

*d'Afrique*, recognizable from his fellow-troopers only by his spotless linen. Shortly after this he was promoted to a sublieutenancy. His promotion was then rapid, and he did good service in the north; for although he was no reader of books and was somewhat heavy of understanding, he was as brave as his famous ancestor.<sup>1</sup>

Count Clary, a cousin of Napoleon III, when I met him, had only recently emerged from his worsted chrysalis;<sup>2</sup> and Albert Bazaine, the marshal's own nephew, was impatiently waiting to be raised from the depressing position of a *piou-piou*, that he might enjoy the full social benefits of his relationship to the commander-in-chief.

The position of these gentlemen in a capital where the army was, so to speak, under arms, and where no civilian's dress, therefore, was allowed to a soldier, was ambiguous and gave rise to amusing anomalies. For instance, they, of course, could not be admitted to official balls or entertainments where uniforms were *de rigueur*, as only officers were invited. They paid calls, however, and thus mixed

<sup>1</sup> An officer wrote me during a *contre-guérilla* known as the the Franco-Prussian war that at "Free Company of Mexican partisans" (see D'Héricault, *loc. cit.*, p. 79), which did brave work in the state of Michoacan against the bands of General Regules and others, and later in the neighborhood of Mexico, without ever exciting the bitter hatred which the *contre-guérilla* of Colonel Dupin, holding the state of Vera Cruz, drew upon itself. (See "Querétaro," by Haus, p. 56.)

<sup>2</sup> He was promoted to the rank of captain before the return of the French army, and commanded

on neutral ground with their officers; and so these nondescript military larvæ managed to enjoy life until the day came when they might become official butterflies.

As for the Marquis de Massa, the day had long gone by when, driving in his own trap to the gate of the Paris barracks after a night spent out on leave through the leniency of General Fleury, he set to work to curry his own horse. His keen wit and happy repartee, his good-humored sarcasm, and, above all, the magnetism of a personality that scorned deceit and gave itself for no better or worse than it was, combined to make him a favorite among the devotees of pleasure whom Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie had gathered about them; and notwithstanding his empty pockets, his roofless château in Auvergne, and his sparsely braided sleeve, he was an habitué of the Austrian embassy and of the best salons in Paris, and made for himself a conspicuous place in the innermost circle of the court of Compiègne and the Tuileries. He had written a number of light plays for the amateur stage of Parisian society, and his dramatic efforts had been interpreted by players whose high-sounding names might be found on pages of history.

His first attempt was the "Cascades de Mouchy," on December 9, 1863. The representation was given at the Château de Mouchy, to which "all Paris" traveled for the purpose. In the words of the "Figaro": "It was a complete mobilization of Parisian society." The Duc de Mouchy, a man of the old nobility, had recently married Princess



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Anna Murat; and the actors as well as the audience represented the wit, talent, wealth, and power of the Second Empire.

In collaboration with Prince de Metternich, then Austrian ambassador at the court of the Tuileries, and an amateur musician of no mean order, he had written the libretto of a ballet called "Le Roi d'Yvetot." This was given on the professional stage, but met with little success, if exception is made of the "first night," when again "all Paris" turned out to see the prince lead the orchestra, and to applaud the brilliant young author after the curtain fell.

In 1865 he wrote a *revue*, which was performed with great *éclat* before the court at Compiègne. In this really clever piece the principal occurrences of the year were touched upon and reviewed. The literary event of 1865 in France had been the publication of Napoleon's work "Les Commentaires de César," and this the young courtier took as a title for his play. Once again all the wit and beauty of the court of Eugénie united to make the occasion a brilliant tribute to the imperial historian. The Comte and Comtesse de Pourtalès, the Marquis and Marquise de Gallifet, the Duc and Duchesse de Mouchy, the Princesse de Sagan, the Marquis de Caux (who afterward married Adelina Patti), the Princesse de Metternich,—indeed, the *élite* of cosmopolis,—appeared upon the stage, and in clever verse and epigrammatic song amusingly dealt with the gossip of the day.

M. de Massa's success was mainly due to the



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good-natured independence of his work. He told the truth to his audience, even though it might be composed of the great of the land. He chaffed the women upon their manners, and sometimes their morals, and the men upon their idleness and their evil ways. He showed up the speculative fever which, like an epidemic, had swept over the higher ranks of Parisian society under the Second Empire.<sup>1</sup> No weakness could be sure of escaping his satire. But in dealing with all this the scalpel of the cynic was concealed under the graceful touch of the man of the world. He did not assume the tone of a moralist or of a misanthrope. He was not even an observing spectator, but a good-natured *enfant du siècle*, a sinner among sinners, for whom life was one long comedy.

After the return of the Corps Expéditionnaire in 1867, when the great International Exposition was attracting to Paris the princes and celebrities of the world, "Les Commentaires de César" was, at the Emperor's request, repeated at the Tuileries before the crowned heads there assembled as his guests.

Notwithstanding the seething forces underlying

<sup>1</sup> For instance, one stanza sung by M. de St. Maurice :

"Tout les terrains, les canaux, les carrières,  
Depuis le fer jusqu'au moindre métal,  
Les champs, les eaux, les forêts, les bruyères—  
Tout représente un certain capital.  
Vous le voyez la fièvre est générale ;  
Tout est matière à speculations . . .  
Tout, en effet, excepté la morale  
Qu'on n'a pas mise en actions."



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the brilliant surface and threatening the empire's very existence, the summer of 1867, as superficially seen in Paris, must be regarded as the very apex of Napoleon's career.

The exposition was the last and most gorgeous set piece of the many Napoleonic fireworks, the splendor of which flashed through history, and ended in the dark smoke of Sedan.

The performance at the Tuileries was one of the most select entertainments arranged at this time. The troupe of aristocratic comedians was greeted with enthusiastic applause, and the popular author received an ovation from his audience of monarchs and princes such as fate never bestowed upon Beaumarchais, Marivaux, or even Molière!

All aglow with the excitement of his social achievements, the Marquis de Massa came to Mexico in 1866 and immediately took his place in the military household of the commander-in-chief.

As soon as he felt sufficiently posted as to the local conditions of Mexico, he went to work, and the result was a vaudeville entitled "Messieurs les Voyageurs pour Mexico, en Voiture!"

The marshal's household supplied the principal stars of the improvised dramatic company, the leader of the orchestra, a young Belgian officer, and the prima donna, an "American girl from Paris," as the Mexican papers had it, being brought in only as necessary adjuncts. Another important female part was taken by Albert Bazaine, who was turned into a superb soubrette.

The play was little more than a skit, and the

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plot—if the thin, sketchy incident that stood in its place may be called one—served only as an excuse for a continuous fusillade of local hits, often of a personal character. These not only kept the audience in a fever of merriment, but long afterward furnished Mexican official and social circles with topics for more or less friendly discussion. Some ill feeling and not a few unpleasant comments were, of course, the result of the little venture; and most of those concerned paid for their fun in some way or other.

The performance took place at San Cosme, at the house of the Vicomtesse de Nouë. Maximilian, whose curiosity had been aroused, expressed a desire to have it repeated at the imperial palace; but having heard of certain unmerciful sallies made upon his financial decrees and other measures of his government, he did not attempt to disguise his displeasure. Of course the performance was not repeated.

No harm whatever was intended; but, looking back upon the incident, one can see that the hits, if innocently meant, coming as they did from the marshal's household, were certainly lacking in discretion. Indeed, when one considers the serious dissensions then existing between the quartier-général and the palace, it becomes clear that such jests must have had upon the court the effect of the banderillas which, in a bull-fight, by a refinement of cruelty, are stuck in the quivering flesh of the baited bull, doomed from the start, and teased to the bitter end.



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Among the verses of an interminable topical song, one contained a reference to the newly organized regiment, the "Cazadores de Mejico," the recruiting of which was then taxing to the utmost Maximilian's energies:

Parmi les corps que l'on vient d'établir  
Les Cazadors sont de tous les plus braves;  
Mais, c'est égal, au moment de choisir  
J'aimerais mieux m'engager dans les Zouaves!

These lines afterward assumed a strangely prophetic importance. Six months later, during the siege of Querétaro, this same regiment of Cazadores, composed of Frenchmen, Germans, and Hungarians, with about one fourth of native Mexican soldiers, was placed, with four twelve-pounders, under the command of Prince Salm-Salm. They were, according to their colonel, a wild, brawling set, constantly fighting among themselves, but ready enough to do their duty under fire.

It would seem that, after a sortie during which they had specially distinguished themselves, the Emperor visited the lines, and paused to praise their bravery. Whether or not the sting contained in M. de Massa's words had impressed them upon his mind, it is, of course, impossible to tell; but in a stirring proclamation Maximilian called them the "Zouaves of Mexico," a compliment which was received by the men with deafening shouts of enthusiasm. This account, as I read it after the final catastrophe, awoke a memory; and I found myself unconsciously humming the bit of satire upon these

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brave fellows, most of whom were now lying cold and stiff under the sky of Querétaro:

"Mais, c'est égal, au moment de choisir  
J'aimerais mieux m'engager dans les Zouaves!"

Ah me, how closely the ridiculous here approached the sublime! How rapidly tragedy had followed upon comedy!

The first colonel of the Cazadores, Paolino Lamadrid, was in the audience that evening. He was a pleasant-looking man, noted for his great skill in the national sports, especially with the *lazo*. He was brave, kindly, obliging, and one of the few Mexican officers who were honestly friendly to the French. He entered into the spirit of the thing, understood the joke, and took no offense. He had lent for the occasion his Mexican dress, *sombrero*, *chapareras*, etc., for the character of a Mexicanized French colonist who, after a series of Mexican adventures, had returned to France and to his family laden with Mexican millions.

Colonel Paolino Lamadrid did not live to stand by his sovereign in the last heroic hour of the empire. He was killed early in January, in an unimportant engagement at Cuernavaca, one of Maximilian's favorite residences, situated some fifty miles from Mexico, and which had already fallen into the hands of the Juarists.

Colonel Lamadrid was ordered to recapture the town. He fell into an ambush, and after a brave struggle was shot down. His troops held their ground, and before retreating next day they recov-



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ered his body, which had been badly mutilated and was only identified by his fine and silky black beard, which formed one of his most striking features.<sup>1</sup> It is said that one of the early hallucinations of the unfortunate Empress, on her way to Rome, was that she saw Colonel Lamadrid lurking about, disguised as an organ-grinder.

But to return to this now historic entertainment. The general situation was summed up finally in a serio-comic manner in a song which, if it then brought down the house, afterward drew severe criticism upon the thoughtless heads of author and performers:

Oui, cette terre  
Hospitalière  
Un jour sera, c'est moi qui vous le dis,  
Pour tout le monde  
L'arche féconde  
Des gens de cœur et des colons hardis.  
Que faut-il donc pour cesser nos alarmes ?  
De bons soldats et de bons généraux,  
De bons préfets et surtout des gendarmes,  
Des financiers et des gardes ruraux.

*Refrain :*

Allons courage,  
Vite à l'ouvrage ;  
La France est là pour nous prêter secours.  
Vieux incrédules,  
Sots ridicules,  
De nos travaux n'entravez pas le cours.

This song, pledging France to back up Mexican enterprise in every venture, may serve to show

<sup>1</sup> D'Héricault, pp. 82, 83.

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how ignorant all were at this time of the sudden determination taken by the Tuileries to set aside the agreement of July 30, 1866, and to put an immediate end to the intervention.

It was written by a member of the marshal's military household, and the refrain was sung by a chorus of the marshal's officers, in the presence of the marshal himself, and of a large audience composed of French, Austrian, and Belgian officers, as well as of members of the imperial government, on September 26, 1866, *i. e.*, just at the time when General Castelnau, who landed at Vera Cruz on October 10, was starting on his mission, the object of which was to force the abdication of Maximilian, and to bring about the winding up of the empire and the immediate return of the army.

At this very time, it will be remembered, a contract was being entered upon by the French government with the house of Péreire, which was to furnish immediate home transportation for the French army.<sup>1</sup>

The song was not meant to be the cruel jest which it must have seemed to those about the Mexican Emperor who were better informed with regard to Napoleon's negotiations with the government of the United States. By those whose all was at stake it must have been taken for a wanton insult.

Indeed, society in Mexico was not just then in the right frame of mind to appreciate M. de Massa's witticisms. Even among his own friends they proved singularly infelicitous.

<sup>1</sup> Bigelow, letter to Seward, October 12, 1866.



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The displeasure of Madame la Maréchale, whose youth and beauty were then superior to her sense of humor, was aroused by a verse the time-worn wit of which she seemed unable to appreciate, and in which she saw an insult to her people:

Le roi Henri, qui détestait l'impôt,  
Des Mexicains aurait bien fait l'affaire,  
Au lieu de poule, un zopilote au pot:  
Voilà l'moyen de devenir populaire!

The zopilote, although protected by law as a scavenger, is held as unclean by the Mexicans, who would almost starve rather than eat it; and the suggestion, taken seriously and indignantly resented by Mme. Bazaine, created quite a ripple of disturbance in the marshal's family.

The following incident also swelled the ranks of M. de Massa's French critics:

Before the performance gossip had been busy with it, and its source had partly been traced to Colonel Petit, a good enough friend, but who at the time happened to be chafing under the sting of a practical joke, recently played upon him by some of his comrades, in which M. de Massa had had a share.

During the recent campaign made by the marshal in the interior, with a view to the concentration of the army preparatory to its retreat, Colonel Petit, with his regiment, arrived at a small town, the authorities of which prepared to receive the French with due honor. Eager for fun, his comrades confidentially disclosed to the alcalde the fact

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that Colonel Petit was a great personage—indeed, no less than the son of the celebrated General Petit whom Napoleon, about to depart for Elba, and taking leave of his veterans, had singled out and embraced as the representative of the Grande Armée.

I do not remember whether the mischievous wags suggested to the alcalde, a pure Indian wearing sombrero, shirt, and white calzoneras, a repetition of the solemn scene of Fontainebleau, or whether the worthy Indian evolved the notion unaided; but the result was that poor Colonel Petit, much against his will, found himself forced into playing a parody of his father's part to the alcalde's Napoleon. In the presence of his men, amid the jeers and cheers of his amused comrades, he had to submit to the speech and public accolade of the worthy magistrate.

The perpetrators of this pleasantry did not soon allow him to forget it. It long remained a sore thing with him; and as he allowed his resentment to appear, an extra verse was on the day of the performance added, for his benefit, to the principal topical song:

À Mexico les cancans vont leur train,  
On vous condamne avant de vous entendre,  
C'est bien "petit" d'éreinter son prochain,  
Bon entendeur saura bien nous comprendre.

As this was sung the audience laughingly turned toward him—a fact which did not tend to make him more amiably disposed, although he bowed



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gracefully enough, and pretended to enjoy the fun.

Altogether, the play, if more than a success as a performance, added nothing to the popularity of the quartier-général. It, however, created far more comment than its literary merit warranted—if this may be said, without detracting from the credit of the author, who himself, looking back upon it later in his career, said that it read as though it had been “written on a drum.”

Sadowa had been fought and lost; but it would have been difficult, to make out from their attitude whether or not the sympathies of the officers of the Corps Expéditionnaire were honestly with their Austrian allies. Strangely enough, the news had been received by them as though it involved no serious warning to France. The full significance of the new mode of warfare, of the needle-gun and other new implements of war, was obscured in their eyes by their naïve Jingoism. The French officers in those days underrated all other nations; and even the superior armament and discipline of the Germans, as exhibited in that short campaign, failed to impress them as they should. They sang:

L'aiguille est un outil  
Dont je ne suis en peine  
Tant que j'aurai la mienne [the bayonet]  
Au bout de mon fusil.  
Vous qui chantez victoire,  
Héros de Sadowa,  
Rappelez-vous l'histoire  
D'Auerstadt et d'Iéna.

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Alas! the time was drawing near when the cannon of Reichshofen was to change the merry tune of the French *chanson* into a dirge for many of the brave, light-hearted fellows, then so unmindful of the storm slowly gathering in the east.

The pomp and dignity of the court had vanished, and social life in the capital no longer centered about the imperial palace.

Even previous to the departure of the Empress, the Monday receptions had been discontinued, without their loss being seriously felt. At best they had never been other than dull, formal affairs. The ball-room was a large hall, always insufficiently lighted, and narrowed in the middle by the platform where stood the imperial throne under a canopy of velvet. Here, after their new guests had been officially presented in an adjoining hall, the Emperor and Empress took their seat. Before supper they made a solemn tour of the ball-room. The dancing then ceased, and the crowd stood in chilled expectancy, and made way for them, each in turn receiving from them, as they passed, a smile, a nod, or some commonplace word of greeting.

Maximilian was happy in his remarks on such occasions. Naturally affable and kindly, like most princes trained to this sort of thing, his memory for names and faces was remarkable. We were presented at court on the first of the imperial fortnightly Mondays, and with us, of course, the larger number of the guests present; and yet, some weeks later, when making his tour of the ball-room, the



Emperor stopped before us, and inquired about an absent member of the family, apparently placing us exactly. Many other instances of his memory and power of observation in such small matters were related by others.

He was tall, slight, and handsome, although the whole expression of his face revealed weakness and indecision. He looked, and was, a gentleman. His dignity was without hauteur. His manner was attractive; he had the faculty of making you feel at ease; and he possessed far more personal magnetism than did the Empress.

Hers was a strong, intelligent face, the lines of which were somewhat hard at times; and her determined expression impressed one with the feeling that she was the better equipped of the two to cope intelligently with the difficulties of practical life. It is probable that, had she been alone, she might have made a better attempt at solving the problems than did Maximilian; at least such was Marshal Bazaine's opinion, as expressed before me on one occasion, during her brief regency, when she had shown special firmness and clear judgment in dealing with certain complicated state affairs.

She, however, was reserved, somewhat lacking in tact and adaptability; and a certain haughtiness of manner, a dignity too conscious of itself, at first repelled many who were disposed to feel kindly toward her. It is more than likely that under this proud mien she concealed a suffering spirit, or, at least, the consciousness of a superiority that must efface itself. Who will ever know the travail of

her proud heart and the prolonged strain under which her mind finally succumbed? For notwithstanding the prudence and decided ability with which she had conducted the difficult affairs of the realm during the Emperor's absence in 1864, it was hinted that on his return she was allowed little weight in public affairs, and that her advice when given was seldom followed. After her departure even the semblance of a court disappeared.

On the other hand, the quartier-général had lost much of its animation since the marshal's second marriage. His first union had been childless, and his delight in the joys and cares of a tardy paternity absorbed all the leisure left him by the military and other responsibilities of his position.

Indeed, the growing ill feeling existing in political circles was spreading rapidly, gradually destroying good fellowship. A tragic incident resulting in the death of a brave French officer, Colonel Tourre (May, 1865), stirred French circles to their very depths.

One night a house was on fire. A lieutenant and some Zouaves of the Third Regiment went in to save property. As the flames grew in intensity the colonel arrived on the scene, and realizing the danger of his men, rushed in to help and direct them. Shortly after he entered, the floor on which he stood gave way, and the unfortunate man was plunged into a fiery grave. The men managed to escape from the building, but the lieutenant and one Zouave were horribly burned, and died in a few hours. The impression made upon society was



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profound. Every one turned out for the funeral. The marshal and his staff, on foot and bareheaded under the tropical sun, followed the remains, and did them as much honor as though the dead had been of the highest rank. It so happened, however, that the cortège, upon its passage, was insulted by some ruffians in the crowd, and the incident aroused more indignation and national feeling on both sides than the strictly limited nature of the incident warranted. One of the offenders, a student, was apprehended, and the clemency of Maximilian, who forthwith pardoned him, was regarded as a deliberate insult at French headquarters.

Another incident, equally limited in its origin, produced a still more serious scandal among the allies, as it gave rise to a report that the Austrians and the French quartered at Puebla were actually coming to blows. One morning a party of Austrians, one of whom was Count de la Sala, entered the Hotel de las Diligencias at Puebla. Some Frenchmen were present. One of these, a sergeant, taking umbrage at the count's manner, became surly, and called him *animal*, whereupon the young Austrian slapped him in the face. Others interfered, and the Frenchman left the room. Presently, however, he returned, holding a revolver in his hand, and walked threateningly toward the count, who, anticipating the attack, jumped upon him, and, seizing his arm, made the weapon useless. The sergeant, bent upon avenging the blow received, then struck at the count with his free hand, on which he wore a set of brass knuckles, inflicting



COLONEL TOURRE, THIRD ZOUAVES.



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an ugly gash over the left eye. Things were getting serious for the count. His companions were keeping watch at the door to prevent interference from the outside and to see fair play. The bystanders had fled. Blood was streaming down his face, almost blinding him. The sergeant struck at him a second time, when the count drew his sword and ran him through the body. There was now no suppressing the affair, which caused a profound sensation. The first reports that reached the capital magnified the occurrence into something very like a riot, and on both sides the real bitterness of the feeling so long suppressed blazed forth for a time undisguised.

Indeed, it is only recently that, meeting the count in Egypt, I heard from him how very limited the incident was. Count de la Sala, who afterward entered the service of the Khedive and now lives in Cairo, still bears the mark of the Frenchman's brass knuckles upon his forehead. In 1866 the irritation had reached such a point that Maximilian, disregarding the feelings of his allies, gave a pension to the widow of General Zaragoza, the hero of the "Cinco de Mayo." This act of the monarch for whose cause the battle had been fought by them was not unnaturally regarded as a wanton insult by the French.

Society now scarcely deserved the name, and the sociability of the capital was confined to small groups of people who privately met for enjoyment in the most informal manner.

A number of officers had invited their wives to



join them in Mexico, and among them were some charming and clever women, such as the Comtesse de Courcy, the Vicomtesse de Nouë, and Mme. Magnan, who by throwing open their salons greatly contributed to the general enjoyment.

Other women of various nationalities formed a background to these, and added to the local interest. One of them afterward played a conspicuous part in the closing scene of the empire. Prince Salm-Salm and his handsome American wife came to Mexico in 1866. They found serious difficulty in gaining admittance into either the social or the official circles of the capital. The relations of Prussia with Austria were anything but cordial at the time; and soon after their arrival the war broke out which culminated at Sadowa. A Prussian subject, the prince was naturally looked upon with distrust by the Austrians, who showed him scant respect. He had brought letters from Baron Gerold, the Prussian minister at Washington; from Baron de Wydenbruck, the Austrian minister; and from the Marquis de Montholon: but these seemed unable to win for him even a hearing from the Emperor.

The French, on the other hand, had little sympathy with a German prince who, having hired his sword to the republic of the United States, had now come in search of a new allegiance, to offer his services to imperial Mexico's Austrian ruler.

When, six months after his arrival in Mexico, the most unremitting efforts on his part at last obtained for him a commission, and he was given

(July, 1866) the rank of colonel in the auxiliary corps under General Neigre, he was treated with no special cordiality. He then applied to the minister of war for permission to pass into the Belgian corps. From this time he and his attractive wife obscurely followed the fortunes of Colonel Van der Smissen, whose personal regard they had won, until the withdrawal of the French and the Austro-Belgian armies, by clearing the stage for the last scene, brought them in full relief, under the search-light of history, by the side of the imperial victim.

At the time of which I now speak, the princess, as well as her husband, had donned the silver and gray of the Belgian regiment, and cheerfully shared the fatigues and dangers of camp life in war time—like a *soldadera*, contemptuously said her proud sisters in society; for this mode of existence naturally drew upon her the criticism of the more conventional of her sex in the Mexican colony. But for all that, she and her husband bravely stood by the Emperor to the bitter end, when older and more valued, though less courageous, friends had dropped away, and had left him, stripped of the imperial purple, to struggle for existence, an adventurer among adventurers.