

# THE LAST SHOT

COPYRIGHT, 1914, by CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

by FREDERICK PALMER



## SYNOPSIS

**CHAPTER I**—At their home on the frontier between the Browns and Grays Marta Galland and her mother, entertaining Colonel Westerling of the Grays, see Captain Lanstron, staff intelligence officer of the Browns, injured by a fall in his aeroplane.

**CHAPTER II**—Ten years later. Westerling, nominal vice but real chief of staff, reinforces South La Tir, meditates on war, and speculates on the comparative ages of himself and Marta, who is visiting in the Gray Capital.

**CHAPTER III**—Westerling calls on Marta. She tells him of her teaching children the follies of war and martial patriotism, begs him to prevent war while he is chief of staff, and predicts that if he makes war against the Browns he will not win.

**CHAPTER IV**—On the march with the 53rd of the Browns Private Stransky, anarchist, decries war and played-out patriotism and is placed under arrest. Colonel Lanstron overhears, begs him off saying the anarchist will fight well when enraged and is "all man."

**CHAPTER V**—Lanstron calls on Marta at her home. He talks with Feller, the gardener. Marta tells Lanstron that she believes Feller to be a spy. Lanstron confesses it is true.

**CHAPTER VI**—Lanstron shows Marta a telephone which Feller has concealed in a secret passage under the tower for use to benefit the Browns in war emergencies, pointing out its value as being in the center of the fighting zone in case of war. Marta consents for it and Feller to remain for the present. Lanstron declares his love for Marta.

"I warned him of that," said Lanstron. "He is a soldier, with a soldier's fatalism. He sees no more danger in this than in commanding a battery in a crisis."

"Suppose that the Grays win? Suppose that La Tir is permanently theirs?"

"They shall not win! They must not!" Lanstron exclaimed, his tone as rigid as Westerling's toward her second prophecy.

"Yet if they should win and Westerling finds that I have been party to this treachery, as I shall be now that I am in the secret, think of the position of my mother and myself!" she continued. "Has that occurred to you, a friend, in making our property, our garden, our neutrality, which is our only defense, a factor in one of your plans without our permission?"

Her eyes, blue-black in appeal and reproach, revealed the depths of a wound as they had on the terrace steps before luncheon, when he had been apprised of a feeling for him by seeing it dead under his blow. The logic of the chief of intelligence withered. He understood how a friendship to her was, indeed, more sacred than patriotic passion. He realized the shame of what he had done now that he was free of professional influences.

"You are right, Marta!" he replied. "It was beastly of me—there is no excuse."

He looked around to see an orderly from the nearest military wireless station.

"I was told it was urgent, sir," said the orderly, in excuse for his intrusion, as he passed a telegram to Lanstron.

Immediately Lanstron felt the touch of the paper his features seemed to take on a mask that concealed his thought as he read:

"Take night express. Come direct from station to me. Partow."

This meant that he would be expected at Partow's office at eight the next morning. He wrote his answer; the orderly saluted and departed at a rapid pace; and then, as a matter of habit of the same kind that makes some men wipe their pens when laying them down, he struck a match and set fire to one corner of the paper, which burned to his fingers' ends before he tossed the charred remains away. Marta imagined what he would be like with the havoc of war raging around him—all self-possession and mastery; but actually he was trying to reassure himself that he ought not to feel perturbed over a holiday cut short.

"I shall have to go at once," he said. "Marta, if there were to be war very soon—within a week or two weeks—what would be your attitude about Feller's remaining?"

"To carry out his plan, you mean?"

"Yes."

There was a perceptible pause on her part.

"Let him stay," she answered. "I shall have time to decide even after war begins."

"But instantly war begins you must go!" he declared urgently.

"You forget a precedent," she reminded him. "The Galland woman,

have never deserted the Galland house!"

"I know the precedent. But this time the house will be in the thick of the fighting."

"It has been in the thick of the fighting before," she said, with a gesture of impatience.

"Marta, you will promise not to remain?" he urged.

"Isn't that my affair?" she asked.

"Aren't you willing to leave even that to me after all you have been telling me, you are to make a redoubt of our lawn, inviting the shells of the enemy into our drawing-room?"

What could he say? Only call up from the depths the two passions of his life in an outburst, with all the force of his nature in play.

"I love this soil, my country's soil, ours by right—and I love you! I would be true to both!"

"Love! What mockery to mention that now!" she cried chokingly. "It's monstrous!"

"I—I—" He was making an effort to keep his nerves under control.

This time the stiffening elbow failed. With a lurching abruptness he swung his right hand around and seized the wrist of that trembling, injured hand that would not be still. She could not fail to notice the movement, and the sight was a magic that struck angst out of her.

"Lanny, I am hurting you!" she cried miserably.

"A little," he said, will finally dominant over its servant, and he was smiling as when, half stunned and in agony—and ashamed of the fact—he had risen from the debris of cloth and twisted braces. "It's all right," he concluded.

She threw back her arms, her head raised, with a certain abandon as if she would bare her heart.

"Lanny, there have been moments when I would have liked to fly to your arms. There have been moments when I have had the call that comes to every woman in answer to a desire. Yet I was not ready. When I really go it must be in a flame, in answer to your flame!"

"You mean—I—"

But if the flame were about to burst forth she smothered it in the spark.

"And all this has upset me," she went on incoherently. "We've both been cruel without meaning to be, and we're in the shadow of a nightmare; and next time you come perhaps all the war talk will be over and—oh, this is enough for today!"

She turned quickly in veritable flight and hurried toward the house.

"If it ever comes," she called, "I'll let you know! I'll fly to you in a chariot of fire bearing my flame—I am that bold, that brazen, that reckless! For I am not an old maid, yet. They've moved the age limit up to thirty. But you can't drill love into me as you drill discipline into armies—no, no more than I can argue peace into armies!"

For a while, motionless, Lanstron watched the point where she had disappeared.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Making a War.

Hedworth Westerling would have said twenty to one if he had been asked the odds against war when he was parting from Marta Galland in the hotel reception room. Before he reached home he would have changed them to ten to one. A scare bulletin about the Bodapoo affair compelling attention as his car halted to let the traffic of a cross street pass, he bought a newspaper thrust in at the car window that contained the answer of a dispatch of the Grays about the dispute that had arisen in the distant African jungle. This he had already read two days previously, by courtesy of the premier. It was moderate in tone, as became a power that had 3,000,000 soldiers against its opponent's 5,000,000; nevertheless, it firmly pointed out that the territory of the Browns had been overtly invaded, on the pretext of securing a deserter who had escaped across the line, by Gray colonial troops who had raised the Gray flag in place of the Brown flag and remained defiantly in occupation of the outpost they had taken.

As yet, the Browns had not attempted to repel the aggressor by arms for fear of complications, but were relying on the Gray government to order a withdrawal of the Gray force and the repudiation of a commander who had been guilty of so grave an international affront. The surprising and illuminating thing to Westerling was the inspired statement to the press from the Gray foreign office, adroitly appealing to Gray chauvinism and justifying the "intrepidity" of the Gray commander in response to so-called "pin-pricking" exasperations.

At the door of his apartment, Francois, his valet and factotum, gave Westerling a letter.

"Important, sir," said Francois. Westerling knew by a glance that it was, for it was addressed and marked "Personal" in the premier's own hand-

writing. A conference for ten that evening was requested in a manner that left no doubt of its urgency.

Curiosity made him a little ahead of time, but he found the premier awaiting him in his study, free from interruption or eavesdropping.

In the shadow of the table lamp the old premier looked his years. From youth he had been in politics, ever a bold figure and a daring player, but now beginning to feel the pressure of younger men's elbows. Fonder even of power, which had become a habit, than in his twenties, he saw it slipping from his grasp at an age when the downfall of his government meant that he should never hold the reins again.

He had been called an ambitious demagogue and a makeshift opportunist by his enemies, but the crowd liked him for his ready strategy, his genius for appealing phrases, and for the gambler's virtue which hitherto had made him a good loser.

"You saw our communique tonight that went with the publication of the Browns' dispatch?" he remarked.

"Yes, and I am glad that I had been careful to send a spirited commander to that region," Westerling replied.

"So you guess my intention, I see." The premier smiled. He picked up a long, thin ivory paper-knife and softly patted the palm of his hand with it.

"Certainly!" Westerling replied in his ready, confident manner.

"We hear a great deal about the precision and power of modern arms as favoring the defensive," said the premier. "I have read somewhere that it will enable the Browns to hold us back, despite our advantage of numbers. Also, that they can completely man every part of their frontier and that their ability to move their reserves rapidly, thanks to modern facilities, makes a powerful flanking attack in surprise out of the question."

"Some half-truths in that," answered Westerling. "One axiom, that must hold good through all time, is that the aggressive which keeps at it always wins. We take the aggressive. In the space where Napoleon deployed a division, we deploy a battalion today. The precision and power of modern arms require this. With such immense forces and present-day tactics, the line of battle will practically cover the length of the frontier. Along their range the Browns have a series of fortresses commanding natural openings for our attack. These are almost impregnable. But there are pregnable points between them. Here, our method will be the same that the Japanese followed and that they learned from European armies. We shall concentrate in masses and throw in wave after wave of attack until we have gained the positions we desire. Once we have a tenable foothold on the crest of the range the Brown army must fall back and the rest will be a matter of skillful pursuit."

The premier, as he listened, rolled the paper knife over and over, regarding its polished sides, which were like Westerling's manner of facile statement of a program certain of fulfillment.

"How long will it take to mobilize?"

"Less than a week after the railroads are put entirely at our service, with three preceding days of scattered movements," answered Westerling. "Deliberate mobilizations are all right for a diplomatic threat that creates a future in the newspapers and a depression in the stock market, but which is not to be carried out. When you mean war, all speed and the war fever at white heat."

"You would have made a good politician, Westerling," the premier remarked, with a twitching uplift of the brows and a knowing gleam in his shrewd old eyes.

"Thank you," replied Westerling. "A man who is able to lead in anything must be something of a politician."

"Very true, indeed. Perhaps I had that partly in mind in making you vice-chief of staff," responded the premier.

"Then it all goes back to the public—to that enormous body of humanity out there!" He swung the paper knife around with outstretched arm toward the walls of the room. "To public opinion—as does everything else in this age—to the people—our masters, your and mine! For no man can stand against them when they say no or yes."

"You know the keys to play on, though," remarked Westerling with a complimentary smile. "No one knows quite so well."

"And you are sure—sure we can win?" the premier asked with a long, tense look at Westerling, who was steady under the scrutiny.

"Absolutely!" he answered. "Five millions against three! It's mathematics, or our courage and skill are not equal to theirs. Absolutely! We have the power, why not use it? We do not live in a dream age!"

From a sudden, unwitting exertion of his strength the knife which had been the recipient of his emotions snapped in two. Rather carefully the premier laid the pieces on the table before he rose and turned to Westerling, his decision made.

"If the people respond with the war fever, then it is war," he said. "I take you at your word that you will win!"

"A condition!" Westerling announced. "From the moment war begins the army is master of all intelligence, all communication, all resources. Everything we require goes into the crucible!"

"And the press—the mischievous, greedy, but very useful press?" asked the premier.

"It also shall serve; also obey. No lists of killed and wounded shall be given out until I am ready. The public must know nothing except what I choose to tell. I act for the people and the nation."

"That is agreed," said the premier. "For these terrible weeks every nerve and muscle of the nation is at your service to win for the nation. In three or four days I shall know if the public rises to the call. If not—" He shook his head.

"While all the information given out is provocative to our people, you will declare your hope that war may be averted," Westerling continued.

"This will screen our purpose. Finally, on top of public enthusiasm will come the word that the Browns have fired the first shot—as they must when we cross the frontier—that they have been killing our soldiers. This will make the racial spirit of every man respond. Having decided for war, every plan is worthy that helps to victory."

"It seems fiendish!" exclaimed the premier in answer to a thought eddying in the powerful current of his brain. "Fiendish with calculation, but merciful, as you say."

"A fast, terrific campaign! A ready machine taking the road!" Westerling declared. "Less suffering than if we went to war carelessly for a long campaign—than if we allowed sentiment to interfere with intellect."

"I like your energy, your will!" said the premier admiringly. "And about the declaration of war? We shall time that to your purpose."

## (To be continued)

### PROPOSALS FOR BONDS

Sealed proposals will be received at the office of the Village Clerk of the Village of Medina, Ohio, until 12 o'clock noon of October 10, 1914.

For the Sewer Improvement of Union Street from North Court Street to Huntington Street; Huntington Street from Bronson Street to North Street; Bronson Street from Huntington Street to Foundry Street; and Foundry Street from Bronson Street to the north line of Lot No. 563, in Sewer District No. 1: Also Mill Street from man-hole to Elmwood Street; and South Broadway from Grant Street to South Street in Sewer District No. 2, dated August 25, 1914, in the aggregate sum of Thirty Three Hundred and Thirty-two Dollars (\$3332.00), payable as follows:

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1915.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1917.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1918.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1919.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1920.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1921.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1922.

One bond for \$333.00 payable April 1, 1924.

One bond for \$335.00 payable April 1, 1925.

with interest upon said bonds at the rate of five and one-half per cent per annum payable annually evidenced by coupons.

Also for the extension of water mains upon Union Street from North Court Street to Huntington Street; Huntington Street from Union Street to North Street in Sewer District No. 1; and Mill Street from South Court Street to Elmwood Street and Broadway Street from Grant Street to South Street in Sewer District No. 2. Said bonds being in the aggregate sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2500.00) dated September 15, 1914, and payable as follows:

One bond for \$500.00 payable September 15, 1915.

One bond for \$500.00 payable September 15, 1918.

One bond for \$500.00 payable September 15, 1919.

One bond for \$500.00 payable September 15, 1920.

Said bonds bearing interest at the rate of six per cent per annum payable semi-annually.

Said bonds are issued for the purpose of providing funds for the payment of that portion of the cost and expense of making the above stated Sewer Improvement and Extension of Water Mains assessed against said Village, under authority of the Laws of the State of Ohio and the ordinances of said village in such case made and provided.

Said bonds will be sold to the highest and best bidder for not less than par and the accrued interest to the date of their delivery.

All bids must state the number of bonds bid for and the gross amount of the bid and accrued interest to date of delivery, and be accompanied by a certified check payable to the Treasurer of Medina Village for \$200.00 per cent of the amount of the bonds bid for, upon the condition that if the bid is accepted the bidder will receive that the bidder shall fail to perform such condition.

Each bidder, as part of his bid agrees to furnish free of cost to said village he banks upon which said bonds are to be executed.

The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

Bids must be sealed and endorsed "Proposals for Sewer Improvement" or "Proposals for Extension of Water Main", as the case may be. George L. McNeal, Village Clerk. 3-4

### TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS

Teachers' examinations are held in Medina on the first Saturday of September, October, January, March, April, May, and on the last Friday of June and August.

## CASTORIA

For Infants and Children

In Use For Over 30 Years

Always bears the Signature of

## WHAT THE COMMONER SAYS ABOUT THE OHIO CAMPAIGN

### THE OHIO CAMPAIGN.

(From The Commoner.)

Below will be found a letter to The Commoner from Governor James M. Cox of Ohio. Governor Cox states the issues between the Democratic party in the Ohio contest and shows conclusively that the Democratic party on its record during the past two years is entitled to the vote of every Democrat and independent voter in Ohio who believes in the rule of the people. Governor Cox is a candidate for re-election and his record of achievement during his administration should insure not only the re-election of himself by a handsome majority, but the election of the whole Democratic ticket, and thus prevent the possibility of any backward step being taken.

W. J. BRYAN.

Governor Cox's letter follows:

Columbus, O., Sept. 11. The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.—The election this fall in Ohio will be for the purpose of filling state offices, including the governorship, the selection of a United States senator, twenty-two representatives in the lower house of congress, and the county officers of the various counties. It will therefore be seen that this is by no means an off year in Ohio politics. The three major parties—Democratic, Republican and Progressive—have nominated both state and congressional tickets. The Socialists have nominated a state ticket, and in some instances candidates for congress. The Prohibitionists endorsed the Progressive ticket. The issue, so far as the Democrats are concerned, is the progressive legislation enacted by the last general assembly. This legislation includes a compulsory workmen's compensation law, a state road building program, a modern tax law, a complete and modern school code, a mothers' pension act, and a number of other progressive enactments. The Republican platform is a straddle upon the temperance question, a condemnation of the state highway department, with a promise to abolish that modern method of securing universal good roads; opposition to the tax law, a revision of the workmen's compensation law, and condemnation of practically everything progressive adopted by the Democrats. The Progressive platform does not oppose generally the laws enacted under this administration. So, reduced to its last analysis, we have a contest for the continuance of the human and regulatory enactments of a Democratic administration.

The Democratic party enters upon the campaign with practically a solid Democratic following. I say practically, because there is the usual opposition within the party of disappointed office seekers and those who have been unable to control the party in their own selfish interests. In addition to the regular Democracy of the state, the administration is supported by a large number of independent voters, especially among the working classes, who favor the workmen's compensation law. In addition to this, numbers of Republicans, grown weary of the control of the party by the reactionary bunch, which has for years held a tight grip upon the party of this state, have volunteered their support of the Democrats. It is therefore evident that we shall again triumph at the polls this fall.

The Democratic party, through its platform, goes on record as opposing at this time any further extensive legislation, and urges a short session only of the next general assembly.

But the success of the new laws, of course, depends much on their proper enforcement. With a hostile administration, the workmen's compensation law, now known to be so beneficial to the working men of this state, would easily be rendered useless; our school code would become a travesty; the tax law would be so amended that tax dodgers would again escape. Regulation of saloons would be unknown. The whole regime of state house graft would unquestionably be inaugurated, because the defeat of the Democratic party would bring into power the identical group which thrived in the balmy days of political corruption in this state.

JAMES M. COX.

### TIMOTHY S. HOGAN.

The Democrats of Ohio have nominated Timothy S. Hogan as their candidate for United States senator. Mr. Hogan as attorney general of Ohio demonstrated his ability as a lawyer, his loyalty to the people's interests and his trustworthiness as a public official. Attorney General Hogan has all the necessary qualifications to give the people of Ohio another able, efficient and thoroughly democratic servant in the United States senate. The Democratic press bureau of Ohio has issued a statement in connection with Attorney General Hogan's campaign for the senate that ought to be read by every voter in Ohio and will be of interest to Democrats throughout the country who want to learn of the character and qualifications of the men who are being offered by the Democrats to the voters as their representatives in the United States senate. The quotation from one of Mr. Hogan's recent speeches appearing in the press bureau statement stamps him as a man with a big heart that beats for humanity. His election to the United States senate will give President Wilson one more able supporter of his policies and will give the people of Ohio a valuable public servant.

W. J. BRYAN.

The press bureau statement is reproduced below. Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 11.—The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.—The fact that Timothy S. Hogan is the Democratic candidate for United States senator from Ohio illustrates, in a striking manner, one of the many great reforms which have been accomplished in our system of government. Mr. Hogan was nominated at a direct primary; he will be elected by the votes of the people of the state, not by the legislature. Timothy S. Hogan is essentially a commoner, a man of the people, and when elected to the senate he will represent and be answerable to the people only.

Mr. Hogan is conceded to be the ablest lawyer who has ever held the position of attorney general in Ohio. In his four years in that office he has cleared the state of Ohio of corruption, extravagance and inefficiency, and made it certain that the laws of the state are alive, capable of enforcement, and that they would be enforced uniformly without fear or favor, and with absolute disregard of persons or politics. In his campaign for attorney general and his campaign for United States senator Mr. Hogan is bringing home to the people the fact that just now in public affairs, both of the state and of the nation, we are beginning to reap the fruits of the fight begun by Mr. Bryan in 1896. When the fight was begun at that time Mr. Hogan was on the right side, and in every campaign spoke forcefully and courageously in advocating the principles advanced by Mr. Bryan, principles which at that time were treated with scorn and derision by Republicans, and unfortunately by some short-sighted Democrats, and which today are embraced by the Republicans in their party platforms.

Mr. Hogan still advocates the principles of Mr. Bryan, and shows that now, as then, they lead to the end which should be desired by all true men; that is, absolute purity in public life; absolute fairness in government, an equal chance to everyone, and the government administered for the benefit of all and not for the favored few.

Mr. Hogan in his speech before the Democratic state convention promised staunch support of President Wilson. He endorses the president and each and every principle advocated by him. There is no exception. He believes in the president. He says openly and at all times that he endorses everything President Wilson has done, and that if he is elected he will stand by and support the president in all of his policies; and the people of Ohio know that when Timothy S. Hogan says this it means that no matter what problems may be before us in this country, Timothy S. Hogan will, at all times, be found supporting our president, with all the power that he has.

One of the fine things about the Ohio campaign is the close and cordial relation existing between the candidate for governor, James M. Cox, and the candidate for United States senator, Mr. Hogan. Governor Cox has been the most progressive governor the state has ever had; in one term he has embodied into the statute law of Ohio measures and reforms which the Republican party had been promising for fifty years. Of course, he could not do this without making enemies, especially of the interests, and the interests are attacking him in all the subtle and devious ways which are so well known to them.

Mr. Hogan stands squarely with the governor; supports him in everything he has done, and makes it plain that Governor Cox is the friend and champion of the people. The governor and Mr. Hogan are close personal friends, and the campaign they are waging may well be said to be a joint battle on behalf of the people of the state of Ohio. If Timothy S. Hogan is elected as United States senator, the state of Ohio will have another member who is the equal of any man who has ever represented this state in that branch of the government.