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The Daily Morning Astorian.

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"POOR CARLOTTA!"

Carlotta, the widow of the would-be Mexican emperor, Maximilian, is regaining her health. Her reason, which fled nearly twenty years ago, is slowly, but surely returning.—*Cable Dispatch.*

Surely the most mournful of all the sad stories of modern history is that of Carlotta, the daughter of that Leopold of Belgium, whom the great Napoleon described as "the finest man he had ever seen." This same Leopold went to Paris in 1815, after the battle of Waterloo. In 1816 he was wedded to Carlotta, only daughter of George IV. of England, and in November, 1817, both his wife and child, the latter new born, were buried. In August, 1832, after the revolution which had separated Holland from Belgium and given Leopold a crown, he married Louise Maria, second daughter of Louis Philippe, the "citizen king" of the French. The fruit of this union were Leopold, now king of the Belgians; Philippe, count of Flanders, and the unfortunate Carlotta. The mother of Carlotta died when the latter was but 10 years old, and the child had an early tuition in the hollow quality of European court life, without any safe-guard but such as could be supplied by hired governesses. A writer of the time immediately succeeding the great tragedy of her life unconsciously gives an idea of her early misery, when he says "her association with her superiors in age was so constant that she seems never to have enjoyed the ordinary light heartedness and playfulness of childhood." Poor girl! this was but a preparation for the sorrows to come—sorrows that have had no parallel since the world has agreed to discard the ax and gibbet in dealing with women.

The poor young princess grew in favor and in praise till, in 1857, when but 17 years old, she was married to Maximilian, younger brother of Francis Joseph, emperor of Austria. The marriage was one of those customary among the F. F.'s of Europe, just as their small imitators used to attempt to make mere territorial marriages in Virginia. The poor girl, no doubt, loved her young husband. Her subsequent conduct showed how deep, how absorbing, how unfortunate that love was in its results.

Maximilian was a sailor by profession, a philosophic inquirer by choice. He commanded several scientific expeditions and has written and published some volumes that are still treated with respect by the scientific world. It was this peculiarly liberal bent of mind that excited Cavour's hostility to Maximiltan. The great Italian saw in the Austrian prince a deadly foe to Italian political fredom. Austria, at that time, had complete control of Venetia and Lombardy and, by marriage connections and religious bonds, really governed Naples and Rome. With a liberal prince like Maximilian to represent Austrian ideas, the task of the Italian liberator would have been immensely increased. He did not want a Maximilian around his quarters, and said, "Maximilian is the only adversary I fear, because he represents the only principle that can ever enchain our Italian cause."

All the time, from 1857 to 1863, Maximilian and Carlotta dwelt as in an Eden, at the palace of Miramar, on the east coast of the Adriatic. It seems that their life there was a perfect idyl; love and literature supplying its rythmic tones. Art in all shapes; music, sculpture painting, words—all combined to make their brief six years of happiness one of those delightful episodes, the mere reading of which suggests happiness and love to all mankind. But the tempter came. Maximilian was ambitious of worldly renown; he knew the sweets of acquisition as a scholar; he was brave, a sailor and a Hapsburg. An empire was offered him. The tinsel emperor of a great nation, the fellow who inherited a name without a particle of blood-right to the inheritance; the smaller Napoleon, before whom the *Singe-Tigres* kneeled for a few years, gave vent to one of his grandiloquent decrees. He would "create a Latin empire in the west to redress the balance of the east." Plagiarist, even in this orotund phrase, he blinded men's eyes to his folly, and Maximilian was seduced into becoming his instrument.

Poor Carlotta, the faithful wife and brave woman, followed her Austrian husband to Mexico, where the new empire was to be founded and maintained. The scheme was skillfully contrived. Napoleon the Little had money and prestige enough, pending the civil war in the United States, to buy up a party in Mexico. They were called a party, but were really a lot of stock-jobbers and speculators, who, with hearts absolutely cold as to humanity or patriotism, sought to make a profit out of Mexican bonds—to say nothing of Mexican blood. They went to Miramar and, in the name of Mexico, offered throne and fealty to the hapless prince.

Through one of those miracles of blindness which sometimes affect the best educated men, Maximilian swallowed the bait. Napoleon III. not only needed a new Latin empire in the western world, but the prestige which a political alliance with the Hapsburgs would give him. Maximilian became his tool, and the faithful Carlotta followed her lord. But the imperial pair—to use the phraseology of the European court journals—had not been many weeks in Mexico before the wife, with true wifely instinct, saw and understood the false position in which she and Maximilian were placed. Carlotta, from babyhood, had been noted for a peculiar sympathetic quality which caused her infinite grief, even when the smallest and most inconsiderable animal suffered in her sight. When she saw the doom-clouds gathering over her husband, we may imagine, though we can not describe, her sorrow.

She fled from Mexico, having besought her husband in vain to fly from the death trap. He, haughtily declaring that a Hapsburg had better die than fly, remained. She went to France, to Paris; saw the spurious Bonaparte and begged for aid; begged for the only aid that could save her husband's life—for military aid. Her answer was a cold declaration that France could not sustain the Mexican empire, which the French emperor had created; that a war with the United States would be certain to ensue, and that instead of sustaining the emperor of Mexico, the French army under Bazaine would have to be withdrawn.

This almost broke the poor woman's heart; but with woman's faith in the impossible she sought for comfort in Rome. A Protestant herself, she deemed that the papacy would come to the rescue of her Catholic husband—compel the Catholic Mexicans to become Maximilian's obedient subjects. She knew nothing of politics, nothing of the stern conditions of political contest. All that she knew and all that she considered was the danger of her husband, who was all the world to her. When her prayer was denied at the vatican, she stopped not to reason out the right or wrong of her unhappiness; she could not. Reason swooned, and from that time to within a few days past, for nineteen long years, she has been an amiable maniac—dead to the world and all but woe. That last has been her possession all the time—woe!

It is not quite well known whether poor Carlotta ever thoroughly comprehended the fact of her husband's murder by the Mexicans. It is probable that the tragedy of Queretaro, which occurred in June, 1867, has never been fully communicated to her. It is probable that she has never been in a condition to understand it since her mental wreck in Rome in 1866. Should that be the case—should it happen that her restoration to reason is but the awakening from a dream—how awful must be that awakening! Think of it! A night of nineteen years, dreams of terror, and the reality! Poor Maxamilian sleeps in his bloody grave, but his unhappy consort, after years of a living death, awakens to a knowledge of her unhappiness! Who shall say which is most fortunate?

A Silver Coinage.

The great question is as to what shall be done with the standard silver dollars, which are accumulating more rapidly than the public seems to have any use for them. It should be remembered by congressmen and all others that each of these standard dollars will buy a bottle of Brown's Iron Bitters, and that this prince of iron tonics will right most wrongs of the physical system. Any good druggist will give you a bottle of Brown's Iron Bitters for a standard silver dollar.

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1885.

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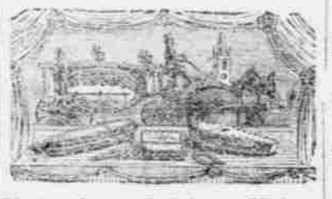

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