THE FATE OF A CROWN (Continued from Page Three)

pay. But de Pintra merely shrugged his shoulders and said nothing. Such a person could do little to imperil the cause, for its important secrets could not be surprised. The grim vault

guarded them well. My duties occupying me only at night, my days were wholly my own, and they passed very pleasantly indeed, for my acquaintance with Lesba Paola had ripened into a close friendship between us-a friendship I was eager to resolve into a closer relation. But Lesba although frank and in-

genuous in all our intercourse, had an effectual way of preventing the declarations of love which were ever on my tongue, and I found it extremely difficult to lead our conversation into channels that would give me an opportunity to open my heart to her,

She was an expert horsewoman, and we took many long rides together, during which she pointed out to me the estates of all the grandees in the neighborhood. Dom Miguel, whose love for the beautiful girl was very evident, seemed to encourage our companionship, and often spoke of her with

great tenderness. He would dwell with especial pride upon the aristocratic breeding of his ward, which, to do him justice, he valued more for its effect upon other noble families than for any especial advantage it lent to Lesba herself; for while Dom Miguel was thoroughly republican in every sense of the word, he realized the advantages to be gained by interesting the best families of Brazil in the fortunes of his beloved made. Cause, and one by one he was clever-

ly succeeding in winning them. My that the Revolution was being backed by the flower of Brazilian nobilitythe most positive assurance in my eyes of the justice and timeliness of the great movement for liberty. The idea that monarchs derive their authority from divine sources-so prevalent amongst the higher classes-had dissolved before the leader's powerful arguments and the object lessons Dom Pedro's corrupt ministry constantly afforded. All thoughtful people had come to a realization that liberty was but a step from darkness into light, a bursting of the shackles that had oppressed them since the day that Portugal had declared the province of Brazil an Empire, and set a scion of her royal family to rule its people with autocratic sway.

And Lesba, sprung from the bluest blood in all the land, had great influence in awakening, in those families she visited, an earnest desire for a republic. Her passionate appeals were constantly inspiring her fellows with an enthusiastic devotion to the cause of liberty, and this talent was duly appreciated by Dom Miguel, whose admiration for the girl's simple but direct methods of making converts was

"Lesba is a rebel to her very fingertips," said he, " and her longing to see her country a republic is exceeded by that of no man among us. But we are chary of admitting women to our councils, so my little girl must be content to watch for the great day when the cause of freedom shall prevail."

However, she constantly surprised me by her intimate knowledge of our progress. As we were riding one day she asked: "Were you not impressed by your

visit to the secret vault?" "The secret vault!" I exclaimed. "Do you know of it?"

"I can explain every inch of its construction," she returned, with a laugh; "everything, indeed, save the secret by means of which one may gain admission. Was it not Francisco's idea? And is it not exceedingly clever?" "It certainly is," I admitted.

"It was built by foreign workmen, brought to Brazil secretly, and for that very purpose. Afterward the artisans were sent home again; and not Lesba, I rode and chatted with her one of them, I believe, could again in the firm conviction that here, at find his way to my uncle's house, for least, was one secret connected with Izabel's report, in order that he may guel!" every precaution was taken to pre the revolution of which she was ignor- prove his department vigilant in ser- Over the heads of the stupidly starvent their discovering its location." "That was well done," said I.

"All that Francisco undertakes in well done," she answered simply. This faith in her perplexing brother was so perfect that I never ventured to oppose it. We could not have remained friends had I questioned either

his truth or ability. Madam Izabel I saw but seldom, as she avoided the society of the family and preferred the seclusion of her own apartments. On the rare occasions his size, for he was considerably above of our meeting she treated me with frigid courtesy, resenting any attempt upon my part to draw her into conversation.

For a time it grieved me that Dom Miguel's daughter should regard me with so much obvious dislike and suspicion. Her sad story had impressed me greatly, and I could understand how her proud nature had resented the slanders of Francisco Paola, and writhed under them. But one evening an incident occurred that served to sent you to General Manuel Deodoro content me with Madam Izabel's da Fonseca. aversion, and led me to suspect that the Minister of Police had not been so guilty as I had deemed him.

to be deposited within the vault. After raising the first trap my em- figure loomed larger than his in the

as usual, extinguished the affairs of the conspiracy. candle. I heard the customary low, grating noise, but before the shoot- disconcerting glance than that which ing of the bolts reached my ears there shot from his full black eyes as I stood was a sharp report, followed by a before him. It seemed to search out my vivid flash, and turning instantly I be- every thought, and I had the sensaheld Madam Izabel standing beside us, tion of being before a judge who would holding in her hand a lighted match show no mercy to one who strove to and peering eagerly at the surface of dissemble in his presence.

My eyes followed hers, and while a moment he had seized my hand and Dom Miguel stood as if petrified with amazement I saw the glitter of a gold to Dom Miguel. ring protruding from one of the many curious indentations upon the plate. said he. The next instant the match was dashed from her grasp and she gave a low Izabel has learned my secret, it is

"Light the candle!" commanded de vouch for her faith." Pintra's voice, fiercely.

dragged his daughter through the pas- devil. They are daughters of Delilahsage and up the stairs. I followed them silently to the chief's study. Then, casting the woman from him, de Pintra confronted her with blazing eyes, "How dare you spy upon me?"

Madam Izabel had become cool as with a grim smile. "Never trust a her father grew excited. She actually woman in politics. But how about smiled-a hard, bitter smile-as she Francisco Paola? Do you vouch for defiantly looked into his face and an- him?"

"Spy! You forget, sir, that I am your daughter. I came to your room to seek you. You were not here; but the door | vouch for any one, General," said I, to this stairway was displaced, and a nettled by his manner. "I am here to cold air came through it. Fearing that serve the Cause, not to judge the loyalsome danger menaced you I passed ty of its leaders," down the stairs until, hearing a noise, "Ugh!" said he, contemptuously; 18-

I paused to strike a maten. Fou cas and I turned my back upon him, facing best explain the contretemps. Long and silently Dom Miguel gazed upon his daughter. Then he said, abruptly, "Leave the room!"

She bowed coldly, with a mocking expression in her dark eyes, and with-As she passed me I noted upon her

cheeks an unwonted flush that renderd her strikingly beautiful. Deep in thought de Pintra paced the floor with nervous strides. Finally he turned toward me. "What did you see?" he asked.

"A ring," I answered. "It lay upon the trap, and the stone was fitted into one of the numerous indentations." "He passed his hand over his brow with a gesture of despair.

"Then she saw it also," he murmured, "and my secret is a secret no lon-

I remained silent, looking upon him curiously, but in deep sympathy. Suddenly he held out his hand, Upon the little finger was an emerald ring, the stone appearing to be of no exceptional value. Indeed, the trinket was calculated to attract so little attention that I had barely noticed it before, although I remembered that my employer always wore it.

"This," said he, abruptly, "is key to the vault." I nodded. The truth had flashed upon me the moment Madam Izabel had struck the match. And now, looking at it closely, I saw that the stone was oddly cut, although the fact was not likely to impress one who was ignorant of the purpose for which it was

The chief resumed his pacing, but presently paused to say: "If anything happens to me, my familiarity with the records taught me friend, be sure to secure this ring above all else. Get it to Paola, or to Fonseca, or Piexoto as soon as possible-you know where they may be

found. Should it fall into the hands of the royalists the result would be fa-"But would either of your associates be able to use the ring, even if it passed into their possession?" I asked.

"There are two hundred indentations in the door of the trap," answered de Pintra, "and the stone of the ring is so cut that it fits but one of these. Still, if our friends have time to test each cavity, they are sure to find the right one, and then the stone of my ring acts as a key. My real safety, as you will observe, lay in the hope that no one would discover that my ring unlocked the vault. Now that Izabel has learned the truth I must guard the ring as I would my lifemore, the lives of all our patriotic

"Since you suspect her loyalty, why do you not send your daughter away?

"I prefer to keep her under my own eye. And, strange as her actions of tonight seem, I still hesitate to believe that my own child would conspire to ruin me."

"The secret is not your own, sir," I

ventured to say. "True," he acknowledged, flushing deeply, "the secret is not my own. It belongs to the Cause. And its discovery would jeopardize the revolution itself. For this reason I shall keep Izabel. with me, where, admitting she has the inclination to betray us, she will not have the power."

After this night he did not extinguish the light when we entered the vault, evidently having decided to trust me fully; but he took pains to secure the trap in the study floor so that no one could follow us. After watching him apply the key several times I became confident that I could find the right indentation without trouble should the occasion ever rise

for me to unlock the vault unaided. Days passed by, and Madam Izabel remained as quiet and reserved as if she had indeed abandoned any further curiosity concerning the secret vault. As for my fellow-rebel, the Senhorita

CHAPTER VII.

guel's library, I found mysel? face to obtain it by arresting Dom Miguel. face with a strange visitor. He did not But this report will prevent the Em- not understand? Every moment is wear a mask, as did so many of the peror putting his man Valcour upon precious." conspirators, even in the chief's presence; but a long black cloak swept in many folds from his neck to his feet. My first thought was to marvel at six feet in height and finely proportioned, so that his presence fairly dominated us and made the furnishings of the room in which he stood seem

small and insignificant. As I entered, he stood with his back to the fireplace confronting Dom Miguel, whose face wore a sad and tired expression. I immediately turned to withdraw, but a gesture from the

stranger arrested me.

I bowed profoundly. General Fonseca was not only a commander of the Emperor's royal army, but Chief Marshal It was late, and Dom Miguel had of the forces of the Revolutionary parpreceded me to the domed chamber ty. I had never seen the great man bewhile I carried the records and papers fore, as his duties required his constant presence at the capital; but no

Seldom have I met a keener or more

But the glance was brief, withal. In gripped it painfully. Then he turned

"Let me hear the rest of your story," "There is nothing more, General.

true; but she is my daughter. I will "Then will not I!" returned Fon-I obeyed. He was holding the woman seca, in his deep, vibrant tones. fast by her wrist. The ring had dis- "Never have I believed the tale of her appeared, and the mystery of the trap estrangement from that scoundrel, Leon de Mar. Men are seldom traitors, Dom Miguel, greatly excited and for they dare not face the consequenmuttering imprecations all the way, ces. Women have no fear of man or

each and every one. He turned suddenly to me. "Will you also vouch for Senhora Izabel de Mar?" he asked.

"No," I answered. "And quite right, sir," he returned,

I hesitated, startled by the question. "Answer me!" he ca "I cannot see that I am required to

Dom Miguel, over whose features a Fonseca stalked up and down the a general he possesses rare ability, and fleeting smile passed apartment, his sword clanking beneath his high station renders him the most

his cloak, and his spurs clicking like valuable leader the Cause can boast. castanets. Then he planted his huge Moreover, Fonseca has risked everyfigure before the chief. "Watch them both," said he brus- implicitly trusted. When at last we quely; "your daughter and your friend. strike our great blow for freedom, They are aware of our most important | much will depend upon Manuel da

De Pintra's face reddened. "Francisco is true as steel" he retorted, firmly. "Not one of us-including yourself, General-has done more to serve the Cause. I have learned to little room next the study. Dom Miguel

depend upon his discretion as I would | slept in a similar apartment opening upon my own-or yours." The general frowned and drew a folded paper from his breast pocket. "Read that," said he, tossing it in- it was some time before I sank into to Dom Miguel's hand. "It is a copy a restless slumber. of the report made by Paola to the

Emperor this morning. De Pintra glanced at the paper and then gave it to me, at the same time dropping his head in his hands. I read the report. It stated that the Minister of Police had discovered the existence of a secret vault constructed beneath the mansion of Miguel de Pintra, the rebel chief. This vault, the police thought, contained important records of the conspiracy. It was built



"Come quick, for God's sake!" double plates of steel, and the entrance was guarded by a cleverly constructed door, which could only be unlocked by means of a stone set in a ring which was constantly worn by Dom Miguel himself. In conclusion the minister stated that every effort was being made to secure possession of the ring, when the rebels would be at the Emperor's mercy.

"Well, sir, what do you think of place the ring in its cavity and heard Francisco Paola now?" inquired Fonseca, with a significant smile. "Did he not himself invent the secret vault?" I asked.

"He did, sir." "How long ago?" "A matter of two years. Is it not so,

Dom Miguel?" the lamp into my face. It shivered The chief bowed. "And until now Paola has kept this secret?" I continued. "Until now, yes!" said the general.

"Until the vault was stored with all our funds and the complete records of a living pillar of fire. the revolution." "Then it seems clear to me Paola, as Minister of Police, has been

driven to make this report in order to Dom Miguel looked up at me quickly, and the huge general snorted and stabbed me with his terrible eyes. and I stumbled up the iron stairs until

"What do you mean?" demanded I reached the study, where I set the "This report proves, I fear, that our alarm bell going so fiercely that its suspicions of Madam Izabel are well deep tones resounded throughout the founded," I explained, not daring to whole house. look at Dom Miguel while I accused his daughter. "Paola has doubtless clothing over my smarting flesh, and discovered that this information re as the astonished servants came pourgarding the vault and its mysterious ing into the study, I shouted to them: key has either been forwarded to the Emperor or is on the way to him. and bring her to me-by force if Therefore he has forestalled Madam necessary. She has murdered Dom Mi-Paola's claim that he is working to se- with a quick look of comprehension. cure the ring is but a ruse to gain time Then she disappeared, and I turned One evening, as I entered Dom Mi- for us? Really, he knows that he could again to the wondering servants. the case, which he would probably have done had he received his first

them aside and ran through the house information from Izabel de Mar." in frantic search for the murderess. For a moment there was silence. The rooms were all vacant, and when I Then the general's brow unbent and he reached the entrance hall a groom said with cheerfulness: "Inis explanation is entirely reason- stopped me. able. It would not do for Paola to get himself deposed, or even suspected, at

this juncture. A new Minister of Police would redouble our danger." "How did you obtain this copy of the report?" asked de Pintra. "From one of our spies." "I have no doubt," said I, "that Paola was instrumental in sending it

"Robert," said Dom Miguel, "I pre to you. It is a warning, gentlemen. We must not delay in acting upon it, and removing our treasure and our records to a safer place." "And where is that?" asked Fon-

I looked at the chief. He sat thoughtfully considering the matter, "There is no need of immediate haste," said he presently, and nothing can be done to-night, in any event. Tomorrow we will pack everything in chests and carry them to Senhor Bastro, who has a safe hiding-place. Meantime, General, you may leave me your men to serve as escort. How many are

there?" "Three. They are now guarding the "Let them ride with you to the sta- ed upon our swiftest horse, and knows usual approaches to this house. tion at Cruz, and send them back to every inch of the country. It would me in the morning. I will also summon some of our nearby patriots. By noon to-morrow everything will

waiting-I have saddled him myself ready for the transfer. "Very good!" ejaculated the gener-Make for the station at Cruz, for Izaal. "We cannot abandon too soon the bel will seek to board the train for vault we constructed with so much care. Where is your daughter?"

"Before you leave to-morrow, lock across the broad piazza; and as, halfdazed, I mounted the horse, she addher up and put a guard at her door. We must not let her suspect the removal

"It shall be done," answered de Pin-"Dom Miguel is locked up in the vault, tra, with a sigh. "It may be," he conand I must find the key-the key!" fidence in Izabel has been min The general did not reply. He folded my shoulder I saw her still standing on his cloak about him, glanced at the the steps of the piazza staring after clock, and strode from the room with- me.

out a word of farewell. When he had gone Dom Miguel turned to me.

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"I do not like Fonseca," I answered. "As a man he is at times rather disagreeable," admitted the chief. "But as

thing in our enterprise, and may be

Fonseca. And now, Robert, let us re-

tire, for an hour before daybreak we

It was then eleven o'clock. I bade

the chief good night and retired to my

from the opposite side of the study.

The exciting interview with Fonseca

CHAPTER VIII.

The trap in the floor was open, and

the chief threw himself into the aper-

ture and quickly descended. At once I

followed, feeling my way down the

iron staircase and along the passage.

Reaching the domed chamber

strange sight met our view. Both traps

had been raised, the second one stand-

ing upright upon its hinged edge, and

from the interior of the vault shone a

While we hesitated the light grew

stronger, and soon Madam Izabel came

slowly from the vault with a small

lamp in one hand and a great bundle

of papers in the other. As she reach-

ed the chamber Dom Miguel sprang

from out the shadow and wrenched the

"So, madam!" he cried, "you have

betrayed yourself in seeking to betray

us. Shame! Shame that a daughter of

mine should be guilty of so vile an

act!" As he spoke he struck her so

sharply across the face with the bun-

dle of papers that she reeled back-

"Look to her, Robert," he said, and

Then, while I stood stupidly by, not

leaped into the vault to restore the pa-

thinking of any further danger, Ma-

dam Izabel sprang to the trap and

the heavy plate of steel. I saw her

the shooting of the bolts; and then,

suddenly regaining my senses, I rush-

in that dungeon in a few minutes."

"The ring!" I gasped, in horror,

against the wall, and as I staggered

Screaming with pain, I tore the burn-

into ashes with my bare feet. Then,

smarting from the sting of many

burns, I looked about me and found

Dom Miguel flashed upon me anew,

In my chamber I hastily pulled my

"Fnd Senhora de Mar immediately

"Make haste!" I cried. "Can you

But the frightened creatures gazed

"Senhora de Mar left , the house

be useless to pursue her.

hand touched my elbow.

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While I glared at the fellow a so?

"Come!" said Lesba. "Your horse is

She had led me through the door

ed, "Tell me, can I do anything in

"Nothing!" I cried, with a sob;

Away dashed the horse, and over

Instantly the danger that menaced

myself in darkness and alone.

ed forward and seized her arm.

ward and almost dropped the lamp.

papers from her grasp.

pers to their place.

must be at work."

It was Dom Miguel.

dawn of a new day.

stolen my ring!"

The season's first cold may be slight-may yield to early treatment, but the next cold will hang on longer; it will be more troublesome, too. necessary to take chances on that second one. Scott's Emulsion is a preventive as well as a cure. Take

had left me nervous and wakeful, and

A hand upon my shoulder aroused when colds abound and "Come quick, for God's sake!" he you'll have no cold. Take it cried, in trembling tones. "She has when the cold is contracted and it checks inflammation, heals the membranes Scarcely awake, I sprang from my of the throat and lungs couch in time to see de Pintra's form disappear through the doorway. A moand drives the cold out. ment later I was in the study, which was beginning to lighten with the

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shuddering at the knowledge that de Pintra was slowly dying in his tomb while I was powerless to assist him, I lashed the good steed until it fairly flew over the uneven road. "Halt!" cried a stern voice.

The way had led me beneath some overhanging trees, and as I pulled the horse back upon his haunches I caught

the gleam of a revolver held by a mounted man whose form was enveloped in a long cloak, Then came a peal of light laughter. "Why, 'tis our Americano!" said the horseman, gayly; "whither away, my

gallant cavalier?"

To my delight I recognized Paola's "Dom Miguel is imprisoned in the vault!" I almost screamed in my agi-

tation; "and Madam Izabel has stolen "Indeed!" he answered, "And where is Senhora Izabel?"

"She has fled to Rio." "And left her dear father to die How unfilial!" he retorted, laughing with one quick movement dashed down again. "Do you know, Senhor Harcliffe, it somehow reminds me of a story my nurse used to read from the 'Arabian Nights,' how a fond daughter planned

"For God's sake, sir, the man is dying!" I cried, maddened at his indif-"give me the ring! He will suffocate He drew out a leathern case and I can see yet her cold, serpent-like calmly selected a cigarette. eyes as they glared venomously into "And Madam Izabel has the key. my own. The next instant she dashed

he repeated, striking a match. the way, senhor, where are you backward the burning oil streamed "To overtake the murderess before down my pajamas and turned me into she can board the train at Cruz." "Very good. How long has Dom Miguel been imprisoned in the vault?" ing cloth from my body and stamped it

"Twenty minutes, a half-hour, per-"Ah! He may live in that foul and confined atmosphere for two hours; possibly three. But no longer. I know, for I planned the vault myself. And the station at Cruz is a good two hours' ride from this spot. I know, for I have

just traveled it. I dropped my head, overwhelmed by despair as the truth was thus brutally thrust upon me. For Dom Miguel there was no hope.

"But the records, sir! We must save them, even if our chief is lost. Should Madam Izabel deliver the key to her husband or to the Emperor every leader of the Cause may perish upon the gallows."

"Well thought of, on my word," ving the government, and so protect ing group I saw a white, startled face, commented the strange man, again his high office. Can you not see that and Lesba's great eyes met my own laughing softly. "I wonder how it feels to have a rope around one's neck and to kick the empty air?" He blew a cloud of smoke from his mouth and watched it float away. "But you are quite right, Senhor Harcliffe. The lady must be found and made to give up

He uttered a low whistle, and two upon each other silently, and I thrust men rode out from the shadow of the trees and joined us.

"Ride with Senhor Harcliffe to the station at Cruz. Take there the train for Rio. Present the American to Mazanovitch, who is to obey his instruc-

The men bowed silently. "But you, senhor," I said, eagerly, "can you not yourself assist us in this

"I never work," was the reply, the men I have given you will do all that can be done to assist you. For myself, I think I shall ride on to de Pintra's and kiss my sister good morning. Perhaps she will give me a bite of breakfast, who knows?"

Such heartlessness amazed me. Indeed, the man was past my comprehen-"And General Fonseca?" said I,

hesitating whether or no to put myself under Paola's command, now that the chief was gone. "Let Fonseca go to the devil. He would cry 'I told you so!' and refuse to aid you, even though his own neck is in jeopardy." He looked at his watch, "If you delay longer you will miss the train at Cruz. Good morning, senhor. How sad that you cannot breakfast with us!"

Touching his hat with a gesture of mock courtesy he rode slowly on, and the next moment, all irresolution vat ishing. I put spurs to my horse and bounded away, the two men following

Presently I became tortured with thoughts of Dom Miguel, stifling in his tomb of steel. And under my breath I cursed the heartless sang froid of Francisco Paola, who refused to be serious even when his friend was dy-

tered, as I galloped on; "the cad! the trifling coxcomb! Can nothing rouse my master, senhor," said one of the Something in his voice caused me

to turn and scrutinize his face. The station at Cruz! I must reach it "Ah!" I exclaimed, "you are Seras soon as possible—before Izabel de Mar should escape. Almost crazed at geant Marco." the thought of my impotency and Concluded next week.)

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