

The "Unlucky" Bourbon Necklace in Trouble Again

All the Spanish Royal Family Upset Through the Latest Upheaval of the Ill Luck That Has Followed the Historic Bauble Ever Since Its First Owner Was Cursed for Sacking Rome Centuries Ago



Marie Antoinette, One of the Unfortunate Royal Possessors of the Necklace.

PARIS, April 3. THE very precious and beautiful historical pearl necklace of the Duke Charles de Bourbon, perhaps the most famous and ill-omened jewel in existence, has been adding new chapters to its grim record of tragedy and ruin.

The necklace, which has been associated with misfortune ever since the days of the celebrated Sixteenth Century Duke de Bourbon, was recently in the possession of the Prince Antonio de Bourbon-Orleans, Infante of Spain, who married the Infanta Eulalia, aunt of King Alfonso of Spain.

The necklace was not really the property of Prince Antonio, but was held in trust as a family heirloom, and he was allowed access to it. This Prince, by the way, is notorious for his dissipation and wild extravagances, and has long been separated from his wife.

He entrusted the historic necklace to his fair companion, the Viscountess de Tennes, and she wore it many times. He says that he did this with the understanding that the Viscountess would always restore it to the family safe when she was not wearing it. She says that he gave it to her, and she appears to have strong evidence in support of her claim.

The Prince suddenly determined to sell the necklace, to raise needed money, and perhaps rid himself of its gloomy associations. He demanded that his friend should restore it, and this she refused to do.

Then he took her before a Parisian Magistrate, Judge Cluzel. The Judge ordered the Viscountess to return the necklace.

Then Prince Antonio sold it to a pearl dealer, receiving \$200,000 for it, which is said to be less than one-tenth of its real value.

But the Prince had not rid himself of the ill-fortune associated with the necklace. He was held responsible for disposing of this family treasure. Spanish officials, acting at the instigation of King Alfonso, seized his property in Spain and placed him under legal surveillance.

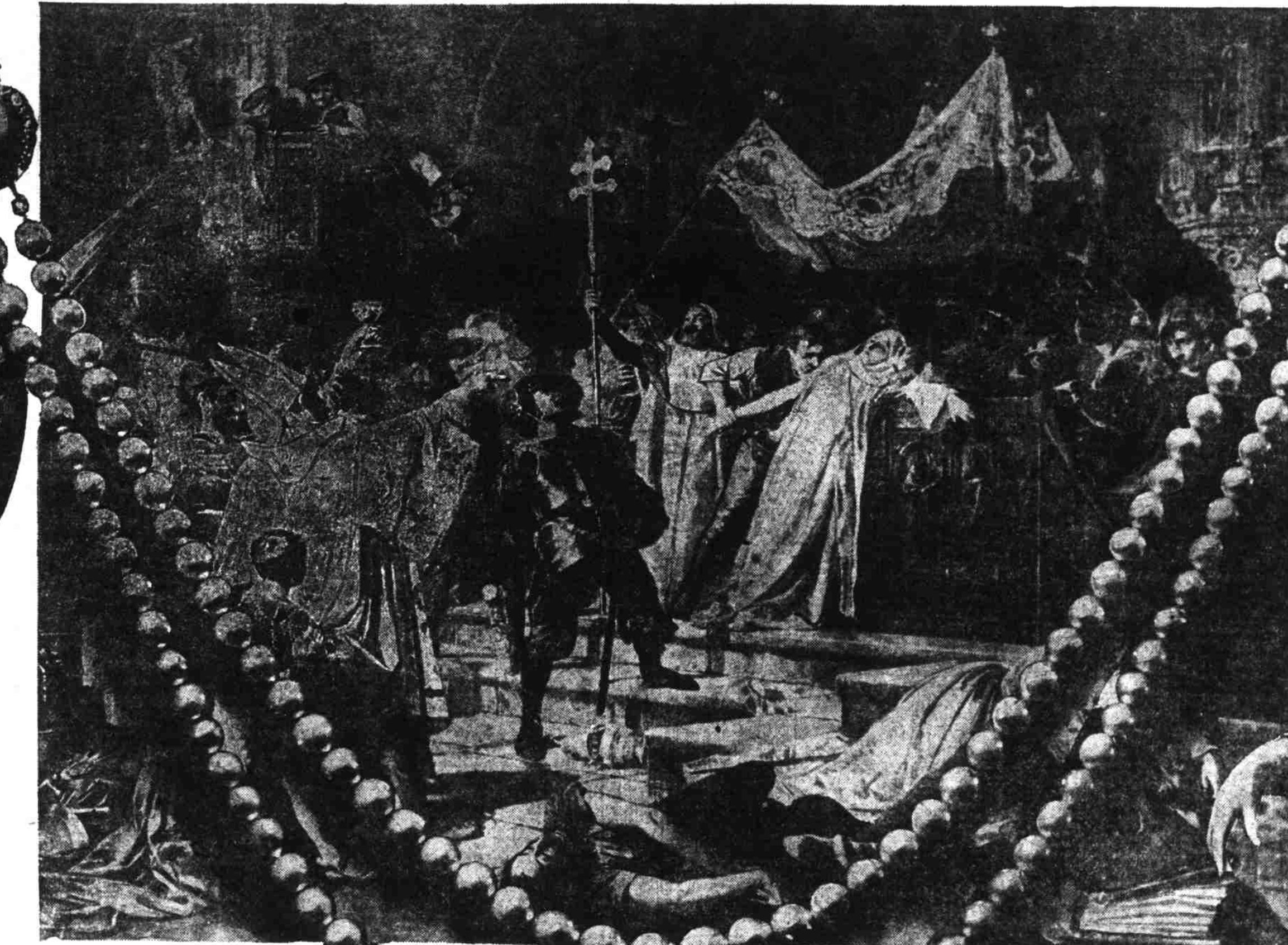
The Prince alleges that the King prosecuted him in order to get possession of his private property and help to pay his (the King's) own vast debts, amounting to \$50,000,000, incurred for extravagances he dared not confess to the Spanish nation.

Prince Antonio charged that his daughter-in-law, the pretty Princess Beatrice, of English birth and a cousin of Queen Victoria of Spain, had been leagued with King Alfonso in a plot to ruin him, to seize his property, to incarcerate him in a dungeon and perhaps to end his existence. It was an astonishing recital of the Prince, more like some medieval story of court intrigue and secret crime than we are accustomed to hear to-day.

The Prince declared that while in the custody of a Spanish judicial officer he escaped in disguise in the middle of the night, got into a waiting automobile, and with the aid of a friendly ship's captain was able to leave Spain.

Prince Antonio is now in Italy, engaged in a bitter legal struggle and reduced to poverty. His family, who seized his estates in Spain, are now endeavoring to take similar action against his property in France and Italy, on the ground that he is irresponsible, and that he disposed unlawfully of the family necklace.

The Viscountess de Tennes, who long enjoyed a luxurious existence with the Prince, has been brought to poverty and misery. She has been dispossessed of her handsome mansion, No. 48 Rue Spontini, and now occupies a little room in a dingy hotel in the Rue St. Anne, a street well



The Bourbon Necklace and the Spanish Artist, F. J. Amerigo's Extraordinary Painting of an Incident of the Sacking of Rome Which Brought Down Upon Its First Owner the Horrified Condemnation of the Civilized World.

known to American soldiers, because the Provost Marshal had his headquarters there. The mother of the Viscountess has died in Spain of a broken heart on account of the scandal brought on her family.

The Infanta Eulalia, once well known to Americans through her visit to the Columbian Exposition, has gone into hiding as a result of the vexation brought to her by her husband's troubles.

Certainly not one of the historic crown jewels of Europe has a more tragic, romantic and picturesque record than this Bourbon necklace. Not even the Hope diamond or the Hapsburg opal has such an eventful history.

The Duke Charles de Bourbon, also known as "the Constable de Bourbon," the first Bourbon owner of the necklace, was a great man in the time of King Francis I. of France, a cousin of the King, the richest noble in the land and a brilliant soldier. The King grew jealous of him, seized his estates and planned to kill him.

Bourbon took service with the King's enemy, the Emperor Charles V., that super king who ruled over Germany, Spain, the two Americas and much of Asia. In 1525 the Emperor presented his new general with the famous necklace, which had been collected with infinite pains from the mighty ruler's Asiatic possessions.

No sooner did the Duke de Bourbon possess the necklace than disaster befell him—men wore necklaces in those days. The Emperor made peace with the King of France and left the Duke with a hungry army of mercenaries in northern Italy.

The Duke in a mad and wicked fit of desperation marched his army against Rome, which was defenseless. As he entered the city a venerable priest uttered a terrible curse against him for his sacrilege, condemning him to eternal torture. Immediately after this he was killed, legend has it by Benvenuto Cellini. His mercenaries ravaged the Holy City for days, plundered the altars of churches, dressed themselves in the vestments of bishops and priests, attacked nuns and committed the most dreadful acts of sacrilege known in history.

In a few generations the throne of France fell to the Duke's descendants, the first King of this line being the famous Henri VI. He drew the fateful necklace forth from a family chest and presented it to his Queen—Marguerite de Valois. After she wore it, he lost his affection for her and became fascinated with the famous Gabrielle d'Estrees.

The Queen stayed away from court and the shameless King gave the necklace to Gabrielle. She expected to become Queen, for the King had taken steps to obtain an annulment of his marriage.

Gabriel d'Estrees wore the necklace and the next day was found dead in bed mysteriously poisoned.

The King obtained his annulment and married Marie de Medici, of the famous Italian family. She then wore the neck-

lace. Her husband, while riding through the streets of Paris, found his carriage halted by a blockade. A fanatic named Ravallac leaped into the carriage and stabbed the King to death.

Marie de Medici quarreled with her own son, King Louis VIII., who took the necklace from her and banished her to Italy, where she died of grief.

Louis VIII. gave the necklace to his wife, Anne of Austria. Then occurred a dramatic chapter in its history, which is related in Dumas's famous novel, "The Three Musketeers." The King of England sent an envoy, the Duke of Buckingham, known as the handsomest man in Europe, to obtain certain concessions from the King of France.

The Queen gave the fascinating Buckingham two pearls from her necklace as a token of her esteem.

Cardinal Richelieu, who disapproved of her conduct, persuaded the King to command her to appear at a State banquet wearing the jewels, meaning that Louis would notice that certain pieces were missing.

At the Queen's appeal the heroic musketeer, D'Artagnan, went to London in spite of tremendous difficulties and brought back the jewels in time for her to wear them. Nevertheless the King heard of the intrigue and kept the Queen imprisoned until his death.

The necklace was next worn by the young wife of King Louis XIV., the Princess Maria Theresa of Spain. She was quickly neglected by the King, whose gallantries during a long life are notorious. One chronicler states that the King permitted the earliest and most attractive of his favorites, the Duchess de la Valliere, to wear the necklace. In a short time he abandoned her and she spent the rest of her life in seclusion and sorrow.

The next King, Louis XV., made a great ceremony of placing the necklace about the throat of his young bride, the Princess Marie Leszinska, daughter of the King of Poland. Then he began to neglect her cruelly, acting as his predecessor, Louis XIV., had done toward his queen. She was most unhappy in the loss of her children and, overcome with grief and shame, spent her later years in a convent.

Two of the notorious favorites of Louis XV.—the Marquise de Pompadour and the Countess du Barry—wore the necklace in succession. Madame de Pompadour was

deserted by the King and died miserably. Madame du Barry was similarly abandoned and perished tragically in the great revolution, the first conspicuous victim of the guillotine.

The ill-fated Queen Marie Antoinette was destined to wear the Bourbon necklace.

It must not be confused with "the Queen's diamond necklace," which so strangely involved Marie Antoinette, the Cardinal de Rohan and the necromancer Cagliostro. Nevertheless, it was reported at that time that the Queen disposed of the pearl necklace when she was first tempted to buy the diamond necklace, and that it (the former) was bought back by the King's officers.

The whole transactions and intrigues relating to these jewels, together with other extravagances of the Queen, helped to create unpopularity for herself and the King. Both perished by the guillotine and their family was overwhelmed by death and ruin.

At the Bourbon restoration in 1816 King Louis XVIII., who had spent many years in bitter exile, kept the necklace in seclusion, and few dramatic events were associated with it in this period. But this King was succeeded by his brother, Charles X., who asked his Queen to wear the famous necklace. Misfortunes immediately began to fall on the family.

The King's oldest son was assassinated and two others died of smallpox. In 1830 a revolution drove Charles X. from the throne, and he barely escaped with his life, leaving the family necklace to those who seized his palace.

The Duke of Orleans, head of a younger branch of the Bourbon family, ascended the throne as King Louis Philippe. His Queen wore the necklace at a court ball and the next day her only son, the Duke of Orleans, was killed in an accident.

A revolution turned King Louis Philippe off his throne in 1830. Before running for his life to England, King Louis Philippe dispatched some of his crown jewels, including the historic necklace, to his kinsman, the King of Spain.

By the King of Spain they were entrusted as a family heirloom to the grandfather of the Prince Antonio de Bourbon-Orleans, Infante of Spain.

This gay Prince is a descendant of the French and Spanish branches of this ancient family. He married in 1886 the Infanta Eulalia, a royal princess and sister of the late King Alfonso XII. of Spain.



Prince Antonio de Bourbon-Orleans, Who Has Been Forced to Flee from Spain for Disposing of the Bauble.

For nearly twenty years Prince Antonio's gayeties have been the talk of Europe. In addition to great wealth inherited from his family, he received an immense fortune from an eccentric old woman, the Duchess of Galliera. All this wealth he spent recklessly in gambling, in entertaining frivolous ornaments of the Parisian stage and in similar extravagances.

The Infanta Eulalia complained bitterly of her husband's shameless conduct, declaring that he was entertaining a favorite within sight of her house in Paris and spending on worthless companions money that should have been hers. She declared that she was poverty stricken on his account and that she would obtain a divorce.

She actually wrote a book in defence of divorce. Her nephew, King Alfonso, ordered her to retract her views on divorce under penalty of having her income from Spain stopped. After a brief show of rebellion the unhappy woman yielded to this royal command.

One of Prince Antonio's favorites was the Viscountess de Tennes, a relative of

The Infanta Eulalia, the King of Spain's Aunt, Whose Husband Sold the Necklace

several Spanish noble families, from whom she was estranged. He quarreled with her after the undignified dispute already described.

Cut off by all his relatives, including the King of Spain, deprived of much of his property, and overwhelmed with bills from his creditors, the Prince felt that he must have money to keep up the extravagant style of living to which he had been accustomed. Besides it occurred to his fevered mind that the necklace was really a haunted thing, that it would be better to be freed from it.

He showed it to one of the noted pearl connoisseurs of Paris. When this man offered him 1,000,000 francs for it the Prince jumped at the offer. Experts now say that the necklace is worth 10,000,000 francs.

The King of Spain is seeking to reclaim the treasure for the Bourbon family. Is it destined to continue its career as a bringer of misfortune?