The Vale of Aragon

By FRED McLAUGHLIN

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CHAPTER X-Continued

--15--"I haven't forgot it, and the general shall know. General Bolivar shall hear how he received that injury."

I stood aghast, for Pini, in the presence of witnesses, had given me his promise that nothing of that unfortunate affair of Maracay should reach the ears of the Liberator. Was he mad, could he hope to gain anything by thus breaking his word; would Bolivar forgive him for that vital hour of drunkenness that had cost us Maracay? I did not think so, for the Liberator was too good a soldier to overlook so flagrant a blunder. I waited.

"If there is anything," said Bolivar in a voice of cold menace, "which should have been told to me that either of you have refrained from telling-"

"Tell him," Pini cried, "tell your general about your arm; explain to him how you were wounded."

I imagined the wily colonel assumed that I would never mention the Senorita, which, indeed, I had no intention of doing.

"I am waiting," said Bolivar, "Colonel Pini shot me, my general."

Francisco, seated next to me, rasped a bitter curse, and a sigh went around the table. The Liberator leaned to his feet, "Colonel Pini shot you? You jest, Senor"

"Not at all." "Was this at Maracay?" "Yes, my general."

"Pini would doubtless have good reason for doing such a thing." He turned a judicial eye upon the colonel. "May I expect an explanation?"

Pini smiled. "Major Garde, I'm sure, will make explanation." "I attacked him, my general."

"Mother of G-d!" Bolivar gasped. "That is," I dissembled, "my attack upon him and his shooting of me came so near the same instant that it would be impossible to tell which was cause and which effect."

"Was this-er-unfortunate affair in any way related to the loss of Mara-

"No, general," Colonel Pini lied; "It was purely personal. We could not have held Maracay with the force at my command "

Now Bolivar's eyes questioned me. It was not in me to explain to the Liberator how Colonel Pini had wasted a precious hour in drunkenness and in an unsuccessful attempt to win the favor of the Senorita Lamartina; an hour in which he might have made the necessary preparations for successful defense of Maracay.

'Colonel Pini is entirely right, general; that unfortunate affair was purely personal. I confess to having been insubordinate, I confess to having attacked the colonel, my superior officer, and I do not care to offer any defense."

Bolivar's face was a study. He must have known that, in service to him and to Venezuela, I had given my best; he knew that the Apure battalion of three hundred Indians whom I had commanded was the best of his native fighting force, for I had trained them with the greatest care. "Why, then, Garde," he questioned, "did not Colonel Pini make report of this on his return to Tinaquillo?"

"That, my general, is a question for Colonel Pini."

Pini must have realized that his burst of anger had opened up a dangerous abyss for himself, for he smiled and, assuming a pose of charity, said: "One must make allowance for a gallant soldier, General; our Americano has been a bit impetuous and I did not report that hapless circumstance because I had no wish to injure him in your eyes. Our personal differences will doubtless be settled as time offers us opportunity."

Drunk, even, the sophist was always a good liar.

General Bolivar laughed, relieving thereby an awkward tension. "I cannot expect all my officers to love one another; it is not the way of soldiers. for most of them are 'sudden and quick in quarrel'; neither can I afford to lose one of them thus on the eve of our greatest struggle. You will have to postpone the pleasure of this contest between yourself and Colonel Pini until after we have won the battle of Carabobo."

"Aye, my general." So we drank again, and Monahan, pinching my arm, whispered, "Any soldier who can dash a glass of wine into the face of his superior officer, and get away with it, must surely have the fairles working for him!"

. Dawn came slowly as we rested on our arms in the early morning of the twenty fourth of June, a day which might termed the birthday of Vene-We occupied the timbered heights southwest of the field of Carabobo, and waited to ring down the curtain on the last act of the great

Colombian tragedy. We had waited thus, six years before, I remembered, at Chalmette, waited in just such a silent gloom. Brilliant victory had been ours, and I offered up a fervent hope that I might find myself again in a victorious army. I knew that, upon the success or fallure of republican arms, rested my success or failure in winning the Senorita Lamartina. If we won this Impending battle, then Venezuela was open to me, and I could seek her out;

if we lost, I knew that I would go down fighting among those Apure bravos of mine, for I had taught them to stand and fight until the last man could stand no longer. Of my little command, and of the British, I had no doubts, but we were only a thousand; the bulk of Bolivar's forces was composed of llaneros, sambos, and of other native troops. Some were good, and some, I knew from sad experience,

were poor. The sun glinted on the equipment of the Spaniards, who were spread out in battle array. They were possibly eight thousand strong, which gave them an advantage over us of two thousand men; yet they were hireling fighters, and our men were fighting for their homes, for their families, for the right to rule themselves.

General Paez, with fifteen hundred men, had been sent around to the right on a flanking movement, Generals Bolivar, Cedeno and Plaza, with a regiment of English rifles under Colonel Mackintosh, occupied the center, while my command and a battalion of llaneros were expected to hold the right wing of the Spanish army, which looked to me to be composed of over a thousand men-a task beyond us, I knew, for we had scarce six hundred soldiers.

The approach to the field was a narrow way, hardly wide enough to admit a file of men. The Spaniards opened the battle. The approach of the main body of our forces was in full view of the enemy, and we lost many men to their artillery fire before we reached the plain, where the various units spread, each to its task.

Under desultory fire of the right wing of La Torre's forces we advanced slowly and took our station upon a low ridge that commanded the plain; where, according to my orders, I placed my three hundred men in a



position which seemed to me best to hold the ridge when a general advance of the Spanish army might be made. The Tiradores, and Vargas battalions, and a brigade of La Guardia had gone through the center to attack, with the British legion under Colonel Mackintosh following up.

The crash of contact filled the surrounding hills with thunder, for Paez and Cedeno struck-right and center -at once. My men lay, their slim brown bodies close against the ground. and waited. I heard murmured prayers and oaths, and saw nervous movements; so, while the air was full of the potent whine of bullets, I got to my feet and walked slowly back and forth in front of the men.

"Venezuela, my bravos," I said, "will be watching you today; when the men of Spain shall charge upon us-we will hold."

I saw Bolivar's unit reach the plain and close in behind the British legion, which had already made formation in the famous hollow square. As our center, under Cedeno, broke before the superior marksmanship and the greater numbers of the Spanish soldiers, as Paez faltered and failed, I talked to my men, urging, coaxing: "It is only the beginning, my bravos of Apure: we fight today for liberty. To run is defeat and slavery; to stand is victory and freedom. They will be coming now; do not shoot wildly. Walt, hold your fire until you can pick a silver button on a Spanish jacketand do not miss. For every silver button you make your target a Spanish soldier will offer up his life."

With the aid of a glass I saw our right wing, with reinforcements from the rear, forming to offer battle to regain the ground they had lost. I saw fearful native soldiers of the center retreating through the ranks of the British legion, which, I knew, would stand as Britons have always stood. I recalled that half of the eight hundred men in the legion were veterans of Waterloo, and I was sure the center of the approaching Spanish line would

be strong indeed if it broke through. Again the enemy met Paez, while Cedeno reformed in the rear; and the main body of the Spanish forces fell upon the British legion, broke like waves against a reef, and came on again, while the right wing engaged us. It was beautiful to watch the grim silent Indians from the Apure river. They held their fire until the attackers were less than a hundred

I recognized Adolfo, and waved my sword, and called to him to come on; and my voice was drowned in a roar of musketry. Then the bravos leaped oral feeding.

to their feet and, yelling wildly. charged with the bayonet. They fought like fiends-thrusting, driving, hacking, shrilling weird warcries, and moving ever forward until the enemy broke and fled before us.

We took an advanced position upon another lateral ridge, and prepared for the next attack. Behind us the field was covered with dead, but for every prostrate bravo there were two of the uniformed men of Spain. Scarce two hundred of our men survived, yet, resting on their arms, they laughed and jested among themselves, and told one another how many Spaniards they had killed.

Then in one concerted movement the Spaniards attacked all along the line, but Paez held, and the British legion, though called upon to withstand the shock of the bulk of Spain's soldiery, gave no ground; and the center of the enemy line rolled back even as the right wing struck us again.

The Apure bravos fired almost into the faces of the soldiers, after which they leaped to their feet to meet the Spaniards in hand-to-hand fighting. There was a frantic heroism about their ardor, a wild enthusiasm, a manfacal lust for killing that must have terrified the uniformed soldiers, who outnumbered us two or three to one, for they broke in dismay, leaving us again in possession of the tiny sector that we had been directed to hold at any cost.

And the cost, indeed, had been a grievous thing, for less than half of my bravos remained; I knew that the next charge of our enemies would find us too weak to hold. I looked back to where Colonel Pini, with more than six hundred mounted men, waited for us to fall, and hatred for the man filled my soul.

A body of soldiers disengaged itself from the British legion and, under command of a captain whose head was swathed in a crimson bandage, came toward us on a run.

"Monahan," I cried, "all honor to the British legion!"

He grinned. "That's the way we did the French at Waterloo, son. They charged and broke against our squares, and charged and broke again, and old Bony's heart broke with them. It's easy when you know how."

He considered Pini's force, a scant half-mile behind us, and swore softly. "What's the colonel waiting for, Garde?"

"For the 'break,' my friend, then he will gallop forward and win a glorious victory. These hundred men are sent to me?"

"Sure; if you hadn't held their right wing we could not have held the center. Those braves of yours have stood like a rock, an unusual thing for native troops."

"And have died," I said sadly, "hold-

"So Colonel Mackintosh offers his compliments-and this hundred menand he directs me to tell you that you have put the white man's dogged heroism into the red man's heart."

This from Mackintosh, grizzed warrior of many battles, was sweet music to my ears.

The veterans of the British legion had already been distributed among my bravos, so, renewed in strength and spirit, we waited for the next attack. It came too slowly to suit us, so we went out to meet it-went blithely, wildly, white man and brown -with eager cries upon our lips and the consciousness of imminent victory in our hearts.

After the first volley we met them standing up, arm to arm, eye to eye, and the clatter of conflict filled our little world with noise,

That mixed command of mine fought its way through the first Spanish line, then we drove ahead to meet the next one, paying no heed to anything behind us. On our right the British legion, having abandoned its defensive tactics, moved slowly against the center. Evidently it, too, had broken through the first line. From the east came wild cheering from the soldiers of Paez.

"We win, I think," said Monahan, "We could not lose, my friend; yet they move back slowly, in good order. What we should have is a rout-an overwhelming victory."

"In that case," said the Irish soldier, "we need the mounted llaneros," That must also have been Bolivar's thought, for a body of horsemen, moving swiftly through the center, passed the British legion and hurled itself upon the enemy, throwing the line into confusion. The six hundred mounted llaneros of Colonel Pini's command roared by us, and we waved our arms and cheered them on.

"There he goes," cried Monahan, with a short laugh, "on to victory!" The right wing of the Spanish army crumpled under the charge of Pini's horsemen, crumpled and fled in wild confusion. The desperate battle of

rule of Spain from Venezuela, had become a rout, The wings of Bolivar's army, racing across the plain, closed in to complete the work of destruction, for nothing less than complete destruction for the Spanish would appease the Liberator. He must have seen, at last, the golden opportunity for a free Venezuela, and he took no chance on losing. Few Spaniards escaped, few prisoners were taken; the rout had become a slaugh-

was fully appeased, Yet Spain had taught them, (TO BE CONTINUED.)

ter wherein the Indians' Just for blood

Rub in Your Food

A Vienna specialist has discovered a new kind of food paste which, rubbed into the skin, is capable of supporting life indefinitely without



MEEKNESS

"Who was the first man?" asked the visiting minister.

"Adam," the children all answered in chorus.

"Who was the first woman?" "Eve," they all shouted. "Who was the meekest man?" "Moses." "Who was the meekest woman?"

Everyone was silent. The children looked blankly at one another, but none could answer. Finally a little hand went up, and the preacher said: "Well, my boy, who was she?" "There wasn't any."-The Kable-

Interest

"I may as well confess that I a i not as picturesque and prominent a figure as I expected to become when I amassed great wealth," said Mr. Dustin Stax.

"I have no doubt," replied Miss Cayenne, "that many are surprised to see how much easier it is to make dollars draw interest than to make them create interest."

COULDN'T DETACH



Guide-I'd like to see you apart for a moment, sir." "Sorry, but I can't detach myself just now."

Bright Youth

A corpulent teacher was giving a lesson to a class of small children on a canary.

Teacher-Can any boy tell me what a canary can do and I can't? Sharp Boy-Please, miss, have a

Fortunate Little Girl-I'm glad I wasn't born in France, daddy,

Dad-Why, my child? Little Girl-'Cos I don't know my

HER ADDRESS



Mrs. Codfish-Why, I declare, that must be for me!

Proof Positive

"A bachelor has left his fortune to a woman who refused him." "And then you say we men are not grateful."-Buen Humor, Madrid.

Beyond Hope

Edna-What kind of a driver is Olive-Terrible-all he grasps is

the steering wheel.

Paradoxical "A sausage factory is an odd place." "Yes, the best thing in it is the wurst."

Otherwise, All Right

"You never go on fishing trips, do you?" said Smithers. "No," growled Withers, "I never have any luck, am a poor liar, don't drink and don't care a hang about Carabobo, which removed for ever the either catching or eating fish."

Goodby to Both

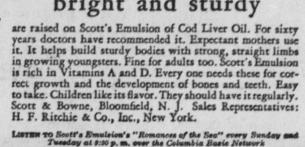
Mother was coaxing Sally Lou to eat. "If you don't eat these carrots mother is going away." To which the child quickly retorted: "Take the carrots with you."

Practical Mind "When that man asked you for seri-

ous advice you insisted on lending him "Yes," replied Mr. Dustin Stax. "Sometimes a lift is of more value than an 'uplift.' "

In a Manner of Speaking Mrs. Jones-Well, I see your bus band is home helping you. Mrs. Peck-Yes, now that he has retired from business he can do just as

Active Children bright and sturdy

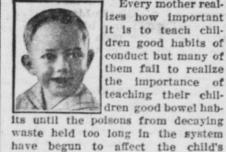


Scott's Emulsion

OF NORWEGIAN COD LIVER OIL

Steamers Among Clouds left Liverpool for South America. In vigil at the shrine of failure. her hold was packed a complete steamship, capable of carrying 100 passengers and heavy cargo. At Mollendo, in Peru, all these thousands of plates, rivets, funnels, boilers, engines, fittings, and furniture were to be repacked into trains and carried 220 miles to Puna, on the shores of Lake Titicaca, 12,500 feet above the sea, where the ship was to be assembled for entering the lake service. This is the eighth steamer to be sent to Puno in this way; the first was

Denver Boy is a Winner



Every mother realzes how important it is to teach children good habits of conduct but many of them fail to realize the importance of teaching their children good bowel habits until the poisons from decaying waste held too long in the system

bealth. Watch your child and at the first sign of constipation, give him a little California Fig Syrup. Children love its rich, fruity taste and it quickly drives away those distressing ailments, such as headaches, bad breath, coated tongue, billousness, feverishness, fretfulness, etc. It gives them a hearty appetite, regulates their stomach and bowels and gives tone and strength to these organs so they continue to act normally, of their own accord. For over fifty years, leading physicians have prescribed it for half-sick, billious, constipated children. More than 4 million bottles used a year shows how mothers depend on it.

Mrs. C. G. Wilcox, 38551/2 Wolff St., Denver, Colorado, says: "My son, Jackie, is a prize winner for health, now, but we had a lot of trouble with him before we found his trouble was constipation and began giving him California Fig Syrup. It fixed him up quick, gave him a good appetite, made him sleep fine and he's been gaining in weight right along since the first few days, taking it."

To avoid inferior imitations of California Fig Syrup, always look for the word "California" on the carton.

Royal Stamps Still Used

European critics of revolutions are giving publicity to the fact that despite the Spanish revolution letters from Spain still bear stamps with the head of King Alfonso, One critic commented that evidently it is easier to depose a monarch from the throne than the post office.

It Hardly Seems Possible

It is hard to realize the speed with which the germs responsible for sore throats and coughs can multiply, once they get a start in the delicate tissues. From a few to a million may be a matter of but a few hours. But you can always stop them short with a few applications of B. & M., The Penetrating Germicide. It is always dependable as a destroyer of the bacteria which do so much damage in the throat and lungs. Easy to apply and quick in action, it is a boon to people who are easily susceptible to such infections-one thing which should always be in the medicine chest ready for emergencies. Your druggist should have it. If not, send us his name and \$1.25 for full-size bottle, postpaid. Helpful booklet free. F. E. Rollins Co., 53 Beverly St., Boston, Mass. (Adv.)

The man who wants all the best of every bargain cheats himself of future opportunities.

Artistic is often a synonym for useless and expensive.



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teeth and healthy gums is Phillips Dental Magnesia, a superior toothpaste that safeguards against acid-A thing of comfort is seldom a

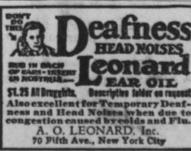
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