

# STRANGER THAN FICTION

## Famous Spanish Belle Dies in Poverty and Alone

### Her Father Owned the Famous San Pablo Rancho and the Presidio

A strange story, having for its opening chapter a setting of splendor and romance, but for its concluding one an atmosphere of pathos and misery, closed in San Francisco Saturday, when the body of Isabela Castro de Francolini was laid upon a slab at the morgue. The woman was 55 years of age, but her face still showed traces of the wonderful beauty that was once hers. Her body was found Saturday morning in her room at 139 Montgomery street, where she had lived for the last two years. Knowing that her tenant had been ailing for some days, the landlady of the place, Mrs. James Martin, went to the woman's room, and, receiving no answer to her knock, entered. She found the woman in bed, cold in death. The coroner was notified and the remains taken to the morgue.

The woman lived in one room, in which she cooked and slept. The deputy who searched the place found bundles of documents and clippings, by the aid of which the woman's identity and part of her strange story were disclosed. She was the daughter of Gabriel Castro, once owner of the famous San Pablo rancho, and one of the early Spanish grantees, whose holdings once stretched for leagues over the vast territory of California. Where the Presidio now stands was her birthplace, for this, too, was a portion of her father's vast estate. General Castro, whose name is enrolled in the history of California, was her uncle. She was a niece of General Vallejo.

#### Was a Noted Belle.

In her youth she was a belle, sought after by the most dashing cavaliers of the new El Dorado, and the faded and faded letters found among her effects are mute witnesses of the gay and luxurious life she once spent. A wealthy broker of this city, J. B. H. Gildemeister, was her first husband, but he died on March 15, 1868. A charming young widow, she toured the continent and a second time met her fate. This time it was a member of the nobility, a French count named Antoine Raymond de Francolini. She married him in Paris, but it seemed that the union was not a happy one, for she returned to America without him.

During her stay in Europe her father died, and she believed that she was cheated in the distribution of the estate. It was at this date, at any rate, that misfortune began to follow her. She was in constant litigation up to the time of her death. For many years suits were pending against this city and county involving the title of large tracts of land near the Presidio, now built up and very valuable. Her second husband, Count Francolini, died in Paris on March 4, 1902, and she sued to obtain part of his estate. All of these things unbalanced her mind, and she was in constant fear that unseen enemies were trying to steal her papers or poison her. For this reason she practically lived the life of a recluse.

## The Crops and the Weather

### General Summary.

The first half of the week was warm and dry in all sections, while the latter part was cool everywhere, with good rains west of the Cascade mountains, but with none of consequence in the eastern part of the state. The rains did no damage to grain in shock, and they were of great benefit to pastures, clover, corn, late potatoes and gardens. The cloudiness was unfavorable for hops, as it caused an increase of vermin and mould, but as yet the yards have not been damaged to any great extent and the prospect is favorable for a good crop of hops. Picking will become general in a couple of weeks, and the growers are now engaging hands for this work.

The grain harvest is drawing to a close and thrashing is now well advanced. Wheat and barley yields are above the average in the Willamette valley, and oats are a splendid crop. Most of the Cascade moun-

tains wheat, barley and oats are yielding well, but falling below last year's returns. The quality of all small grain is better than last year.

Sugar beets, where well cultivated, are doing finely, but this crop needs more rain. Corn has made excellent advancement during the week. Considerable complaint is made of blight affecting the late potatoes in Tillamook and Clatsop counties, but elsewhere they are doing nicely. Prunes have not altogether ceased dropping, but many trees have all they can carry, and the crop, as a whole, will be a big one. Apples are doing well, and Bartlett pears give promise of large returns.

#### Willamette Valley.

Goble, Columbia county—Heavy thunder storm Saturday, with general rain; week favorable for potatoes, corn and cabbage; early apples and plums are ripe, crop fair.

Shawwood, Washington county—Grain about all cut and some thrashing done; wheat and oats yielding well; late potatoes and gardens in need of rain; hops looking fairly well, but lousy, and with this period of warm, cloudy weather lice are on the increase; owners of several yards in this neighborhood are in doubt as to whether their yards will be worth picking, owing to the lice.

Sherman, Yamhill county—Weather cooler, no rain; thrashing in progress; wheat and oats both averaging well; hops in fine condition, very few lice; picking will begin about the 25th.

Liberal, Clackamas county—Thrashing progressing rapidly; wheat and oats all cut; quality of all kinds of grain is No. 1, and quantity good; apples are still falling; prunes ripening fast.

Aswec, Marion county—Thrashing well along, with good yields of wheat and oats; fruit and potatoes continue to do well; hops are coming along slowly; some will begin picking the last of the coming week, and by the last of the first week in September the most of the yards will be picking; weather has been favorable for increase of lice.

Brownsville, Linn county—Weather generally warm, nights cool; excellent for harvesting; no high winds, rain or frost, except warm rain Saturday; fruit maturing well; good crops of prunes, pears and apples.

Waterloo, Linn county—Fall grain nearly all thrashed; yield best for five years; pastures very dry, but stock looks well; corn, though late, is maturing fast; light showers on the 21st and 22d.

Greenleaf, Lane County—Light showers first and last of week; grain all harvested; early apples, prunes and plums ripe a week or more; green corn nearly ready for use; second crop of red clover, cut 1st of July, now blossoming.

## Reliance Is Again A Winner

(Continued from page one.)

The Shamrock at 11:02:10, being handicapped 10 seconds.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Second, outward bound, in order to give her passengers a sight, ordered slow speed and trailed in the wake of the Defender 20 minutes; the passengers cheered the Shamrock also in a round of cheers. As the morning advanced the breeze brought in a gray mist from the southeast nearly obscuring the horizon.

There was a pretty tussle at the start. Wringe stood away down the line endeavoring to shake Barr from his weather course. Barr seeing Wringe intended crossing near the time of the handicap, dropped his adversary and stood across the line on the starboard tack. Wringe stood down to leeward, came about and crossed 19 seconds after the handicap gun was fired. He went on the starboard tack, but immediately after crossing hung the Shamrock about to port. Barr also came about to port, and both yachts stood in toward Bear-bright; though the wind was little more than seven knots in strength, the challenger showed a greater angle of heel than the Reliance.

A grey mist coming in made it difficult for the excursionists to follow the yachts, although the crews huddled on the weather rail, the wind was strong enough to put the yachts well down. The Reliance seemed to slide over the waves with an effort.

The first 10 minutes' sailing showed little advantage with either, although the American points a trifle higher into the wind.

11:19—The Reliance is steadily increasing her lead over the Shamrock.

11:23—The Reliance leads by a minute and a half.

11:36—The Reliance continues to gain, although neither seem to have any advantage in the wind.

Noon—The Shamrock is gaining slightly and doing better work, pointing higher and taking the waves easily.

12:15—The wind led to the southeast on the beach, which should be felt where the yachts are sailing, and will benefit the Shamrock.

12:33—Wringe gave a pretty exhibition of picking, stood down on the defender and gained steadily, until the Reliance's lead was almost cut down.

A mist arose and obscured the yachts, which, as they disappeared, were but a short distance apart. The Reliance was slightly ahead, and the wind off shore and blowing seven knots.

The official start of the Reliance was 11:30:04; Shamrock 11:02. A Coney Island wireless says at 1 o'clock both boats were making for the second mark.

1:23—The wireless puts the Reliance three-quarters of a mile ahead when rounding the second mark.

1:30—The wireless says the Reliance turned the second mark at 1:25 and the Shamrock at 1:29:30. The wind is steady.

2:01—The mist is still thick off shore, and the excursion fleet is gathering at the finish. One yacht is seen approaching, about four miles from the finish. The racers are close hauled on the port tack, the other racer was discovered at 2:05. At 2:08 the Reliance is leading by at least four miles, which gives her the race unless the unforeseen happens. A flash signal says the Reliance wins.

The unofficial time of the finish of was 11:00:36, Shamrock 11:02. A Shamrock 2:20:10, making the Reliance win by more than a minute.

On corrected time, unofficial, the Reliance won by a minute and 10 seconds. Yachtmen are enthusiastic, and say today settled beyond any doubt that the cup is safe. The next race will be a fifteen mile beat to windward and return, Thursday.

#### Two Ancient Instances.

Nebuchadnezzar was eating grass. "Yes," he remarked, "I suppose you might say this is one of the turf events of the season."

Confident of getting into all the sporting extras, he bore up well under the ordeal.

Caesar had refused the crown for the third time.

"But think," they urged, "it carries with it the privilege of entertaining American warships."

Herewith he was fain to reconsider his determination.—New York Sun.

#### Remarkable Properties of Radium.

Radium makes amends for its scarcity by its remarkable properties. A little of it goes a long way. It is so highly luminous that print can be read by its light. Curiously enough, it possesses the power of imparting its own luminosity to other bodies which in their normal state are quite inactive. A mere fraction of a grain in solution poured from one vessel to another imparts to each considerable activity, which persists for some time, even after both vessels are washed in the usual way. The property is similar to that of a grain of musk which imparts its odor to every article of clothing in a wardrobe, although there has been no material contact. So powerful is the photographic action of radium that it is capable of penetrating black paper and other opaque objects as readily as sunlight passes through clear glass. Its chemical action is no less energetic and remarkable. Oxygen is transformed into ozone; yellow phosphorus is converted into red phosphorus.

The physiological effect of radium is such that we should, perhaps, be thankful that large quantities of the material cannot be readily obtained. For six hours Professor Curie carried in his waistcoat pocket a small tube containing a very small quantity of radium. A few days later a sore developed, which healed only after seven weeks had elapsed. The constant handling of radium is attended with inflammation of the fingers. Held against the temples of a blind man, radium will no affect the retina that the sensation of light is produced. In normal persons the experiment if prolonged will result in paralysis of the optic nerve. Applied to the unprotected nerve-center of small animals, the rays produce paralyzing effects which kill.

Radium destroys the germinating power of seeds, kills the larvae of butterflies, and has such a bactericidal effect that it may find a wide use in the cure of certain skin diseases. Indeed, in one of the Parisian hospitals it has been employed with results quite as remarkable as those obtained by Flouren with ultra-violet rays. Diamonds are rendered phosphorescent, and can thus be readily distinguished from paste imitations, which are not so sensitive to the rays.—September Woman's Home Companion.

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SALEM WEDY AUG. 26

Special Popular Railroad and Boat Excursions. Admission Tickets and numbered reserved seats sold on show day at Patton Bros. Book Store at the same prices as charged at the ticket wagon on the Show Grounds.

Edward Charles Blackwell, a native of England, yesterday afternoon appeared before the county clerk and declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, renouncing his allegiance to King Edward VII of England.

King Philip's farewell tournament to the Princess, Knights and Nobles immediately preceding their memorable pilgrimage from France to the Holy City, as depicted in Ringling Brothers' pantomime and spectacular production of Jerusalem and the Crusades, is a panoramic scene of thrilling tilting and jousting contests and furious broadsword battles, together with wonderful exhibitions of superb horsemanship.