mine he was not to remain a poor man for very long, and this fact gave him a certain courage which had been lacking before. He wondered if she remembered him. Wentworth had said very little about her in his letters, and Kenyon, in spite of the confession he had made when his case seemed hopeless, was loath to write and ask his friend anything about her.

One day, on a clear, sharp, frosty winter morning, Kenyon had his little pony harnessed for his weekly journey to Burntpine. After the rougher part of the journey between the mine and the river had been left behind and the pony got down to her work on the ice, with the two white banks of snow on either side of the smooth track, John gave himself up to thinking about the subject which now so often engrossed his mind. Wrapped closely in his furs, with the cutter skimming along the ice, these thoughts found a pleasant accompaniment in the silvery tinkle of the bells which jingled around his horse's neck. As a general thing he met no one on the icy road from the mine to the village. Sometimes there was a procession of sleighs bearing supplies for his own mine and those beyond, and when this procession was seen, Keogon had to look out for some place by the side of the track where he could pull up his horse and cutter and allow the teams to pass. The snow on each side of the cutting was so deep that these boys were shovelled out here and there to permit teams to get past each other.

He had gone half way to the village when he saw ahead of him a pair of horses which he at once recognized as those belonging to the hotel keeper. He drew up in the first bay and awaited the approach of the sleigh. He saw that it contained visitors for himself, because the driver, on recognizing him, had turned round and spoken to the occupants of the vehicle. As it came along the man drew up and nodded to Kenyon, who, although ordinarily the most polite of men, did not return the salutation. He was stricken dumb with astonishment at seeing who was in the sleigh. One woman was so bundled up that not even her nose appeared out in the cold, but the smiling, rosy face of the other needed no introduction to John Kenyon.

"Well, Mr. Kenyon," cried a laughing voice, "you did not expect to see me this morning, did you?"

"Well, Mr. Kenyon," cried a laughing voice, "you did not expect to see me this morning, did you?"

"I confess I did not," said John, "and yet," here he paused. He was going to say, "and yet I was thinking of you," but he checked himself.

Miss Longworth, who had a talent for reading the unspoken thoughts of John Kenyon, probably did not need to be told the end of the sentence. "Are you going to the village?" she asked.

"I was going; I am not going now."

"That's right. I was just going to invite you to turn round with us. You see, we are on our way to look at the mine, and, I suppose, we shall have to obtain the consent of the manager before we can do so." Miss Longworth's companion had emerged for a moment from her wraps and looked at John, but instantly retired among the furs again with a shiver. She was not so young as her companion, and she considered this the most frightful climate she had ever encountered.

"Now," said John, "although your sleigh is very comfortable, I think this of mine is even more so. It is intended for two, won't you step out of the sleigh into the cutter? Then, if the driver will move on, I can turn and we will follow the sleigh."

"I shall be delighted to do so," said the young woman, shaking herself free from the buffalo robe and stepping lightly from the sleigh into the cutter, pausing, however, for a moment, before she did so, to put her own wraps over her companion. John tucked her in beside himself, and, as the sleigh jingled on, he slowly turned his pony round into the road again. "I have got a pretty fast pony," he said, "but I think we will let them drive on ahead. It irritates this little horse to see anything in front of her."

"Then we can make up speed," said Edith, "and catch them before they get to the mine. It is far from here?"

"No, not very far; at least, it doesn't take long to get there with a smart horse."

"I have enjoyed this experience ever so much," she said, "you see my father had come to Montreal on business, so I came with him, as usual, and, being there, I thought I would run up here and see the mine. I wanted—" she continued, looking at the other side of the cutter and trailing her well-gloved fingers in the snow. "I wanted to know personally whether my manager was conducting my property in the way it ought to be conducted, notwithstanding the very satisfactory balance sheets he sends."

"Your property," exclaimed John in amazement.

"Certainly. You didn't know that, did you?" she replied looking for a moment at him and then away from him; "I call myself the Mistress of the Mine."

"Then you are—your are—?"

"Mr. Smith," said the girl, coming to his rescue.

There was a moment's pause and the next words John said were not at all what she expected.

"Take your hand out of the snow," he commanded, "and put it under the buffalo robe; you have no idea how cold it is here, and your hand will be frozen in a moment."

"Really," said the girl; "an employe must not talk to his employer in that tone. My hand is my own, is it not?"

"I hope it is," said John, "because I want to ask you for it."

For answer Miss Edith Longworth placed her hand in his.

Actions speak louder than words. The sleigh was far in advance, and there were no witnesses on the white-topped hills.

"Were you astonished," she said, "when I told you I owned the mine?"

"Very much so, indeed. Were you astonished when I told you I wished to own the owner of the mine?"

"Not in the slightest."

"Why?"

"Because your treacherous friend Wentworth sent me your letter applying for a situation. You got the situation, didn't you, John?"

THE END.

THE STORY OF THE CIGARETTE.

(From the French of Jules Claretie.)

Yes, monsieur, it was in the time of the war of the last Don Carlos. All this Basque country, these environs of St. Sebastian, these mountains of Guipuzcoa here smelled of blood and powder for months—for long, long months. You ought to have seen the black and crackled walls in the country. They were once farms and houses, happy living corners, but now they are ruins, almost cemeteries. That is war!

How they fought! The Carlists on one side, the soldiers of the government of Madrid on the other. They left a train of wounded and dying along the road—poor fellows, who knew they were passing away and who were asking themselves why, why? Civil wars! Civil wars are pretty things! And, when one thinks of it, they may begin again to-morrow, for does any one know? Men are so foolish!

You see, one beautiful morning we were told the King was here—that Don Carlos had arrived. Then it was simple. The old yeast was stirred up and we Basque peasants ran to the pretender and furnished him an army. We put on a handsome uniform, our cap on the ear, and arrived in the village with the trumpeter at our head, where we formed for dancing with the village girls, who kept time to our singing. Later we heard the whistling of the balls, for our Basques are brave and die well. Only, adieu the harvests, the apple trees and the life of the poor world. We fought all day, and we fought for three years. At a given time all the roads were broken up and occupied by men of the same country, who had no thought but to cut each other's throats.

You know the history of the blockade of Bilbao—that the Carlists pressed like squeezers. It was necessary to succor the city, and between Saint Sebastian and Bilbao the soldiers of Don Carlos held the defiles, repulsed the assaults, and beat back with the bayonet the columns of troops that were launched against them. The chief Carlist who commanded this side was Zucarraga, a hero, monsieur. He was an officer of the army who had sent his sword to the government at Madrid, saying: "Give it to another that it may combat me. That which I wear henceforth I will hold from my king."

He was hirty years of age, handsome, tall, superb. He held the mountain there, and never slackened his grip. They sent their best troops against him, and each day fresh troops. We saw the poor fellows returning limping, decimated, their officers carried on bloody mule-litters, shaking their heads and saying: "It is for Spain that one kills Spain."

This Zucarraga's reputation increased at each misfortune of the national army. People said, "This is Thomas Zumalacarregui came back to life," the paladin of the other Carlist war in the olden time. Everything made Zucarraga a hero of romance. He was a general as popular as the Cid.

The general who commanded at Hernani and sent out his poor soldiers against the defiles defended by Zucarraga was transported with rage. He had promised himself to force a passage, to break through those people in a hand-to-hand struggle in order to pierce Bilbao, but each attack was a defeat, each assault a half rout. The harassed troops returned with heavy feet and lowered heads, leaving their dead along the road.

One evening upon the square of Ayuntamiento, as the General watched his soldiers slowly, quietly, dejectedly returning to their quarters, while in the distance could be heard the grumbling of Zucarraga's cannon, and their smoke could be seen mounting at the foot of the valley, he clenched his hands, and said with flashing eye, "Oh, this Zucarraga; this Zucarraga; this miserable Zucarraga! I would give my skin for his, and a fortune to the man who would kill him!"

He was beside himself and weeping to see his regiments melting like snow in the defiles. It seemed to him that all the brave men sowed by the wayside were his children. And who was it? Zucarraga—the Basques of Zucarraga—the Carlists.

The old Garrido had not finished speaking, when, before him, in this square filled with troops, upon which the setting sun was casting its parting rays, appeared a large, handsome youth, who looked him in the eye, and said brusquely:

"Will you give me what I ask if I will kill Zucarraga?"

"Who are you?" asked Garrido.

"I am Juan Araquil, a native of this country—a man not afraid of dying, but who has sworn to be rich."

The general examined the man from head to foot.

"You are a Guipuzcoa. Why have you not joined the army of Don Carlos?"

"Because I care for nothing in the world except the woman I love?"

"A fiancee?"

"Ah, if she were my fiancee! No. She is the daughter of a farmer too rich for me, who am poor, and wish money to marry her."

Araquil was well known in the country. We all knew his history and his love for the daughter of Father Chegaray, a good Guipuzcoan laborer, who owned four of five farms and orchards, whose trees cracked under apples that made a cider you ought to have seen. I have never tasted your French cider, of which I have heard much, but it is not so good as our Guipuzcoa cider. It is not I who say it.

The Father Chegaray, lived between Hernani and the fort Santa Barbara, which you have seen coming from Saint Sebastian. Of his daughter, Pepa, old Chegaray was as proud as an Andalouse of her jewels. He was very watchful when he took her to vespers or a village dance, and it was here one often became engaged without consulting the parents. In laughing, in dancing, it is quickly done. The heart is struck, and the life gives itself.

There was in the valley at Loyola, very near here, a great, handsome devil, who fluttered around the pretty girls and had all the qualities that please women, but none which please parents. It was this Araquil who came to tell his ambitions to old Gen. Garrido. This youth was gay, always ready for something foolhardy, whether the proposal be to put a hole in his skin or to break his neck. He was strong, agile, first in games, wrestling and in improvised bull fights, where he showed the skill of a professional. Added to these gifts were the air of a cavalier, a freshly shaven chin, the figure of a Hercules and the hand of a woman. He hadn't a sou, but lived from day to day on prizes won at tennis or bets made with the matadores. One day at St. Sebastian, when the matadores could not overcome a bull—a great, furious, black beast, flecked with red lather and breathing foam and blood—Juan Araquil began to hiss. The entire circus, spectators and actors, cried out: "Well then, in the arena with you, in the arena!" Juan did not hesitate monsieur. He arose, leaped into the ring, and taking from the espada a short-handled sword, held it like this and planted himself in front of the bull. He looked it in the eye, laughed in its nostrils, and then, with a swift forward thrust, a great mass went boum, bam, and the bull fell. Araquil, laughing, turned to the matadores and said: "You see, you others, it was not difficult."

But this was not all. These men were furious with rage when they heard the bravos for the feat and the hisses for themselves. They surrounded him to demand an accounting for his audacity. Araquil looked at this circle of enraged matadores, and then with a sudden impulse leaped over the head of the man in front of him and regained the spectators' level. That evening he and one of these men fought behind the circus with knives, and Juan fell with a weapon in his breast. He was in bed fifteen days and was then ready to kill another bull, and a matadore with him, if necessary. He had some remedies for wounds, for he did a little of everything and frequented the houses of people who made pomades and drugs from mountain herbs. He had made for himself an essence from some wicked plant, aconite or I know not what, that he wore in a ring on his finger. He said that a man ought to be master of his life, able to finish it when he would. "A knife might be taken away from you, but a ring, no," and with the gesture of the hand to his lips—"one is free." He was a man, this Araquil. One day this handsome youth of twenty-five, who had been loved without loving anybody, encountered in a village dance in Loyola, on Easter Monday, a young girl, whom he invited like the others, to be his partner. It was Pepa Chegaray.

A waltz and a guitar turn the head of the young in my opinion. Neither Juan nor Pepa could forget this meeting in the open air, the music accompanied by smiles and the song more intoxicating than cider.

Since this Easter Monday Juan Araquil, ordinarily so gay, had become savage, very gloomy, speaking seldom, and Father Chegaray down there smiled no longer. It was this devil of love which was passing that way.

Yes, it was love, complete, absolute and as rapid as a clap of thunder. There is love like that. She dreamed of him; he thought of no one but her. He was as sad as a garden without flowers; love made him surly.

Why? Because he hadn't a sou in his pocket and Pepa was rich, and, above all, because that cast-iron Father Tiburcio had said his daughter should never marry a man who had no fortune except his tennis racquet.

"But," said Araquil, at last, to Father Chegaray, "Pepa loves me; she has told me so."

"She has told me so also," said the father.

"I—I adore her. I am madly in love. I will kill myself if you do not give her to me. What must I do to have her for my wife?"

"That which I have done myself," said the farmer. "Work and bring to the home something to support the children. I have not struggled all my life to throw my money and my daughter away on an idle fellow. When you can say to me that you have amassed a little fortune, and that you can furnish your part of the bread and salt, you can have Pepa, since she loves you."

"And the amount that will be necessary—how much?" asked Juan.

"Two thousand douros."

This would be 10,000 francs of our money.

"Two thousand douros!" said Araquil, very white. "Where can it be found?"

"I found it in the earth. Search," responded the farmer.

Tiburcio was not one, who, having spoken, goes back on his word. No; Araquil had not killed himself, as he had threatened the old man, nor had he dug to amass that sum. Pepa, brave girl, did not disobey her father, but, very much in love with the handsome fellow, resigned herself to wait until Juan gained the exacted dot.

Only in their meetings and conversations before the old man she did not conceal from Araquil that she had for him those sentiments which unite two beings to the last sacrament. And she had sworn to him on the prayer book of her dead mother that she would never belong to another if not to him.

Such a pledge, given by a creature as beautiful as a star in heaven, ought to have given heart to the audacious. Juan said to himself: "Very well, I will have the two thousand douros "I don't know how I will get them, but I will have them."

While he rolled this project in his brain, this is how he worked. He played against the champion of Tolosa at tennis and lost by one point. The stakes were large. What a commencement of fortune—lost by one point, by one point! He tore his hair and beat his brow in his wild rage.

He had to have these two thousand douros, and he repeated to himself what Pepa had said to him: "Life with you or with no one, Araquil; but I will obey my father living, and dead I will respect his wishes."

Poor Juan had begun to think of going far away. He had been told that on the Plata, in South America, some of the Basques who had gone there had made a fortune. Yes, monsieur, it appears that the tennis players of our country in Buenos Ayres could pick up handfuls of pesetas. That pretty house you see on the right on the return to St. Sebastian belongs to a young man from Hernani, who thus made a little fortune in the new southern world. If the idea of not meeting Pepa, of no longer seeing her at a distance, at mass, vespers or a bull fight, or even at the window as he passed the farm, had not demented him, he would certainly have gone away. Yes, as a trapper, a gold seeker or an adventurer he would have searched something to do, for since the old man had said "Search," it was better to do that than to stay.

Thus it was with him when the last war broke out and what I have related took place before Bilbao. To return then to our story: Gen. Garrido, who was greatly discouraged, saw planted before him this great dare-devil fellow, who in two words told his history. While the old soldier who was suffering such defeat from the Carlists knotted his brows, Juan Araquil added:

"If the life of Zucarraga is worth a fortune, as you say, I will have it."

"The life of Zucarraga is worth more than a fortune," said Garrido. "It is worth the existence of thousands of my poor children. Zucarraga is the key to Bilbao, the center of resistance, and it is nothing but a continual slaughter. I have no orders to give you, for you are not a soldier, but if you do what you say you will, recall the promise that I have made."

"Very well, Monsieur le General, I shall be back soon."

The old general shrugged his shoulders and asked himself for a moment if that man were not a spy.

Araquil himself thought of but one thing: that the life of Zucarraga was a fortune. This he would not have wanted except that it gave him Pepa. He disappeared from Herhani and no one heard of him for several days. The general said the man was a fool, and planned an attack at night to surprise Zucarraga and take the pass by the sense of feeling, the only light to be that of the firearms.

During this time Araquil had lounged around the intrenchments of the Carlists, sleeping under the stars wherever he chanced to be. He had in his pocket his knife, this knife which he knew how to plant at a distance, like a ball in a target. He was watching for an opportunity to approach Zucarraga and rid old Garrido of the chief Carlist, in the meantime arguing with himself—what is the difference, war with the cannon or war with the knife, they are the same thing? It is right to kill one who sacrifices life.

One night as he approached too close to the farmhouse, half in ruins, where Zucarraga slept, the ball of a sentinel whistled so close to his head that it took away a little of the flesh of his left ear. He took no notice of it, and had but one regret, and that was that the Carlist sentinel had seen him. Without that he would have been able to scale the wall and spring to the side of Zucarraga. It was all to begin over again.

Very well, he began again the next day, and this was the very day Garrido had chosen for the night attack. Juan Araquil was sleeping that night in a trench with no better bed than that of a beast, decided this time to reach Zucarraga, cost what it might, when Garrido's men made their attack. The firing at first astonished Araquil, then gave him pleasure. Since they were fighting, Zucarraga ought to come out, led by the shots of his soldiers, and if Juan could glide up to him it would be well done—the knife in the heart—not in ambush, but in open battle. Ah! the blood of Zucarraga was worth a fortune. Father Chegaray would have two thousand douros; he was going to have them, and so much the worse for the Carlists.

They fought bravely that night. Garrido's soldiers were enraged, and mounted to the assaults of the entrenchments with fixed bayonets, pressing on the Carlists, whom they believed taken by surprise. In the blackness of the night they strangled and cut each other's throats. Sabres thrust holes in the chests, revolvers crushed the heads as they assassinated each other without seeing. As between Spaniards, I ask you if that was not a pity?

It lasted a long time. At daybreak the soldiers of the army were in retreat once more, the poor devils having lost many of their number to arrive there. A useless attack. A night of bloodshed added one downfall to another. The old Garrido was going to cry again with rage down yonder. The Carlists, on the contrary, after having fought all night, saluted the break of day with cries of joy. "Karri! Karri!" Suddenly they stopped and there was a dead silence. They were carrying by the invincible Zucarraga, wounded in the leg, as they could see; him whose voice they had heard all night crying out: "Forward! Courage! Let us resist, my children!" To the front of the dismantled house in which he slept ordinarily, the prisoners of the other army, of whom there had been many made during the night, saw this magnificent and brave fellow carried. He was as white as his cap and could no longer stand, but was supported until some of his soldiers could bring a bench, upon which he was seated with his leg extended.

Araquil looked on. He had been taken with Garrido's soldiers, who were all under guard of Carlists with loaded guns. His knife, his famous knife, had not served him. Zucarraga was surrounded by his officers, who were greatly agitated. Some of them were upon their knees looking at the wound. One of them called for the surgeon.

Continued in Next Sunday's Times.

Better Than Reading.

Poeticus—Have you read Shakespeare's "Love's Labor Lost?"

Cynicus—No; but I've taken a girl to the theater and had her talk to the man next her all through the show.—New York Herald.

"Mary, won't you join in the game?"

"Excuse me, Matildy Victoria; I'm on my way to Sunday school. I ain't no heathen. I don't dessicate the Sabbath."

—Life.