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My Reimbursement

It Was Not the Kind That Was Expected

By F. A. MITCHEL

Not long before the revolution in Mexico that put Huerta in the saddle I was sent out by the house by which I had been employed for ten years—from the time I was sixteen till I was twenty-six—to establish a branch of the business at the capital of that country.

For a while I was so busy getting a store, unpacking goods and attending to the various requirements of opening up a new business that the country, the people, their customs, manners, appearance, did not engage my attention, but when all was running smoothly I began to take notice of what was going on about me. Being young and a bachelor, it was natural that the first object to interest me was the señoritas.

It has been said that the women of tropical climates are attractive in appearance when very young, but their beauty soon fades and is replaced by extreme ugliness. But I found that those of Mexico differed much as they do in other countries. Their beauty and its continuance depended largely on their sphere in life. Their long lashes drooping over their liquid brown eyes and their luxuriant hair were to me their chief attractions.

The poor in Mexico are very poor, and the most prosperous, except in a few instances, are not what we in the United States would call rich. In Mexico, as in other countries, there are ups and downs in families, some acquiring wealth, others sinking into poverty.

Directly opposite the house in which I lived dwelt a family which, from appearances, I judged belonged to the latter class. Not long after I came to live near them I saw a piano moved out, then a handsome mahogany desk. These were followed by other articles. In such regular succession that it excited my curiosity. I asked the lady with whom I lodged about it and she replied:

"Oh, the Garcias! They have recently lost a great deal of money. For many years the family has owned stock in mines of this country, but since President Diaz has been deposed and our government has been unstable their mines have not been worked. They have been gradually selling off valuable articles that have been in the family many years. Some of them, they claim, were brought over by one of the conquerors from whom they claim descent."

The world may envy prosperous persons during their prosperity, but it sympathizes with them when their prosperity passes away from them. I was at an age to pity this unfortunate family, and my heart went out to them, especially since my father had felt in business just as I was about to enter college and I felt obliged to go into business instead.

Concha Garcia was a typical beauty of the tropics. Her face was oval, her complexion olive, with a tinge of red in her cheeks, while she possessed the liquid eyes, long lashes and wealth of glossy hair of which I have spoken. On several occasions when she had not taken the precaution to draw her window curtains I saw her standing before a mirror combing her hair and noticed that it swept the floor.

I had the advantage of the young lady—so far as I knew—in observing her, while she knew nothing about me, for even if she had under ordinary circumstances taken an interest in a young man opposite she now appeared absorbed in her troubles. Though I saw her go and come often from and to her home I never saw her smile. One morning I happened to start for my store just as Senorita Garcia left her house. She was unconscious of my presence on the street, though I saw no one else but her. I walked some distance behind her till, coming to the business part of the city, she entered a pawnshop. An impulse moved me to follow her inside. I was not led by a desire to pry into her affairs, but by an interest in her. She engaged the attention of the proprietor while I kept in the background. She produced a brooch with a handsome emerald setting and asked the shopman if he would buy it or loan on it. He said he would do whichever, she preferred, offering to buy it for a much better price than he would loan. The señorita, remarking despondently that she would never be able to redeem it, concluded to sell it.

As she left the shop she glanced at me. I fancied, to see if the sale had been observed by any one she knew. At all events, she showed no further interest in me. As soon as she had left the shop I stepped forward and asked the proprietor if he had any unasked antique jewelry for sale. He brought out, among other articles, the emerald brooch. I bought it, but was obliged to pay him double what it had cost him. Why I bought it or what I would do with it I did not know. Perhaps it was in obedience to the same kind of impulse that had induced me to follow Senorita Garcia into the shop.

Now and again I happened to leave my lodging house at the same time as the young lady left her home, but did not follow her again into a store till

one day I saw her enter a building from which hung a sign, "Manuel Gersona, Dealer in Human Hair."
"Great heavens," I exclaimed, "is she going to advertise those splendid tresses?"
Having delayed a few minutes, I entered a room in which there were cases filled with switches, wigs and other such articles. The señorita was there in the act of taking down her hair, the proprietor waiting to inspect it. Seeing me enter, she hesitated, and the proprietor led her into a rear room curtained from the other. But I could see between the curtains and hear the man bargaining for the hair. I stopped the proceedings by stepping to the curtain and pulling it aside.

"Senor," I said, "I have caught a glimpse of this lady's hair and would like to buy it. If you conclude to purchase it I will take it off your hands at a reasonable profit."

Both the dealer and the lady were somewhat surprised at my intrusion, but the former said at once:

"You are at liberty to make the señorita an offer. I have more stock on hand than I can use in these troublous times."

"Very well. Tell the lady what you would pay were you not overstocked."

"I would pay the highest price—indeed, more than the highest price—on account of the extreme length." He named a sum that the hair was worth.

"If the lady will accept that amount," I said, "I will gladly pay it."

"Are you a dealer in such goods, señor?" asked Senorita Garcia.

"No," I stammered. "I am not."

"Then may I ask for what you want it?"

I have never been good at white lying. If a lie is excusable I would rather tell a big one than a little one.

"I will explain," I said. "I am about to be married to a young lady who is recovering from a fever from which she lost her hair. It is growing again, but very thin. It occurs to me that I could make her no more valuable present than a switch made of your splendid hair."

She appeared to believe the statement, but I could see from her expression that she doubted the propriety of such a gift. However, after a regretful glance in a mirror at the treasure on her head, she accepted my offer.

"Will you take it now, señor?" she asked.

"No, señorita. I have not enough money with me, but I will pay you a sum to bind the bargain and you need not deliver the goods till the balance is discharged."

I went through my pockets and found enough money to pay 70 per cent on the purchase.

"But, señor, you do not know me. You are taking a risk."

"I know a lady when I see her."

"I assure you, señor," said the proprietor, "you run no risk whatever; the señorita's family are well known in Mexico. They have in their veins the blood of one of the conquerors."

"May I ask when the señor will call for my hair?" asked the girl.

"I'll call for it," I said to gain time to construct another lie. "The date of the wedding is not yet fixed."

The wearer of my property said nothing more, but from the curious way she looked at me it was evident that there was something in the transaction she did not understand. Writing her address on a card she handed it to me and left the store. I sent her the balance of the amount of the purchase money the same day, with a caution on no account to cut off her hair till I called for it.

Senorita Garcia, not having any occasion for my address, had not asked for it. Since I had no use for her hair and had only bought it to save it for her, I did not care for it. Weeks passed before we met again. Meanwhile I wondered if she would recognize me at seeing me again. She had perched herself in the rear room at the hair dealer's there was not enough light for her to see me distinctly. Our third meeting was on the street. As I passed her she stared at me, as if uncertain whether I was or was not the owner of her hair. I looked straight ahead but she stopped me and said:

"Senor?"
"I beg pardon," raising my hat.
"Are you not the señor wh-who—"
"Who what, señorita?"
"Bought my hair?"
"I was fixing for another lie, but saw in her eye that it would not pass. I smiled."

"Come, señor," she continued, with great seriousness. "There is something about this transaction that I do not understand. Several weeks ago you bought my hair for your fiancée, so you said. You have paid the price for it, but have not called for it. It is yours, and I insist on delivering it to you or returning the money."

"Senorita," I said, putting a slight tremolo into my voice, "the lady for whom I made that purchase is no more."

"Oh, señor, how I gity you!"
"Do not talk about returning the money, I could not bear it. Let us rather find some other way. If you insist upon it, by which you may reimburse me. Will you permit me to call upon you and talk the matter over with you?"
"I can understand your feelings, but I do insist on reimbursing you and will be glad to receive you for the purpose you mention."
"You are very kind."

PASS MONEY BILL

Six Republicans and One Progressive Vote for It.

FINAL VOTE STANDS 54 TO 34

Provisions Contained in the Bill Are That Banks Must Accept Within Sixty Days of Its Passage—Reserve Districts Are to Be Fixed at from 8 to 12.

WASHINGTON — Backed up by the solid Democratic vote and the additional vote of six Republicans, the new currency bill passed the senate by a vote of 54 to 34.

The following Republicans voted for the bill—Crawford, Jones, Norris, Perkins, Sterling and Weeks. Poin-dexter, Progressive, also voted for it. The vote was taken at 7:42 o'clock, after the senate, sitting as a committee of the whole, had approved the bill in an afternoon session.

Some essential features of the currency bill as it passed the senate are as follows:

Secretary of the treasury and two members of the federal reserve board constitute the organization committee.

The committee is to designate not less than eight nor more than twelve reserve districts, in each of which a federal reserve bank is to be established.

Must Write Acceptance. Every national bank is required and every eligible bank in the United States and every trust company in the District of Columbia is authorized to signify in writing within sixty days after the passage of the act its acceptance of its terms.

National banks are required and others are permitted to subscribe to the capital stock of the reserve banks in a sum equal to 6 per cent of the capital and surplus of such banks, one-sixth to be payable on call, one-sixth within three months and one-sixth within six months, the remainder subject to call.

Any national bank to signify its intention to accept the terms of this act shall cease to act as a reserve agent upon thirty day's notice.

Any national bank failing within one year to comply with any of the provisions of the act will forfeit its charter and privileges under the national bank act.

If the stock subscription by the banks is not sufficient in the judgment of the federal reserve board to provide proper capital the stock may be offered to the public, the maximum subscription being \$10,000.

Minimum capital of reserve banks is fixed at \$5,000,000.

Each reserve bank must establish reserve branches within its federal reserve district at such places as are approved by the federal reserve board.

Mars Banker as Chairman. There shall be nine directors holding office for three years, divided into three classes, three to be chosen by the banks and representatives of the stock-holding banks, three chosen by the banks who at the time of their election shall be actively engaged in their district in commerce, agriculture or some other industrial pursuit, and three designated by the federal reserve board. One of the last-named class is to be designated by the federal board as chairman of the board of directors of the reserve bank. No director of the last two named classes can be a director, officer, employee or stockholder of any bank.

NO CONVENTION OF REPUBLICAN PARTY

National Committee Defeats Gai-together Plan.

WASHINGTON — By a vote of 35 to 14 the Republican national committee decided not to hold a special national convention to reorganize the Republican party.

The states which voted for the convention were Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North and South Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington and West Virginia.

By a unanimous vote the committee adopted a resolution pledging the committee to carry out reforms in party procedure and management of its own motion.

It is the belief of both the so-called regular and progressive leaders that the day's work of the committee amounts to a revolutionary change in the organization of the Republican party and that it will go a long way toward restoring the harmonious relations that took wings in the convention of 1912.

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In "Tigerland" the author relates an extraordinary comedy witnessed by a friend who was sitting in the veranda of his tent in Bengal watching his elephants, which were picketed under some trees a short distance off.

He saw the wife of one of the mahouts emerge from her tent, shelter with an infant in her arms. She took it close up to a huge tusker, then to whom she made a low salaam; then put the sleeping child down before it and salaamed again. Next she spread a blanket on the ground and placed the baby in the center of it, well within reach of the tusker's proboscis. Then salaaming again, more ostentatiously, went off to the bazaar.

Presently the child awoke and soon began to crawl toward the edge of the blanket. But when it had gone a foot or two the elephant, stretching out his trunk, gently pulled it back to its original position. Again and again the baby attempted similar excursions to regions beyond the blanket's edge, but always with the same result. Exploration under elephantine supervision finally proved too dull, and so the child lay quiet for awhile, gazing up at its huge nurse, then dropped off peacefully to sleep again.

Social Calls in China. It is difficult for a Chinaman to master the English pronunciation, and this accounts in great measure for the prevalence of pidgin English. The letter r is almost always sounded like l, so we have ki-lin or kien for green and lain for rain. "Too mu-bee lain just now" is often heard, "just now" being a favorite expression to denote the immediate present. In calling upon a lady one says to the boy (house servant) one says from sixteen to sixty, "Misses have got" or "No have got," according to whether she is in or out. This recalls the time honored, true story of the lady who called and the boy reported to his mistress of the house. "One piecee man down downe house. "One piecee man downe downe b'long missus." Scarcely complimentary to the "piecee man"—Amy W. Hotchkiss in National Magazine.

Rebels Still After Tampico. MEXICO CITY, MEX.—Private advices from Tampico received here are in conflict with the official statement that the rebels have abandoned the oil fields and are in full retreat north of Altamira and pursued by the federal forces. According to authoritative dispatches from the gulf port the rebels have captured the most important bridge across the Pamac river in the suburbs of Tampico and are ready for another attack on the city.

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