THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY of A PENNSYLVANIAN

By Samuel W. Pennypacker

Pennsylvania's Most Zealous and Energetic Governor

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When Governor Pennypacker delivered an address before the Pennsylvania Society Sons of the Revolution at Valley Forge June 18, 1898, he spoke to many of the most prominent men in Philadelphia and the State. The Governor is sitting a little to the center. Next to him is the Rev. Cyrus Townsend Brady. Governor Brumbaugh can be seen standing near the left end.

CHAPTER VI (Continued)

AMONG the trustees those in my time who have taken the most active interest in the work have been Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Samuel Dickson, chancellor of the Law Association; Joseph S. Harris, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad; Joseph G. Rosengarten, Samuel F. Houston and J. Levering Jones.

Dr. S. Weir Mitchell has won success in medicine in the treatment of nervous diseases, and in literature in the production of novels. Among American historical novels, "Hugh Wynne" is probably unexcelled. A tall, gaunt and homely man, with a thin beard and mustache, he is autocratic, assertive and full of egotism, but, nevertheless, companionable and entertaining. He wrote to me a long autograph letter, which I still have, in a scrawling hand about the construction of "Hugh Wynne" in which he says the old narrow-minded Quaker father was an attempt to delineate the traits of a Presbyterian he had known. Once when he had completed an address at the Academy of Music he brought and gave to me the proof with his manuscript notes. It has been said that we look somewhat alike. Physically he is extremely nervous, having little control of his hands, so that the query arises, as it did about the frog, why he does not cure himself; but such queries lead to the deeper mysteries and are unanswerable. No man has been more important in the literary, professional and social life of the city than Mitchell. The letter to which I have referred, giving the author's explanation and estimate of "Hugh Wynne," his most successful book, follows:

"November 4, 1897.

"Dear Judge—I take my large paper because of having more to say than I can with comfort get into note paper.

"I wish, first, to say how much pleasure your letter gave me; it is dispatched from a critical standpoint, so remote from that of the newspaper critics that, for me, it is a quite precious and thought-compelling document. To take it in detail, I shall like, sometime, to see your treasures and talk over these for-days. Next, yes, Mt. Hope is a pen-slip, to be amended, as in the second edition have been many minor errors of name, place or date.

No, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Webb, Mr. Howe are in the Virginians, and Esmond for Gen'l W., etc. It was usual unless the men were on duty. Even now it is our army usage to address, in social life, all men under a major in rank as Mr.

"Ardmore, Bryn Mawr are recent names, and as to this I hesitated long. To use them brought the matter in hand within the realizing capacities of the dullest, and I was trying to make a great story leap into life again—an intended error in name or time did not affect me as a novel writer.

In Quentin Durward the wild Boar of Ardennes is killed fifteen years before the true time of his demise and of quite other fashion. As to Conshohocken and Norristown people who criticize and many they be that forget that H. W. presumably wrote these authentic memoirs circa in the eighteen twenties when Norristown and Conshocken had nominal existence.

"H. W. is an autobiography with the limitations of that rarely used form. With the ego one can get a sense of personal product. Without it we lose this charm. In Esmond, Thackeray shirked it and made his hero tell his tale in the third person nearly throughout. Hence there is in Esmond no sense of its being a man's tale of himself. It was a mistake with the third person. Th'y ties himself to the limitations of the first. I mention Esmond because H. W. is frequently compared to it or to Th'y's solemn failure, 'The Virginians.' All this is to point out to my kindly critic why in an autobiography I could not broadly paint those wonderful Quaker people. My, or the old father John W., is the only picture from the life in my book. It is not as a Quaker that he is drawn. The original was a Presbyterian. I cut out some of my Quaker matter as making the book too long, but in Pemberton, Howell and Wetherill I think I have within my space done dignified justice to Friends; so say at least some who have read it. One in Germantown told Mr. S. he could not read fiction, but that perhaps H. W. was in a manner an allegory.

I read last night the to-be-read parts of your book. What a strange and interesting story—3000 from the lives of two. In 1783 came hither Jn. Cadwalader. Up to twenty-eight years ago there had been seventy-seven males of his name.

"With my salutation of repeated thanks, I am

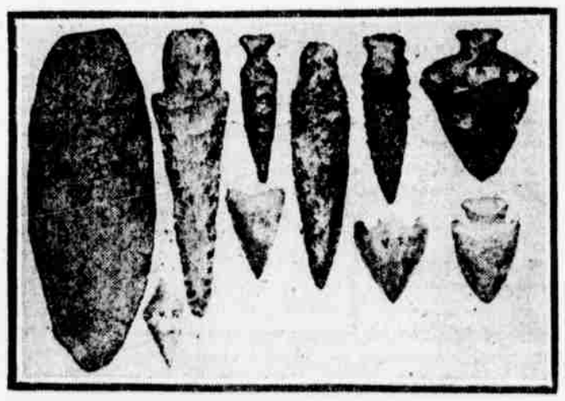
"Yours truly,

"Hon. Sam. W. Pennypacker." "S. WEIR MITCHELL."

A Member of the Historical Society

In March, 1872, I was elected a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, which then occupied as its hall the building at 920 Spruce street owned by the Pennsylvania Hospital, which had been erected for the accommodation of West's painting of "Christ Healing the Sick." Erelong I became a member of the council and vice president and in 1900 was elected to the presidency. This event marked an innovation in the conduct of the society. Up to my time the president had always been selected from among families long identified with the life of the city and had always dwelt south of Market street. Soon after my election and through my intervention the society received from the State $150,000, which enabled it to erect a commodious fire-proof hall at 1300 Locust street. No more useful expenditure of the moneys of the State could have been made, since here are preserved the records of its achievements which were scattered and lost from Harrisburg and have been laboriously gathered together by the society. Its collections of books and manuscripts are in many respects the richest in the country. At the dedication of the new hall in 1910 I made an address tracing its origin and development, which has since been printed. The institution has been a marvellous instance of steady progress in resources and accomplishment. When I became a member, John William Wallace was the president, a man of broad culture who early in life attracted attention at home and in Europe by his book upon "The Reporters" of law cases. He had been reporter for the Supreme Court of the United States. He wrote attractively and presided at the meetings gracefully. A descendant of the Bradfords, the early printers, he saw to it that during his regime the books printed by them were sedulously collected. When he died, Brinton Coxe succeeded, a descendant of Dr. Daniel Coxe, one of the proprietors of West Jersey, and, coming from a family which had made a fortune from coal lands, he was much a gentleman of leisure. He had written books of value and was generous in his gifts. He had dark eyes, side whiskers and a kindly manner, but it was nervous torture for him to appear in public, and he fumbled through to the end of what little he had to say. He was succeeded by Dr. Charles J. Stille, of an old Swedish family, who had been Provost of the University of Pennsylvania and had the benefit of wide literary experience and cultivation. His life of Wayne, written in old age, and too hurriedly, is disappointing, but his "Life of William Smith" and his pamphlet upon "How a Free People Conduct a Great War" are both admirable studies. He left a large bequest to the society. But its success did not at all depend upon the efforts of its presidents. Whenever human institutions thrive, whether they be political, literary or theological, it is because there is connected with the organization some person of intelligence who has its interests at heart, who is willing to work with head and hands, who is ready to sacrifice himself, if need be, and generally he has to, and who selects and sets aside the ostensible heads with a view to the welfare of the cause. The vestryman of the Church never becomes a bishop and the boss of the party never reaches the Presidency.

An insignificant looking little man named John Jordan, Jr., retired from business, with dark eyes, weighing about one hundred and twenty pounds, with a low voice, wearing a wig, and possessing a will, who could not make a speech and never wrote a book, guided the fortunes of the society. What he said was done. If money was needed he gave it. If he saw a description of a rare book in a catalogue it was bought. He belonged to the Moravian Church and hence it happens that our shelves smile with the richness of the collections of the literature of the followers of John Huss and Ludwig, Count Zinzendorff. At every dinner of the society his memory is toasted. After him came Frederick D. Stone, ruddy, stout and sandy. He had failed in business but he had capacity, nevertheless. He had no pecuniary resources, but he had a keen scent, was specially well informed with regard to events of the Revolutionary war and was ever alert in watching for opportunities to aid the institution. He selected the members of the council and the officials, and men who were loud in their denunciations of Quay and Hanna submitted quietly to the domination of Stone.



Indian arrowheads, spearheads and knives collected in the vicinity of Pennypacker's Mills and Valley Forge.

A more striking figure than either was Charles R. Hildeburn. He came out of a drug store and was substantially without education. He was young, thin and had no stomach which could digest. He was ever on the wire edge of nervous overthrow. He did not chew tobacco, but he ate it. He could not bear stimulants and used them to excess. Violent and domineering, he quarreled with everybody. He worked until 4 o'clock in the morning and slept with difficulty. But he had unbounded energy and appreciation of imprints, typography and the importance of a book seen for the first time, which amounted almost to genius. He did much to enhance the value of the collections, and in his "Issues of the Press of Pennsylvania," in the production of which I aided him materially, he produced a book which is a marvel of research. One day he came to consult with me. We differed about the date of an imprint or some such trifle. He called me a liar, and I ordered him out of the office. He could not help yielding to impulse. He died in young manhood and is likewise gratefully remembered.

On the 3d of April, 1888, Colonel Oliver C. Bosbyshell, who was one of the first defenders to reach Washington on April 18, 1861; Dr. Herman Burgin, Horace Burgin, Major J. Edward Carpenter, who took part in Keenan's charge at Chancellorsville; Robert P. Dechert, William C. Houston, Charles Marshall, John W. Jordan, J. Granville Leach, William Brooke Rawle, Richard M. Cadwalader, William Wayne and myself met in the dingy little office of Herman Burgin and organized the Pennsylvania Society Sons of the Revolution, composed of the descendants of those who participated in the War of the Revolution. It has since grown to a membership of over a thousand and every year gives a reception on the 22d of February, attends a service at Christ Church on the anniversary of the beginning of the encampment at Valley Forge, and makes a pilgrimage to some revolutionary field in June, on the anniversary of the evacuation of that camp.

The "Collecting Instinct"

I have made addresses before the members—once in the State House, twice at Valley Forge, once at Pennypacker's Mills and once at Neshaminy, and, as chairman of a committee, raised most of the moneys they now have with which to erect a statue to Anthony Wayne. In the Decennial Register of the society, published in 1898, are copies of an original map of Valley Forge which I secured in Amsterdam, and of the music of one of the dances of the Meschianza, also discovered by me, both of them of great interest because of the light they throw upon that struggle.

I still remember the day when, being then a child seven years of age, perhaps, I picked up in the garden a piece of white flint of curious shape and took it to my father to make inquiries. I recall with complete distinctness, after so many impressions made since have disappeared, its shape, the corner of the garden in which it lay, and even the time of the day. He explained to me that I had found an arrowhead made by the Indians and he pointed out to me the details of manufacture and the method of use. A very slight incident often is not only the beginning of habit, but the turning point of character. A career is often fixed by the most trivial of occurrences. If any fact, no matter how comparatively unimportant it seemed, could be omitted from the past, the whole history of the world would be changed. If 300 years ago a young man had not, upon a summer evening, gone out to the garden gate, George Washington would never have been born, and the colonies perhaps would have remained dependencies. If a Dutchman had lost, instead of making a profit, on a negro slave 300 years ago there would have been no battle at Gettysburg.

John H. Converse once told me that when he was a young man anxiously seeking an opportunity in life he was offered a clerkship at a small salary in Chicago and had made all of his arrangements to go there gladly. At the last moment some unexpected event occurred to prevent, and he remained in Philadelphia to become, eventually, the head of the Baldwin Locomotive Works.

I never overcame the tendency which started when my father enabled me to understand the significance of the piece of quartz I had picked up, and all through my boyhood and young manhood, upon occasion, I hunted through the fields, which had been plowed for corn, for the implements lost or thrown away by the Indians, and my somewhat extensive collection is preserved at Pennypacker's Mills. Once on the high ground on the opposite side of the Schuylkill from Phoenixville, I found a cache of fifty-six stone blades six inches long and two and a half inches in width, made of argillite, blue within, exidized and green without. At Green Hill, a romantic spot, a mile below Phoenixville overlooking the river, now being torn to pieces and ruined by a brickyard, was the site of an Indian village, where the implements were numerous. I found there on one occasion a hammer, neatly fashioned of quartz, which gave evidence that in their work the Indians were not without the artistic sense.

When I went to the city to live where there were no such opportunities, I naturally enough turned to the gathering of books, with the result that when I went to Harrisburg in 1903 I left locked up in my house, 1549 North Fifteenth street, in Philadelphia, over 10,000 volumes. In the main they were books relating to Pennsylvania and early imprints of the Province and the State. It was the most complete collection of material of that kind which any individual had ever possessed, and in some respects was unequaled by any public library. The Boston Public Library has made it a policy to collect the books printed by Franklin and had succeeded in securing about eighty, while I had about 250. There were also the most complete collections of the publications of Ephrata, of the Sowers in Germantown, and of Robert Bell in Philadelphia, to whom must be accorded the credit of introducing literature into America. Sower printed the Testament in German seven times, at Germantown, before it appeared anywhere in America in English and I still possess the only complete set of these testaments. My library contained a full representation of the imprints of the inland towns of Pennsylvania, a copy of the Nuremburg Chronicle of 1493, a fair set of the Sessions Laws of Pennsylvania, the early magazines and newspapers, the finest known set of "The Portfolio," the fullest collection of Vorschrifften, representing the art of the Germans of the State; the best collection of the literature of the Mennonites and the Schwenkfelders, an Aitken Bible, the first American Bible in English, a set of original war maps of the battles of the Revolution, the autobiography in manuscript of Benjamin West, his original study of the "Death of Wolfe," an autograph portrait of West and a portrait of Franklin by West. These are sufficient to indicate its importance.

(CONTINUED MONDAY)

RAINBOW'S END

By REX BEACH

Author of "The Spoilers," "The Barrier," "Heart of the Sunset."

A novel of love, hidden treasure and rebellion in beautiful, mysterious Cuba during the exciting days of the revolt against Spain.

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CHAPTER XXVI

HOW COBO STOOD ON HIS HEAD

ALL that day, or during most of it, at least, Rosa and O'Reilly sat hand in hand, obvious of hunger and fatigue, impatient for the coming of night, keyed to the highest tension. Now they would rejoice hysterically, assuring each other of their good fortune, again they would grow sick with the fear of disappointment. Time after time they stepped out of the hut and stared apprehensively up the slopes of La Cumbre to assure themselves that this was not all a part of some fantastic illusion; over and over, in minutest detail, Johnnie described what he had seen at the bottom of the well. He tried more than once during the afternoon to sleep, but he could not, for the moment he closed his eyes he found himself back there in that pit upon the ridge's crest, straining at those stubborn rocks and slippery timbers. This inaction was maddening, his fatigue rendered him feverish and irritable.

Jacket, too, felt the strain, and after several fruitless attempts to sleep he rose and went out into the sunshine, where he fell to whetting his knife. He finished putting a double edge upon the blade, fitted a handle to it, and then a cord with which to suspend it round his neck. He showed it to O'Reilly, and after receiving a word of praise he crept out doors again and tried to forget how sick he was. Black spots were dancing before Jacket's eyes; he experienced spells of dizziness and nausea during which he dared not attempt to walk. He knew this must be the result of starvation, and yet, strangely enough, the thought of food was distasteful to him. He devoutly wished it were not necessary to climb that hill again, for he feared he would not have the strength to descend it.

Luckily for the sake of the secret, Evangelina spent most of the day searching for food, while Asensio lay babbling upon his bed, too ill to notice the peculiar actions of his companions.

It was with a strange, nightmare feeling of unreality that the trio dragged themselves upward to the ruined quinta when darkness finally came. They no longer talked, for conversation was a drain upon their powers, and the reaction from the day's excitement had set in. O'Reilly lurched as he walked, his limbs were heavy, and his liveliest sensation was one of dread at the hard work in store for him. The forcing of that door assumed the proportions of a Herculean task.

But once he was at the bottom of the well and beheld the handiwork of Sebastian, the slave, just as he had left it, his sense of reality returned and with it a certain measure of determination. Inasmuch as he had made no visible impression upon the bulkhead by his direct attack, he changed his tactics now and undertook to loosen one of the jambs where it was wedged into the rock at top and bottom. After a desperate struggle he succeeded in loosening the entire structure so that he could pry it out far enough to squeeze his body through.

Victory!

"I have it!" he cried to Rosa. Seizing the candle, he thrust it into the opening. He beheld what he had expected to find, a small cavern or grotto which had evidently been pierced during the digging of the well. He could appreciate now how simple had been the task of sealing it up so as to baffle discovery. Rosa, poised above him, scarcely breathed until he straightened himself and turned his face upward once more.

He tried to speak, but voiced nothing more than a hoarse croak; the candle in his hand described erratic figures.

"What do you see?" the girl cried in an agony of suspense.

"I— It's here! B-boxes, chests, casks—everything!"

"God be praised! My father's fortune at last!"

Rosa forgot her surroundings; she beat her hands together, calling upon O'Reilly to make haste and determine beyond all question that the missing hoard was indeed theirs. She drew perilously close to the well and knelt over it like some priestess at her devotions; her eyes were brimming with tears and there was a roaring in her ears. It was not strange that she failed to see or hear the approach of a great blurred figure which materialized out of the night and took station scarcely an arm's-length behind her.

"He intended it for his children," she sobbed, "and Providence saved it from our wicked enemies. It was the hand of God that led us here, O'Reilly. Tell me, what do you see now?"

Johnnie had wormed his way into the damp chamber and a slim rectangle of light was projected against the opposite side of the well. Rosa could hear him talking and moving about.

Don Esteban Varona's subterranean hiding-place was large enough to store a treasure far greater than his; it was perhaps ten feet in length, with a roof high enough to accommodate a tall man. At the farther end were ranged several small wooden chests bound with iron and fitted with hasps and staples, along one side was a row of diminutive casks, the sort used to contain choice wines or liquors; over all was a thick covering of slime and mold. The iron was deeply rusted and the place itself smelled abominably stale.

O'Reilly surveyed this Aladdin's cave in a daze. He set his candle down, for his fingers were numb and unsteady. Cautiously, as if fearful of breaking some spell, he stooped and tried to move one of the casks, but found that it resisted him as if cemented to the rock. He noted that its head was bulged upward, as if by the dampness, so he took his iron bar and aimed a sharp blow at the chine. A hoop gave way; another blow enabled him to pry out the head of the cask. He stood blinking at the light exposed, for the little barrel was full of coins—yellow coins, large and small. O'Reilly seized a handful and held them close to the candle flame; among the number he noted a Spanish doubloon, such as young Esteban had found.

He tested the weight of the other casks and found them equally heavy. Knowing little about gold, he did not attempt to estimate the value of their contents, but he judged they must represent a fortune. With throbbing pulses, he next lifted the lid of the nearest chest. Within he discovered several compartments, each stored with neatly wrapped and labeled packages of varying shapes and sizes. The writing upon the tags was almost illegible, but the first article which O'Reilly unwrapped proved to be a goblet of most beautiful workmanship. Time had long since blackened it to the appearance of pewter or some base metal, but he saw that it was of solid silver. Evidently he had uncovered a store of old Spanish plate.

In one corner of the chest he saw a metal box of the sort in which valuable papers are kept, and after some effort he managed to break it open. Turning back the lid, he found first a bundle of documents bearing imposing scrolls and heavy seals. Despite the dampness, they were in fairly good condition, and there was enough left of the writing to identify them beyond all question as the missing deeds of patent to the Varona lands—those crown grants for which Dona Isabel had searched so fruitlessly. But this was not all that the smaller box contained. Beneath the papers there were numerous leather bags.

These had rotted; they came apart easily in O'Reilly's fingers, displaying a miscellaneous assortment of unset gems—some of them at first sight looked like drops of blood, others like drops of purest water. They were the rubies and the diamonds which had brought Isabel to her death.

O'Reilly waited to see no more. Candle in hand, he crept out into the well to apprise Rosa of the truth.

O'Reilly Finds the Deed

"We've got it! There's gold by the barrel and the deed to your land. Yes, and the jewels, too—a quart of them, I guess. I—I can't believe my eyes." He showed her a handful of coins. "Look at that! Doubloons, eagles! There appear to be thousands of them. Why, you're the richest girl in Cuba. Rubies, diamonds—yes, and pearls, too, I dare say——" He choked and began to laugh weakly, hysterically.

"I've heard about those pearls," Rosa cried, shrilly. "Pearls from the Caribbean, as large as plums. Isabel used to babble about them in her sleep."

"I found those deeds the first thing. The plantations are yours now, beyond any question."

Rosa drew back from her precarious position, for she had grown limp from weakness and her head was whirling. As she rose to her feet she brushed something, somebody, some flesh-and-blood form which was standing almost over her. Involuntarily she recoiled, toppling upon the very brink of the pit, whereupon a heavy hand reached forth and seized her. She found herself staring upward into a face she had seen but once before in her nightmares, a face the mere memory of which was enough to freeze her blood. It was a hideous visage, thick-lipped, flat-featured, black; it was disfigured by a scar from lip to temple and out of it gleamed a pair of eyes distended and ringed with white, like the eyes of a man insane.

For an instant Rosa made no sound and no effort to escape. The apparition robbed her of breath, it paralyzed her in both mind and body. Her first thought was that she had gone stark mad, but she had felt Cobo's hands upon her once before, and after her first frozen moment of amazement she realized that she was in her fullest senses. A shriek sprang to her lips, she tried to fight the man off, but her weak struggle was like the fluttering of a bird. Cobo crushed her down, strangling the half-uttered cry.

Terror may be so intense, so appalling as to be unendurable. In Rosa's case a merciful oblivion overtook her. She felt the world grow black, fall away; felt herself swing dizzily through space.

O'Reilly looked upward, inquiring, sharply, "What's the matter?" He heard a scuffling of feet above him, but received no answer. "Rosa! What frightened you? Rosa?" There was a moment of sickening suspense, then he put his shoulder to the timbers he had displaced and, with a violent shove, succeeded in swinging them back into place. Laying hold of the rope, he began to hoist himself upward. He had gone but a little way, however, when, without warning, his support gave way and he fell backward; the rope came pouring down upon him. "Rosa!" he called again in a voice thick from fright. Followed an instant of silence; then he flattened himself against the side of the well and the breath stuck in his throat.

Into the dim circle of radiance above a head was thrust—a head, a pair of wide shoulders, and then two arms. The figure bent closer, and O'Reilly recognized the swarthy features of that man he had seen at the Matanzas railroad station. There could be no doubt of it—it was Cobo.

The men stared at each other silently, and of the two Cobo appeared to be the more intensely agitated. After a moment his gaze fixed itself upon the opening into the treasure chamber and remained there.

As if to make entirely sure of what he had overheard, he stretched his body farther, supporting it by his outflung arms, then moved his head from side to side for a better view. He seemed to rock over the mouth of the well like a huge, fat, black spider. He was the first to speak.

"Am I dreaming? Or—have you really discovered that treasure?" he queried.

O'Reilly's upturned face was ghastly. He wet his lips. He managed to whisper Rosa's name.

"The riches of the Varonas! What a find!" Cobo's teeth shone white in the grin of avarice. "Yes, I see now—a cavern in the rock. Well, well! And you are the spirit of Sebastian, chained in the bowels of La Cumbre, ha! These are the ghosts——" He began to chuckle, but the sound of his malevolent merriment was like the hiccoughing of a drunken man.

"Rosa! What have you done—

Cobo ran on unheeding: "It must be a great treasure, indeed, from all accounts—the ransom of a dozen kings. That's what Cueto said, 'The ransom of a dozen kings!' Those were his very words."

The fellow continue to sway himself back and forth, peering as if his eyes were about to leave his head. For a long moment or two he utterly disregarded O'Reilly, but finally as he gained more self-control his gaze shifted and his expression altered. He changed his weight to his left arm and with his right hand he drew his revolver.

"What are you doing?" O'Reilly cried, hoarsely.

The colonel seemed vaguely surprised at this question. "Fool! Do you expect me to share it with you?" he inquired.

Cobo Accepts the Compromise

"Wait! There's enough—for all of us," O'Reilly feebly protested; then, as he heard the click of the cocked weapon: "Let me out. I'll pay you well—make you rich." In desperation he raised his shaking hand to dash out the candle, but even as he did so the colonel spoke, at the same time carefully lowering the revolver hammer.

"You are right. What am I thinking about? There must be no noise. Caramba! A pretty business that would be, wouldn't it? With my men running up here to see what it was all about. No, no! No gunshots, no disturbance of any kind. You understand what I mean, eh?"

His face twisted into a grin as he tossed the revolver aside, then undertook to detach a stone from the crumbling curb. "No noise!" he chuckled. "No noise whatever."

O'Reilly, stupefied by the sudden appearance of this monstrous creature, stunned by the certainty of a catastrophe to Rosa, awoke to the fact that this man intended to brain him where he stood. In a panic he cast his eyes about him, thinking to take shelter in the treasure cave, but that retreat was closed to him, for he had wedged the wooden timbers together at the first alarm. He was like a rat in a pit, utterly at the mercy of this maniac. Aye, Cobo was a maniac at the moment; he had so far lost control of himself as to allow the stone to slip out of his grasp. It fell with a thud at O'Reilly's feet, causing the assassin to laugh once more.

"Ho, ho!" he hiccoughed. "My fingers are clumsy, eh?" But there is no need for haste." He stretched out his arm again, laid hold of another missile, and strained to loosen it from its bed. "Jewels! Pearls the size of plums! And I a poor man! I can't believe it yet." He could not detach the stone, so he fumbled farther along the curbing. "Pearls, indeed! I would send a dozen men to hell for one——"

O'Reilly had been standing petrified, his body forced tightly against the rough surface behind him, following with strained fascination the deliberate movements of the man above him; now he saw Cobo, without the least apparent reason, twist and shudder, saw him stiffen rigidly as if seized with a sudden cramp, saw his eyes dilate and heard him heave a deep, whistling sigh.

O'Reilly could not imagine what ailed the fellow. For an eternity, so it seemed, Cobo remained leaning upon his outspread arms, fixed in that same attitude of paralysis, looked almost as if he had been startled by some sound close by. But manifestly this was not the cause of his hesitation, for his face became convulsed and an expression of blank and utter astonishment was stamped upon it. The men stared fixedly at each other, O'Reilly with his head thrown back, Cobo with his body propped rigidly on wooden arms and that peculiar shocked inquiry in his glaring eyes. But slowly the expression changed; the colonel bent as beneath a great weight, his head rose, he turned back upon his neck, he filled his lungs with another wheezing sigh. "Christ! O Christ——" he whispered.

(CONTINUED MONDAY)