

## *A Piquant Anecdote*

Don Louis Eguilar, the Madrid correspondent of a Havana paper, relates in one of his late letters the following curious episode. A Spanish lady of high rank, being recently invited to dine with an Austrian princess in Paris, was found in her dressing-room, busily engaged in putting on the proper vestments for the occasion. When she came to the point of adorning herself with a certain set of pearls and emeralds that she prized very highly, there was found wanting the breast-pin. Suspecting a robbery, she examined closely her jewel-box, and was fully confirmed in her suspicions. As it happens that a lady of good breeding, though fretted and annoyed, knows how to conceal, more or less, her vexation, she said nothing of her loss, but the princess and guests perceived, by the working of the lady's face and the uneasy air which she maintained, that something extraordinary was passing through her mind. To ask her what had happened, and to receive a reply, couched in injured tones, and accusing all the French of being thieves and robbers, was but the work of a moment; and the ladies, because of her saying so many and such hard things, were induced to report her conduct to the emperor, their master. The question seemed to be one of national honor. A few minutes thereafter, the shrewdest detectives in Paris were at work, examining all the jewelry stores, with the hope of finding the lost pin. They did find it. A celebrated dealer in diamonds, a Spaniard, by the by, had bought it for the sum of \$32,000, and had already sold it to an English lord for \$35,000, in whose possession the piece of jewelry was found.

“How did you happen to buy this piece of jewelry that you ought to have known was stolen?” asked the agent of the police to the worthy dealer in diamonds.

“I not only suspected that, but I was sure of it, for I well knew the set of which this piece formed a part, and the exalted person to whom it belonged.”

“Then how can you explain your conduct as an honorable business man?”

“Why, as it often happens that persons of high rank are pressed for money, and as we diamond dealers and usurers may be their only confidants, I admitted the possibility that the lady to whom the set belongs might find herself in such a strait, and I demanded that he, who proposed to sell, should bring me a receipt signed by some person of position, which would be a guarantee to me for the amount of money paid out. Will the signature of Monsieur ----- suit you?” said the dealer.

“Yes,” replied the detective, and in a few minutes he returned with the signature, on which he was repaid the \$32,000 by the detective.

The emperor sent to the lady in question the same night her lost jewel, which had been redeemed from the hands of the English lord, asking her at the same time if she desired that the thief should be handed over to the tribunal? The noble lady answered that she so desired, and thereupon his majesty showed her the receipt which was given to the diamond dealer for the \$32,000, and at the bottom of that was seen written the name of her husband!

*The Flag of Our Union*, November 6, 1869