Rainbow's End A Novel

By REX BEACH

Author of "The Iron Trail," "The Spoilers," "Heart of the Sunset," Etc.

CUETO'S TREACHERY BRINGS NEW PERILS UPON ESTEBAN AND ROSA.

Synopsis.—Don Esteban Verona, a Cuban planter, hides his wealth—money, jewels and title deeds—in a well on his estate. The hiding place is known only to Sabastian, a slave. Don Esteban's wife dies at the birth of twins, Esteban and Rosa. Don Esteban marries the avaricious Donna Isabel, who tries unsuccessfully to wring the secret of the hidden treasure from Sebastian. Angered at his refusal, she urges Don Esteban to sell Evangelina, Sebastian's daughter. Don Esteban refuses, but in the course of a gambling orgie, he risks Evangelina at cards and loses. Crazed by the loss of his daughter, Sebastian kills Don Esteban and is himself killed. Many years pass and Donna Isabel is unable to find the hidden treasure. Don Mario, rich sugar merchant, seeks to marry Rosa, who has returned from school in the United States. Johnnie O'Reilly, an American, who loves Rosa, wins her promise to wait for him until he can return from New York. Donna Isabel falls to death while walking in her sleep. Esteban's connection with the insurrectos is discovered and he and Rosa are compelled to flee. In New York, O'Reilly gets a letter from Rosa telling of her peril and urging him to rescue her. O'Reilly immediately returns to Cuba.

CHAPTER VII-Continued.

O'Reilly read the label. "It's bit-

ters," said he.
"Bitters! And I asked for 'yellow'—
a glass of agwa with yellow." Branch's
voice shook. "I'm dying of a fever.
and this ivory-billed toucan brings me
a quart of poison. Bullets!" It was
impossible to describe the suggestion
of profanity with which the speaker
colored this innocuous expletive. "Weak
as I am, I shall gnaw his windpipe."
He bared his teeth suggestively and
raised two talonlike hands.
The waiter was puzzled but not

The waiter was puzzled but no He embraced himself as his customer had done, and shuddered; then pointing at the bitters, he nodded

O'Reilly forestalled an outburst by translating his countryman's wants. "Un vaso de agua con hielo," said he, and the attendant was all apologies.

"So you speak the lingo?" marveled Mr. Branch. "Well, I can't get the hang of it. Don't like it. Don't like anything Spanish. H—l of a country. Isn't it?—where the ice is 'yellow' and the butter is 'meant to kill you,' and

O'Relly laughed. "You've been studying a guide book, with complete glossary of Spanish phrases."

Mr. Branch nodded listlessly. "Tm

supposed to report this insurrection, but the Spanlards won't let me. They edit my stuff to suit themselves. I'm getting tired of the farce."

"Going home?" "Going home?"
"Don't dare." The speaker tapped his concave chest. "Bum lungs. I came down here to shuffle off, and I'm waiting for it to happen. What brings

you to Cuba?"
"I'm here for my health, too." The real invalid stared. "I have rheuma-

"Going to sweat it out, eh? Well, "Going to sweat it out, eh? Well, there's nothing to do but sweat"—Branch was racked by a coughing spasm that shook his reedy frame—"sweat and cough. Bullets! No mistake about that hospital bark, is there?" When he had regained his breath he said: "See here! I'm going to take a chance with you, for I like your looks. My newspaper work is a bluft; I don't send enough stuff to keep me alive. I came here to cure my me alive. I came here to cure my lungs, and—I want you to help me do it."

O'Reilly stared at the man in sur-orise. "How can I help you?" he

"By taking me with you."
"With me? Where?"

"To the insurrectos, of course." The men eyed each other fixedly.

What makes you think—" O'Reilly

"Oh, don't say it! I've got a hunch!

I don't know what your game is—
probably dynamite: there's a story
that the rebels have sent for some American experts to teach them how to use the stuff, and God knows they heed instruction! Anyhow, I can't swallow that rheumatism talk. I thought you might give me a lift. Take need instruction!

"And how would that benefit you Johnnie inquired curiously Mr. Branch hesitated. "Well, I'll tell Mr. Eranch nestated. "Well, I'll tell you," he said, after a moment. "I'm afraid to die this way, by inches, and hours. I'm scared to death." It seemed impossible that the sick man's cheeks could further blanch, but they became fairly livid, while a beading of moisture appeared unon his upper lib.

fairly livid, white a heading of moisture appeared upon his upper lip.
"Heaven! You've no idea how it gets on a fellow's nerves to see himself slipping—slipping. I'd like to end it suddenly, like that!" He voiced the suddenly, like that!" He voiced the last sentence abruptly and snapped his fingers. "Then, too, I'd like to have a thrill before I cash in—taste 'the salt of life,' as somebody expressed it. That's war. It's the biggest game in the world. What do you think of the

"Not much," O'Reilly said honestly. "Difference in temperament. I sup-pose it is a sick fancy, but I've got it. I'm a rotten coward, but I'll fight if the Cubans will take me."

"Where are the Cubana?" "Oh, they're out yonder in the hills.

I know all about 'em. Come over to

my quarters, and I'll show you a map if you're interested."

"I am," said O'Reilly, and, rising, he followed his new acquaintance,

The Spanish Doubloon

On the whole, Pancho Cueto's plans had worked smoothly. After denouncing the Varona twins as traitors he had managed to have himself appointed trustee for the crown, for all their properties, consummation for which he had worked from the moment he read that letter of Esteban's on the morn-ing after Donna Isabel's death. That there was a treasure Cueto had never doubted, and, once the place was his to do with as he chose, he began his

grounds, he ripped them up with a series of deep trenches and cross-cuts. It was a task that required the labor It was a task that required the labor of many men for several weeks, and when it was finished there was scarcely a growing thing left upon the place. Only a few of the larger trees remained. Cueto was disappointed at finding nothing, but he was not discouraged. Next he tore down the old slave barracoons and the outbuildings, after which he completely wrecked the residence itself. He pulled it apart bit by bit, brick by brick. He even dug up its foundations, but without the reward of so much as a single peseta. Finally, when the villa was but a heap of rubbish and the grounds a scar upon the slope of La Cumbre, he desisted, baffled, incredulous, while all Matanzas laughed at him. Having sacrificed his choicest residence, he retired in chagrin to the plantation of La Joya.

But Cueto was now a m But Cueto was now a man with a grievance. He burned with rage, and his contempt for the boy and girl he had wronged soured into hatred. In time he began to realize also that so long as they lived they would Jeopardize his tenure of their property. Public feeling, at present, was high; there was intense bitterness against all rebels; but the war would end some day. What then? Cueto asked himself Sympathy was ever on the side day. What then? Cueto asked him-self. Sympathy was ever on the side of the weak and oppressed. There would come a day of reckoning.

As if to swell his discomfiture and strengthen his fears, out from the hills at the head of the Yumuri Issued rumors of a little band of guerrilleros, under the leadership of a beardless boy—a band of blacks who were mak-ing the upper valley unsafe for Spanish scouting parties.

Cursing the name of Varona, Pancho Cursing the name of varona, Fancho Cueto armed himself. He did not ven-ture far alone, and, like Donna Isabel before him, he began to have bad

One day a field of Cueto's cane was burned, and his laborers reported see-ing Esteban and some negroes riding into the wood. The overseer took horse within the hour and rode pellmell to Matanzas. In the city at this time was a certain Colonel Cobo, in command of Spanish volunteers, those execrable convict troops from the Isle of Pines whose atrocities had already marked them as wolves rather than men, and to him Pancho went with his story.

"Ah, yes! That Varona boy. I've heard of him," Cobo remarked, when his caller had finished his account. "He has reason to hate you, I dare say, for you robbed him." The colonel smiled disagreeably.

Cueto nurmured something to the effect that the law had placed him in his position as trustee for the crown, and should therefore protect him; but Colonel Cobo's respect for the law, it seemed, was slight. In his view there was but one law in the land, the law

'Why do you come to me?" he asked. "That fellow is a desperado," Pan-ho declared. "He should be de-

"Bah! The country is overrun with "Ban! The country is overrun with desperadoes of his kind, and worse. Burning crops is nothing new. I'd make an end of him soon enough, but nearly all of my men are in Cardenas. We have work enough to do."

"T'd make it worth while, if you could put an end to him," Pancho said, hesitatingly. Then, recalling some of those stories about Colonel Cobo, he added, "There are two of them, you know, a boy and a girl."

"Ah, yes! I remember."
"I's more than a theory," the boys of the property of t

"I can direct you to the house of sensio, where they live."
"Um-m!" Cobo was thoughtful. "A irl. How old is she?"

"Eighteen." "Ugly as an alligator, I'll warrant."
"Ha! The most ravishing creature
in all Matanzas. All the men were

mad over her."
Colonel Cobo, the guerrilla, licked his full, red lips and ran a strong, square hand over his curly, short-cropped hair. "You say you know where she—where they are living?"
"Ah, perfectly! It's less than a night's ride. There's no one except the boy to reckon with."
"How much is he worth to you?" bluntly inquired the soldier, and Cueto sat down to make the best terms possible. mad over her."

"Do you think he received my let-ter?" Rosa asked of her brother one evening as they sat on the board bench by Asensio's door. It was a familia stion to Esteban; he had answered

many times.
"Oh, yes!" he declared. "Lopez' mesenger got through to Key West."
"Then why doesn't he come?"
"But, my dear, you must be patient.

Think of his difficulties.

Think of his difficulties."

This subject always distressed young Varona; therefore he changed it. "Come! You haven't heard of my good fortune. I captured another fine snake today, a big, sleepy fellow. Belleve me, he'll wake up when I set fire to his tail. He'll go like the wind, and with every foot he goes away will go more of Pancho Cueto's profits."

"You intend to burn more of his."

"You intend to burn more of his fields?" absently inquired the girl. "It seems terrible to destroy our own

Esteban broke out excitedly; he ould not discuss Pancho Cueto with-



out losing control of himself. "Would

out losing control or himself. would you permit that traitor to fatten upon the profits of our plantations? I shall ruin him, as he ruined us."
Rosa shook her dark head sadly. "And we are indeed ruined. Think of our beautiful house; all our beautiful things, too! We used to consider ourselves poor, but—how little we knew of real poverty. There are so many things I want. Have we nothing left?"

"I thought it best to buy those rifles, the brother murmured, dropping his eyes. "It was one chance in a mil-

Spaniards will sell their souls.

"Exactly. We can dig food from the earth and pluck it from the trees, but good Mausers-don't grow on everybush. Besides, of what use would money be to us when we have no place to spend it?"

to spend it?"

"True!" After a moment Rosa
mused aloud: "I wonder if Cueto found
the treasure? If only we had that—"

"He didn't find it," Esteban declared,
"I think" ossitively. "I"—he hesitateu— 1.

I know why he didn't. I think I know

"Where is it?" breathlessly inquired After a furtive look over his shoul-

"You're joking!"
"No. no! Think for yourself. It was old Sebastian who dug that well—"

"And he alone shared father's confidence. That sunken garden was all Sebastian's work. No one else was al-lowed to tend it. Why? I'll tell you. They feared to let anyone else draw the water. Isabel searched for years; tered band.

that's your theory?"

"It's more than a theory," the boy insisted. "Look at this!" From the pocket of his cotton trousers he produced an odd-looking coin, which he placed in Rosa's hand

"Why, it's gold! It's a Spanish doubloon," she said. "It's the first one I ever saw. Where did you find it?" "You'll think I'm crazy when I tell you—sometimes I think so myself. I found it in Isabel's hand when I took

er from the well!"

Rosa was stricken speechless.

"She clutched it tightly," Esteban hurried on, "but as I made the rope fast her hand relaxed and I saw it in the lantern light. It was as if—well, as if she gave it to me. I was too badly frightened to think much about it, as you may imagine. It was a horrible place, all slime and foul water; the rocks were slippery. But that coin was in her fingers!"

Rosa was stricken speechless.

Rosa managed to say: "Impossible! Then she must have had it when she

"No, no! I saw her hands up-stretched, her fingers open, in the monlight."

"It's uncanny. Perhaps-" "Yes. Perhaps some unseen hand led her to the place so that we should at last come into our own. Who knows? There's no doubt that father hid his money. He turned his slaves into gold, he bought jewels, precious metal, anything he could hide. Well, perhaps there were old coins in the lot. The water in the well is shallow; Isabel must have groped this piece from the bottom. Some day I shall explore the hole and-we shall see.'

Rosa flung her arms rapturously about her brother's neck and kissed him. "Wouldn't it be glorious?" she cried. "Wouldn't it be wonderful, to be rich, and to want for nothing; to have fine clothes and good things to eat once more? Good things to eat!"
Her lip quivered. "Oh—I'm so hun-

"Poor little girl!"
"Wait till O'Reilly hears about this."
Rosa was all excitement once more.
"He'll be glad he came and got me,
if he does come."

Esteban caressed her. "He'll come, never fear. I know it. Every time I leave you my heart is in my throat for fear of what may happen in my absence—and yet I can't always be at your side."

"There! You acknowledge that I handicap you. Except for me you would be making a glorious name for your-

"Nothing of the sort. More probably I'd be getting myself killed. No! It's better this way. We must be brave and patient and—think of what is waiting for us at the bottom of that well."

It was indeed a great piece of luck which had enabled Esteban Varona to buy a half-dozen Mausers from a Spanbuy a half-dozen Mausers from a span-ish soldier. Through Asensio's ac-quaintance he had profited by the dis-honesty of an enemy, and, although it had taken all his money to effect the purchase, Esteban considered the sac-rifice well worth while. The fire of patriotism burned fercely in him, as did his hatred of Pancho Cueto, and the four trusty young negroes to whom he had given rifles made, with Asensio and himself, an armed party large enough to be reckoned with. These blacks were excitable fellows, and wretched marksmen, but, on the other hand, each and every one had been raised with a machete at his hip and knew how to use it. After a few pre-liminary forays under Esteban's lead-ership they had absorbed a bit of dis-cipline and were beginning to feel a ish soldier. Through Asensio's ac

military ardor.

In the Cuban field forces there were many negroes, and few of their fellow patriots fought better, or endured the hardships of guerrilla warfare more cheerfully than they. General Antonio Maceo was of mixed blood, Antonio Maceo was of inflet indox, and yet his leadership was characterized not only by rare judgment and ability, but also by an exalted abandon of personal bravery. His several brothers rendered Cuba services scarcebrothers rendered Cuba savives as were by less distinguished, and they were but of a few of many dark-skinned he-roes. This struggle for independence was no patrician's war; the best stock of the island fought side by side with

At dawn of the morning following his talk with Rosa, when the members of his command assembled, Esteban was up and ready. He had made his preparations to destroy Pancho Cueto's fields, and since the road over the hills to La Joya was long he had summoned

"Be careful!" Rosa implored him. "I shall die of suspense.

"It is for you to be careful," he laughed. "Keep a good watch, and conceal yourself at the first alarm. However, I think we have taught these bandits a lesson. As for Cueto, he would run to the jungle if he saw us. He has the heart of a mouse." He kissed his sister affectionately and then rode off at the head of his tat-

he disappeared into the woods, then, to occupy herself, she helped Evangelina with what little housework there was to do, later going with her to the garden patch where the viandas grew.

den patch where the viandas grew.
Evangelina's early devotion to her mistress had not diminished with time; if anything, it had deepened. When emancipation came she would have returned to the service of her beloved twins had it not been for Donna Isabel's refusal to accept her. As it was, she and Asensio had married, and by means of Rosa's surreptitions help they had managed to buy this little piece of land. Rosa had practiced self-denial to make the purchase possible, and her self-sacrifice had borne fruit that act of childish beneficence had created a refuge for Esteban and herself and had ripened the negro woman's affection into idolatry. an's affection into idolatry.

Evangelina's joy at having the girl to herself, where she could daily see her, touch her, serve her, was temher, touch her, serve her, was tempered only by the knowledge of Rosa's unhappiness. She scolded and tyrannized, she mothered and adored the girl to her heart's content; she watched over her like a hawk; she deemed no labor in her service too exacting. It would have gone ill with anyone who offered harm to Rosa, for Evangelina was strong and capable; she had the arms and the hands of a man, and she possessed the smoldering black temper of Sebastian, her father.

Even in peaceful times few people came to this clearing in the woods, far off from the main-traveled roads of the Yumuri, and the day, as usual, of the Yumuri, and the day, as usual, passed uneventfully. Evangelina worked, with one eye upon her Rosa, the other watchfully alert for danger. When evening came she prepared their scanty meal, upbraiding Rosa, meanwhile, for her attempts to assist her. Then they sat for an hour or two on the bench outside the door, talking about Juan O'Rail-ye and the probable hour of his coming. When Rosa fretted about her brother, the negress reassured her. "Don't be frightened, little dove; he has the makings of a great soldier. Now, then, it is growing cool and the night carries fevers. Creep into your bed and dream about that handsome lover of yours."

of yours."

Rosa obeyed, although reluctantly. "I'll sleep for a while," she compromised, "then I'll come out and take my turn."

Dawn was still a long way off when, true to her promise, Ross emerged from the hut with an apology for having slept so long. Evangelina protested, though her eyes were heavy and she had been yawning prodigiously for hours. But for once the girl was firm. Having finally prevailed in her determination, she seated herself in the warm place Evangelina had vacated, and, curling her small feet under her, she settled herself, chin in hand, to think of O'Reilly. It was a good time to think, for the jungle was very still and the night like a velvet curtain. Dawn was still a long way off

"We had better leave the horses here." Pancho Cueto hesitatingly ad-dressed the dim blur which he knew to be Colonel Cobo. The colonel of volunteers was in a vile temper, what with the long night ride and an error of Cueto's which had considerably

lengthened the journey.
"Where is the house?" growled the Ten or fifteen years?"

"Where is the house?" growted the officer.

"Not far. But the path is rocky and the horses' feet—"

"Yes, yes!" There was a creak of saddle leathers and a groan as the colonel dismounted. "Now, my good Cueto," he threatened, "another of your mistakes and I'll give you something to remember-me by."

A curte order brought his men out

thing to remember-me by."

A curt order brought his men out of their saddles. One of their number was detailed to guard the animals, while the rest fell in behind Cueto and followed him up the trail

Esteban and his followers arrive on the scene in the nick of time. What happened when they encountered Colonel Cobo and his men is told in the next

Many Will Claim Spitzberger More than 300 years ago, in 1614, James I of England, formally claimed Spitzbergen. The Muscovy company, a British concern, was ordered "to up-hold the king's right to Spitzbergen" by an order in council. That claim by an order in council. That claim was allowed to lapse in the same man-ner in which the Russian claim lapsed, the Britons interested in the country

say.

With the end of the war old data With the end of the war old data will be dug up, with records of com-paratively recent times, to bolster the contentions of the various claimants, as Spitzbergen is sure to occupy a prominent place in north European af-fairs. Uncle Sam is happily out of the matter because of the sale by the Arc-tic Coal company, although judg-ing by precedent it never was likely that this country would go so far as to desire to exercise suzerainty over land. Such a course was urged in America in 1912 and 1913.

Brought War Into Home.

The beginning of hostilities between Italy and Austria was the cause of similar activity in the household of Anthony Sokelic, says his wife, formerly Baroness Blanca Alessi, in her divorce complaint, filed at New York.

"He is a Croatian," she alleges, "and I am an Italian baroness. He has been a raving maniac since our respective countries got into war. I'm through."

through.

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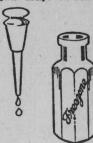
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