

THE VALE OF ARAGON

By FRED McLAUGHLIN

Author of "The Blade of Picardy"

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THE STORY

At nightfall, in the old city of New Orleans, in the year 1821, Loren Garde, recently an officer under General Jackson, is surprised by the appearance of three figures, in ancient Spanish costume, two men and a woman whose beauty enchants him. Resenting the arrogance of the elder of the two men, Garde fights a duel with him with swords, and wounds him. Afterward he learns his opponent is Adolfo de Fuentes, colonel in the Spanish army in Venezuela. Garde flees from gens d'armes, taking refuge in a garden, where he overhears a plot to overthrow Spanish rule in Venezuela. Discovers, he fights, but is overpowered, recovering consciousness to find himself a prisoner on the Santa Lucrecia, Spanish ship bearing contraband arms and ammunition for the Venezuelans under Bolivar. On board are the conspirators he had overheard, the lady of his love, her brother Polito, and De Fuentes. An attempt to seize the ship fails. From the girl, Garde learns her name is Dulce Lamartina. He does not tell her of his love, but feels she is not indifferent to him. The vessel is wrecked during another attempt to seize it, and Garde, thrown overboard, reaches the Venezuelan shore, alone.

CHAPTER III Tucayan

The morning sun dried my clothes and filled me with comfortable warmth. Except for inconsiderable soreness from the buffeting of the storm and a tender spot on my head that kept Adolfo in my mind, I was none the worse for the extraordinary experience in which I had reached the shore of Venezuela. That I had an implacable enemy in the person of Adolfo de Fuentes was somewhat disquieting, for Spain ruled Venezuela, and if De Fuentes survived the wreck my stay in the country would be to me a constant source of danger. Yet to leave Venezuela would be to turn my face from the lodestar of love that had directed my actions since that night of moon-madness in the Place d'Armes. If the Senorita Dulce lived she was even now in Venezuela, and where the Senorita was there I would be also.

I turned my face to the southward and moved through the solemn silence of primeval forests. I left the jungle floor at last and climbed the timbered slopes to the crest of a mountain range that paralleled the coast. Extending far to the south, I saw the checkered green and brown of cultivated fields, and the irregular outlines of a few tiny villages, and even farther southward yet the forested slopes began again, to disappear in the misty distance.

Musing, I looked upon this land of beauty, where peace should have reigned supreme, but did not, because Bolivar and his revolutionary army contended for its possession against La Torre, the right hand of Ferdinand VII, august king of Spain. Even as I stood, lost in admiration of the lovely scene, the clank of arms came to me, and the clattering of shod hoofs upon a rocky road. A body of soldiers mounted on mules passed in single file along a narrow way that the underbrush had hidden from my view. I watched them from the concealment of a great ceiba tree.

"A sweet reception," said a voice, in Spanish, "to our colonel. I wonder if he lost his lady-love."

"A thing of no importance," said another; "there are many more—and De Fuentes never lacks a lady-love."

Then Adolfo had been saved . . . but the Senorita Dulce! Ah—had the storm, after all, claimed that lovely lady? My mad worship would not let me believe it. Surely the Master of our souls would not have brought me through and taken her. Well, I would know, for they were evidently going to Adolfo now; they were traveling west and the colonel's destination had been Caracas. Caracas, therefore, was east.

After the sounds of their passing had died away I descended the rocky declivity to the road and bent my steps to the east. I heard, after three hours of rapid walking, the mingled noises of a town, so leaving the road, I beat back into the forest and passed north of the settlement, which, I was to learn, was Maracay, a city on the lake.

Just before the sun went down I came to a village unexpectedly, because it did not offer the mixed noises that Indian villages always have. The village lay under the somber silence of a tomb. I was in it before I realized that any settlement was near.

The first few jacks I passed were in ruins, and neither dogs nor children came out to greet me. I began to wonder if the storm had reached this far. Now I came across a prone figure

in the path, a flattened figure with face pressed against the earth as though he were endeavoring to look through it. I had seen dead men before; I had seen scores of them upon the battlefield. Now other figures—a woman and a child—lay before me; and now five men upon a single gibbet, and a boy of ten or less hanging by a vine around his neck, his slim bare feet pointing pathetically toward the earth. Every house was down—burned or crushed as though a giant hand had pressed upon them, and every occupant was dead.

I went through the awful length of that silent village—which must have had three hundred souls—with a dreadful desolation of death around me, and dropped to my knees at the end of the street of terrors and raised my face to the graying sky. A figure rose up beside me, rose up slowly, the horribly emaciated figure of an aged man whose unseeing eyes were fixed upon space and whose thin lips were forming faint words. "My wife," he whispered, "and the two boys—and a girl—." He was silent a moment. "Gone, all gone!"

"Who did it?" I inquired. "In the name of God, Senor, who could have done this thing?"

"Morales," he gasped. He drew in a long breath for one last effort, raised a right hand in half a salute, and whispered: "Viva Bolivar!"

Now, like a man possessed, I got to my feet and ran through the wood; ran madly, wildly, stumblingly, frenziedly, wringing my hands and calling down the curses of God upon a people who would do so atrocious a thing. Through the long night I went, raving; until I fell at last exhausted, and awoke with the blessed sun upon my face.

With much labor, for my body seemed to be the habitation of a hundred aches, I got to my feet and stood in a wide road. Flanking the road was a broad ragged hedge, over which a man leaned, who considered me with mild concern in his blue eyes. He pointed the long barrel of a gun in my general direction; upon his head he wore a wide sombrero, and on his profusely freckled face a friendly grin.

"Hi, towhead," said he, and while I stared, marveling, he continued: "are beds so scarce you must sleep beside the road and pillow your head upon a stone?"

"Name of G—d!" I gasped, for the horror of the night still bore upon me. "Humph, French." He thought a moment. "Oh, well, if it's French you



I Wondered Even More Until a Giant Wave, Receding, Left Me Stranded in a Tree.

want here goes . . . though it seems a little odd that an Irishman from London should be speaking French in Venezuela to an American."

I was sure then that I was awake and that the figure beyond the hedge was no apparition. "I am not French," I explained, "though I have lately come from France. You gave me so severe a shock that I reverted to the tongue of my mother, a thing I often do. Besides, I have just left a village of death, and the terror of the thing is still with me."

"Tucayan," he said; "Morales passed that way two days ago. Such is the Spaniard's method; no man in his path is left alive."

"The last man in Tucayan died in my arms," I said, "and with his last breath he whispered, 'Viva Bolivar!'"

"Simon Bolivar has so great a hold upon his people . . . he will win, some day." His blue eyes went over me appraisingly. I think I read approval there. "Tall," he mused, "with shoulders, and a light in the eye; knows the woods and the sea, I take it, and may have had a turn at soldiering. May I ask you who you are?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Explorers Too Ready to "Pass Up" Australia

The continent of Australia was not discovered until just before the American Revolution. Louis de Torres, sailing from Peru in 1606 thought the northern Queensland coast was another of those island groups—the Marquesas, Solomon, New Hebrides—through which he had passed. The Dutch proceeding from Java several times met the west and north of Australia, but reported a barren wild country inhabited by barbarous, cruel, black people. Abel Tasman, in 1642 found Van Diemen's Land, Tasmania, and left in disgust. In 1688 William Dampier, an English buccaneer, landed in West Australia, and the following year mapped the coast. In his report to King William he described the land as "sandy and waterless," with stunted trees, inhabited by "the miserablest

"Assuredly; I am Loren Garde. My father is Norse, a planter of the lower Mississippi valley, and my mother in her youth was the belle of Vieux Carre."

He leaned the gun against his shoulder. "Norse and French . . . such a combination ought to make you fight—and love—like the devil!"

"I fear I have had my share of fighting," I admitted, "but as for love—" I sighed because I visualized the glorious Lamartina.

"If you have come to Venezuela to fight, the ranks of Simon Bolivar are open to you, and I can promise you—" "Francisco Perez intimated much the same thing."

There was studied calculation in his survey of me. "You know Francisco Perez?"

"I have come from New Orleans with him on the Santa Lucrecia."

He twisted a finger in his ear. "Balm," he said, "a touch of the sun." He looked at me with professional sympathy. "Did you say the Santa Lucrecia?"

"Exactly; would I not know the name of the ship that brought me from New Orleans?"

"Oh, sure." He laughed. "Only, the Santa Lucrecia has not been sighted. When it is I shall hear a whistle from the east, and when I hear it I shall face west and whistle, and another man a kilometer from here will send the signal along. On the Puerto Cabello road other sentinels will signal to one another, and on the Valencia road, and the road to Barcelona, and roads to Calabozo and Ocumare. A man stationed upon the heights will sight it as it enters the harbor of La Guaira, which is the port of Caracas, and in five minutes every follower of Bolivar within fifty miles shall know it, and soldiers will spring up like spirits out of the earth, for the Santa Lucrecia brings a cargo of arms and knives and ammunition sufficient for an army. And then we will take—"

"If the men of Bolivar can whistle the Santa Lucrecia into the harbor of La Guaira, my freckled patriot, or into any other port except that dreadful port of missing men, they may take the prize as the champion whistlers of the ages, for, only two nights and a day ago the deck of that unfortunate ship was the scene of mutiny, and a tropical storm came up and washed the palm of victory upon a reef. As I fell into the water I saw them working with the lifeboats. A friendly spar, and the wind and waves, carried me on to the land."

He stood, long in thought. "Then Francisco and the cargo—"

He stopped, alert, for the road gave out the sounds of approaching horsemen. I pushed my way quickly through the hedge and crouched beside him as the cavalcade came into view.

Adolfo led the van. He rode in silence, his heavy features exhibiting lines of grimness. The Senorita rode beside him. A mule's length behind them rode Polito, a voluminous handkerchief around his head, eyes upraised to fleecy, westward-wringing clouds, and upon his lips a softly whistled tune. There was something about the boy that made one love him. Two other women, and two men—doubtless survivors of the wreck—trailed along, and a score of soldiers brought up the rear.

Now my eyes went back to the Senorita, who had come out of the storm and into my arms. I drank deeply of the beauty of her, I exulted in my dreams, and gasped at my recollections. A wild exhilaration seized me, and I came up slowly, to find myself shoulder to shoulder with the "Irishman from London," whose eyes were gleaming, whose breath was hissing through his teeth, and whose gun was rising carefully to bear upon De Fuentes. "No," I whispered, "no!"

I grabbed him and, as we contended grimly and in silence for possession of the weapon, the cavalcade passed on. Then I loosed him and waited.

"What a powerful brute you are!" And then, "Dizzard," he gasped, "you poor doodle! That man is De Fuentes, aide of Morales, and a greater butcher by far than the infamous Butcher himself."

"You might have missed him," I said, "and killed the lady."

"Oh, the lady? Humph."

"Yes, the lady. Besides, Adolfo belongs to me."

He found his sombrero and pulled it down over tumbled red hair. "So Adolfo belongs to you . . . My eye!" he cried. "Yet De Fuentes went to Spain to get a bride—and I can say this much for him: He has surely picked the fairest flower in the Spanish garden!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

News Review of Current Events the World Over

Mrs. Hoover Christens the Navy's Big Dirigible Akron— President Forms Relief Plans for Next Winter.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD



Mrs. Hoover.

MRS. HERBERT Hoover journeyed from Washington to Akron, Ohio, and there graciously christened the world's largest dirigible, the Akron, which has been built for the United States Navy. As the First Lady pronounced the name of the huge airship, the traditional ceremony of releasing a flight of white pigeons was observed. Before the christening the monster was brought to life by the inflation of twelve of its cells with helium gas, enough to raise it about ten feet from its cradle. It was then "walked" sideways forty feet and secured as in actual operation by sand ballast, so it was really aloft when Mrs. Hoover set free the homing pigeons to carry messages of the event to the various navy stations.

The trials of the Akron will take place in the latter part of August or early in September, under supervision of a board of inspection and survey. They will consist of five or six flights of various duration, including one of forty-eight hours, to determine speed, fuel consumption, endurance, structural integrity of parts and other details of performance and handling.

If the trials prove satisfactory the Navy department will accept the Akron and have it flown to Lakehurst for commissioning and docking.

MORE trouble for the federal farm board developed during the week in the form of "civil war." It is now under fire from within its own ranks as the result of the fight between the farmers' National Grain corporation and the Farmers' Union Terminal association of St. Paul, on the one hand, and the Northwest Grain association on the other.

Like others the Northwest Grain association protests that the government's helping hand is not being stretched out to all alike. Ten other co-operatives and farm organizations have supported a resolution to that effect.

The side the board has taken is that of the management of the Farmers' National. Chairman James C. Stone reiterated that the board would not finance competition among the northwest co-operatives, which was tantamount to saying that the Northwest Grain association must come into line or it will not have its loan renewed.

The Farmers' Union Terminal association contains many of the old Non-partisan league crowd. Among its active supporters has been Senator Gerald P. Nye, insurgent Republican of North Dakota.

While the row goes back to fundamental differences between the two groups, the more immediate cause of the crisis lies in the recent policy of the Farmers' National to take over the marketing activities of the twenty-five co-operatives composing its list of stockholder members.

The Farmers' Union Terminal association has been forced entirely out of the picture.

PRESIDENT HOOPER, in a long conference at his Virginia week-end camp with Secretary of Labor Doak, virtually completed his plans for the organization of government and charitable agencies to care for the unemployed and others in distress during the coming winter. Mr. Hoover is unchanged in his opposition to anything like a dole, or direct government assistance, and will continue to rely on organized charity. He is willing, however, that the army should be used as a distributing agency, as it is in the times of flood disasters, and to communities where distress is acute there will be loans of army blankets and supplies. The Red Cross will be, as heretofore, the backbone of the relief organization.

Mr. Doak presented to the President a report from the recent survey of conditions throughout the country. Neither of them would make public the estimate of the number of people who would be out of work during the coming winter, but both admitted that it would be little different from last year.

However, it was learned that the President, as head of the Red Cross, has directed the Red Cross to start a new drive to raise funds and that the machinery has already been set in mo-

tion. He also has issued the necessary instructions to the army to have concentrated at the various bases, most of which are located near the big industrial centers, all of the surplus property available should they be called upon to use it.

BY AN almost unanimous vote in a provincial plebiscite Catalonia gave its enthusiastic approval to a constitution which defines the liberties of the people and fixes the status of the province as autonomous within the Spanish republic. If this is not granted by the new government of Spain, the Catalonians seem willing to fight for it under the leadership of that elderly patriot, Col. Francisco Macia. The apparent danger of Catalonia lies in the fact that Macia and his followers have given commitments to the syndicalists who form the huge labor organization and who are already threatening a general strike if their demands, including higher wages for family men, are not granted. Macia promised his friends he would be able to get out of this difficulty when the time was ripe.



A. H. Wiggin.

FURTHER relief was given Germany, in accordance with the decisions of the London conference, when the board of governors of the Bank for International Settlements at Basel, Switzerland, ordered the extension of its one-fourth share of the \$100,000,000 loan to Germany for a maximum of three months beyond August 5, the date it fell due. It was assumed this action would be imitated by the other participants in the loan, the American Federal Reserve bank, the Bank of England and the Bank of France.

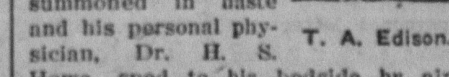
The governors set Saturday, August 8, as the date for the committee of inquiry into German credit needs to begin its work. The meeting was delayed until then to await the arrival of Albert Henry Wiggin, the American member. It was believed that Mr. Wiggin, who is chairman of the board of the Chase National bank of New York, would be selected as chairman of the committee. There are ten members in all, and their principal task will be to study the possibilities of converting a portion of Germany's short-term credits into long-term credits. There were indications that the French would try to convert the committee into an inquisitorial body.

New York bankers delegated to study the same question of German short-term credits were busy throughout the week with the technical details of the problem, but the prospects of reaching an agreement were said to be small.

Through Ambassador Sackett the suggestion was made to Berlin that Germany purchase large amounts of wheat and cotton now held by the federal farm board, and it was promised that long-term credits would be arranged. The administration in Washington thought this would both aid Germany and relieve the farm board, and the idea was well received in Berlin. Germany is especially eager to get American cotton and for this reason might also take the wheat, although unofficial reports said she had already contracted with Rumania for wheat. She needs, in addition to her own production about 25,000,000 bushels of the grain.

When it seemed such a deal might be put through, objections to the sale of the farm board's cotton to Germany came from the southern producers. Senator William J. Harris of Georgia said he had received a protest to the effect that such a sale would tend to depress the world price of cotton and that the policy of the farm board should be to hold its cotton and encourage purchases direct from the producers. There were indications, too, that some foreign countries would oppose the wheat and cotton proposal on the ground that it would be tantamount to dumping and would put Germany in an advantageous position over competitors.

THERE was universal grief and anxiety when it was reported that Thomas A. Edison had collapsed at his home in Llewellen Park, West Orange, N. J., and was at the point of death. Members of the aged inventor's family were summoned in haste and his personal physician, Dr. H. S. Howe, sped to his bedside by airplane. Mr. Edison was indeed in a precarious state, but three doctors, after thorough examination, said he was not in immediate danger of death. He is eighty-five years old and is suffering from diabetes, bright's disease and stomach ulcers, as well as uremic poisoning, but he declared he was too busy to die now and that he would soon be able to resume his



T. A. Edison.

work. His determination apparently conquered and within a few days Doctor Howe acknowledged that the "Wizard" had a good chance of being able to return to his laboratories.

Mr. Edison soon was recovered sufficiently to sit in his library and read the newspapers, and he wanted to smoke, but this was forbidden. He was sleeping well, and his son Charles said his father was "in good spirits and feeling very chipper." His health had been falling since his return from Florida seven weeks ago and the collapse was no surprise to the physicians or his family.

CHARLES BOYD CURTIS of New York, minister to the Dominican Republic, has been appointed by President Hoover to be minister to El Salvador. His place in Dominica is filled by the appointment of H. F. A. Schoenfeld of Rhode Island as minister there.

TWO more reports from the Wick-ersham commission were made public. One deals with the federal courts, those of Connecticut having been studied in especial detail, and the conclusion is reached that prohibition cases dominate "the whole character of the federal criminal proceedings."

Prohibition cases in the Connecticut district increased from 69 per cent of the total number of cases in the first year of the study, the commission reported, to 81 per cent in the study's third year which ended June 30, 1930. The total increase in cases had been furnished by prohibition cases, it was explained; other types remained stationary.

The other report deals with the police of the country, and it is asserted that they have forfeited the public confidence because of their "general failure" to perform their duty. This is blamed mainly on political power, pull and protection, the short tenure of office of the average police chief and the burdening of the police with a multiplicity of duties. Milwaukee was lauded as a city with an enviable record for the prevention and prompt detection of crime, and the reason was found in the fact that it has had only two chiefs of police in 46 years.



Gov. Roosevelt.

NEW YORK is in the throes of an epidemic of infantile paralysis, the total number of cases reported since July 1 being well over eight hundred. The death rate is about 12 per cent. The other day Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt gave one pint of blood to aid in the fight against the disease. It went to the state health department for use as a serum. The governor was attacked by the disease some ten years ago, but has practically recovered, and doctors consider his case remarkable. Since blood from a victim who has recovered is considered the best serum for treating others, the governor's action will prove of tangible help to the state authorities.

Dr. Lago Galdston, secretary of the medical information bureau of the Academy of Medicine, announced that more than 100 former paralysis sufferers had donated from 250 to 300 cubic centimeters each of their blood at the Cornell medical school.

Mayor James J. Walker of New York city, threatened with a physical breakdown, sailed for Germany to take the water cure at Carlsbad. His blood pressure is low and his heart is weak.

GOVERNOR MURRAY of Oklahoma, having been somewhat worried in the "war of the bridges" he waged with Texas, found use for his National Guard in the oil controversy. He made good his threat to close down all the oil wells in the state except the small strippers if the price of crude oil were not put at \$1 a barrel. A proclamation to that effect was issued and martial law was declared within fifty feet of each of the 3,100 wells within the proration area. National Guardsmen with fixed bayonets were placed in control of the twenty-seven oil fields designated.

In his order the governor defended his actions on the grounds that he is protecting the natural resources of the state. A considerable portion of the proclamation was given to an attack on the Harry Sinclair interests. The governor charged that Sinclair attempted to bribe forty members of the legislature and to impeach the governor; that Sinclair maintained a large oil lobby during the last session of the legislature and that the Sinclair company has continually attempted to break down proration of production.

IT WAS an eventful week in aviation. Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh flew up beyond the Arctic circle with success and precision and rested at Aklavik before proceeding to Point Barrow. Parker Cramer was found to be making an unannounced flight to Norway by the northern route, the news breaking when he landed at Angmagssalik, Greenland. He was attempting to blaze an air mail route to Copenhagen for the Trans-American Airlines. Herndon and Pangborn reached Tokyo on their world circling flight, and planned to try for a nonstop trip from there to Seattle. Just before their arrival in the Japanese capital Amy Johnson, the English aviatrix, also landed there.

NOTABLE among the deaths of the week was that of D. R. Anthony, who for years represented the First Missouri district in congress. He was a very active and influential member of the lower house. Mr. Anthony was a nephew of Susan B. Anthony, the noted suffragist.