

Afoul of Villa's Men

By Capt. George B. Rodney

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Automobile of Miss Dorothy Upton and friend, Mrs. Fane, breaks down at New Mexico border patrol camp, commanded by Lieutenant Kynaston. The two women are on way to mine of Miss Upton's father, located a few miles across the Mexican border. Kynaston leaves women at his camp while he goes with a detail to investigate report of Villa gun runners. Villa troops drive small force of Carranza across border line and they surrender to Kynaston.

CHAPTER II—Dorothy and Mrs. Fane still at camp when Kynaston returns with prisoners. Blind Mexican priest appears in camp and claims internal Mexicans have in the spoils brought across the line a wonderful emerald bell stolen from a shrine by Zapata and taken from him by Carranza troops. Priest is searching for the emerald in order to return it to the shrine. Kynaston investigates and finds emerald. He reports it to department headquarters and is instructed to hold it until arrival of officer from headquarters. Dorothy's father arrives, sees the emerald, tries to buy it but without success, and then leaves with Dorothy and Mrs. Fane for his mine.

CHAPTER III—Major Updike arrives from headquarters to receipt for emerald. He and Kynaston leave camp for short time for ride along border. On returning they find the blind priest gone. Kynaston discovers a fire in direction of Upton's mine and realizes Villa's men have attacked the mine house.

CHAPTER IV—Upon attempting to turn emerald over to Major Updike Kynaston finds it has disappeared. He sends detail to find the priest, and he, with another detail, starts for the border line to, if possible, assist the Uptons. Despite order Kynaston, with one man, crosses the border to make their way to the mine house, which is being attacked, and with idea of rescuing Dorothy Upton with whom Kynaston is madly in love. They reach the mine house.

CHAPTER V—Mine house is entirely surrounded and escape cut off. Bandits send flag of truce and demand payment of large sum for release of party. Upton refuses and fight continues. Bandits appear with second flag of truce.

CHAPTER VI—Bandits announce that Colonel Pesquera has been killed and demand surrender of man who killed him, the remainder of party to be permitted to leave unharmed. Both Kynaston and Upton insist that each be permitted to surrender himself as man who killed Mexican colonel. Play game of poker to see which one it shall be. Kynaston plays cards so as to force himself to lose. After leaving mine house to surrender to bandits Dorothy discovers how Kynaston lost poker game.

CHAPTER VII.

A Contest of Wits.

Dusk was slowly drawing down as Kynaston left the house. Below him in the camp of the attackers excitement was rife. Serious as was his predicament, he could not help speculating on the cause of it. Anything, even the most trivial thing, might turn the scale in his favor, and he did not mean to miss the slightest chance.

He knew right well that, given the chance, Upton would get his party out and across the border to the place where the cavalry had camped. He also knew right well that the old miner would leave no stone unturned to help him. If he could gain thirty-six hours at most and then manage to escape, he might still win out.

He was by no means hopeless, though well-nigh desperate, as he drew down from the higher ground to the camp, well sheltered in the valley. He saw that more men were coming in—presumably the talked-of re-enforcements.

They saw him as he came down the hill and entered the flat on which the camp lay. The horsemen, in a madly yelling crowd swept forward toward him, lariats circling, horses frantically caroling about him, their riders striving to see who should be the first to get a rope about the neck of the accursed gringo.

Mercifully he forestalled their attempts by backing up against a tall mesquit bush so that the loops of their lariats could not settle about his neck. Seeing his intention they voiced their disapproval in a renewed outburst of yells.

Further designs upon him were prevented by the opportune arrival of an officer, who dispersed the crowd by the simple process of beating them about the heads with a stick.

"Have you come from the house yonder, senior?"

"Yes. And I claim proper treatment from you, sir. You can hardly claim to treat people in your power decently when your troops are as out of hand as that."

"I will take you to El General Obispo, senior," said the officer courteously. "For your own sake, I warn you, do not anger him. His temper is a trifling uncertainty, owing to his having to undergo severe privations for the past week."

A sentry slept in the doorway. From the interior came the smell of a meal that had evidently just been served.

Following his guide, Kynaston entered. El General Obispo, a squat little man, whose high cheek bones and full lips betokened his Indian ancestry, looked up from the supper which he was eating by the simple process of stuffing as much carne seca in his mouth as that organ would hold, and then cutting off the balance with a none too clean knife.

El general growled out a question. The officer explained who Kynaston

was. In answer the general rose hastily from the table, spat the meat from his mouth, and began such a furious tirade of scurrilous epithets as to become nearly epileptic. Kynaston stood silent.

"Take him away! Place him in the cartel till a consejo de guerra (court-martial) can decide what the fate shall be of any accursed gringo who dares kill one of our gallant soldiers! Here!"

He tossed a paper to the officer.

"Let him see, captain, that even in his own accursed country, where the pigs walk on their hind legs and talk and act as if they were indeed men, they are beginning to see that the revolutionary forces of our land are not to be withstood—the court-martial will meet tomorrow afternoon."

"He is in a better humor than I thought," said the officer to Kynaston. "El viejo diablo (the old devil) gave you the paper, senior, not because he wished you to read it, but because he himself cannot read, and wished to impose upon you—here is the cartel. Can I send you some blankets? I fear the house will not be so comfortable as I might wish—Hola, there, hombres! A guard for the Americano!"

And before he even realized that he was indeed a prisoner, Kynaston found himself shoved inside the dirty interior, the door closed and a guard set outside.

Kynaston, seeing that he might as well take things coolly, seated himself on a blanket that a peon threw in the door, took the paper from his pocket and disposed himself to read.

The very first thing that caught his eye was a six-column display head:

ARMY OFFICER DISAPPEARS SO DOES PRICELESS GEM

There followed a garbled account of the arrival of the Emerald Bell in Kynaston's camp. A still more garbled account of how it came into northern Mexico. The account of the gallant



"Have You Come From the House Yonder, Senior?"

fight made by the prisoners he had left in his camp told plainly enough the source of the story.

The article stated that, acting on information received from a Mexican prisoner who had been outrageously abused by the army officer who had captured him, the Tarryville Argus had dispatched a special correspondent to the camp of the United States troops.

There he found Major Updike, who with visible reluctance had substantiated the story about the jewel.

Kynaston swore and raged impotently up and down the little room. Apparently it was not enough that he should sacrifice his life itself; his very reputation, too, was to be torn to shreds.

Hour after hour passed. He had a little tobacco, but one cannot enjoy smoking in the dark. So he set and thought and thought till the tiny stars came out like forget-me-nots in the wonderful Mexican sky, and the camp woke to renewed life in the coolness.

Presently he was aroused by the sound of someone fumbling at the chain that fastened the door on the outside. The door drew open. In the shadow he heard a voice.

"Ohe Mio capitan!"

It was the voice of the officer who had met him.

"Si—si! What is it?"

"If you will come with me it will perhaps benefit you."

Kynaston fumbled in his boot-leg to see if that flat automatic pistol still lay close to his leg. Fortunately, he had not been examined for concealed weapons; the Mexicans had taken for granted that a man surrendering himself would not be fool enough to bring arms into a hostile camp.

Kynaston stepped out. The officer with two guards crowded their way with their prisoner through the fast-gathering crowd to the house where the general lived. By the light of the two glittering candles stuck in empty bottles that illuminated the dirty interior Kynaston saw, seated beside the rebel commander, a figure that he recognized at once—the blind priest of Trocanto, the guardian of the shrine!

The general was the first to break the silence.

"I have brought you here, Senior Gringo, to ask you some questions. This good man tells me that you are an Americano officer. Is it true?"

"Ask him, if he is your source of information," said Kynaston in a disguised voice. He could see the priest lean forward in an eager attempt to identify him.

"There has been a story come to

us—the general was in deadly earnest—"that we mean to look into. There was a stone of incalculable value in the South that we meant to use to buy arms and ammunition to help our cause. We got it; then our forces were attacked by three times their number of the accursed federalistas, and so the stone was taken. It was then that, pursued by our men, the thieves fled across the line and took refuge on American soil, carrying with them the stone that meant so much to the righteous cause."

"That stone was taken charge of by the American officer. The next day the stone and the officer had disappeared, and now the good father tells me that you are the man. I tell you plainly, Senior Gringo, that, failing to obtain from you news of the stone's whereabouts, the court-martial shall do its duty in the morning. Am I clear?"

"Aye! As clear as your own laws—and doubtless as discerning."

This time at hearing Kynaston's voice the old priest leaned back in his seat.

"It is the man," he said quietly. "It is the officer who took the stone."

"A bargain—then the stone against your life! The stone that means two hundred thousand pesos against your life! It can profit you nothing to keep it, for if it is not turned over to us you shall surely die."

Kynaston turned hotly toward the priest.

"Thou hast eaten my bread and salt," he said passionately. "Thou hast slept in my camp. Thou knowest right well that I did not take the stone; thou knowest right well that thou thyself art the thief, and that I had parties out searching for thee by mesa and by river. What hast thou to gain, padre, by lying away my life?"

The old priest turned gray under his dark skin.

"My son, this is not fair. Thou sayest that thou didst not take it. Who then did?"

"Who? Who but the man who has sought it, as he says, for so long? The blind priest of Trocanto, of course. Who else has so great a desire for it? I could not have taken it, as my commandante—major—can prove, for I was with him from the moment that he came into my camp till the bundle was unwrapped, and the stone was found missing."

"Was no one else in your tent then?" asked the general.

"Thou knowest there was, senior." The voice of the blind priest rose to almost breaking tension. "Thou knowest there were the two ladies—where are they, I say?"

"Where are they? Is this camp a place to ask such a question? Wouldst thou expect to find women—decent women—in such a camp of ladrones?"

"Then, senior," said the general, "there can be but one person who knows about the stone. Either one of the ladies must have seen the stone when it was in your tent, or else—which is, of course, unbelievable—one of them has taken it—"

"No—no!"

The voice suddenly rose to a shriek; the Mexican captain raised his hand to guard his forehead from the blow that he thought was coming. Kynaston dropped his hand.

"Someone in your camp must know the matter. Doubtless if any man entered your tent while the ladies were in your camp they have seen him. A note to Senior Upton that I will send by an officer will discover the matter. You can tell him with perfect truth that if the jewel is not restored your life will pay the forfeit."

"Wherever it is found? Do you mean, general, if for instance I should be able to prevail upon this blind priest to restore it that I will be released?"

"Si—si! But mark, I must have the stone in my hands before safety is promised to Senior Upton."

A lieutenant had entered with a hasty report which he whispered in the ear of his commander in chief, and had handed him a paper. A pleased smile stole across Obispo's face as he read it aloud:

It is permitted to announce that tonight the gallant General Villa will make an attack on the American army. The gallant general will himself lead by a small force in this first attack, and will then await re-enforcements.

You will therefore join the main force at Palomas by tomorrow evening. The gallant general refuses to disclose his plans, but says he will be in El Paso within two weeks.

Kynaston could hardly believe his ears. Was Villa really to attempt an invasion of the States? What could such a move mean but war, the war he was sacrificing himself to avoid? The army must be advised, but how?

A murmur of approval from those in the room had prevented the reading of the message. After a moment Obispo turned to him again.

"If you wish to live, gringo," he said, "see to it that my messenger takes a letter from you to the house of Senior Upton this night."

Obispo waved his hand in dismissal and Kynaston was escorted back to the little adobe house where paper and pens were brought him. For a few moments Kynaston sat, tapping his teeth with his penholder, thinking over the situation, revolving in his mind what he wanted to tell Upton and how he should tell it. For he had a message to send Upton that would never get by his censors if they should understand it; and his censors, moreover, would be everyone in camp who could read.

He finally concluded not to attempt to tell Upton of the intended attack by Villa, but to confine his efforts to intimating how an escape from the

house might be made with the machine. After a few meaningless introductory sentences he wrote:

I am told that the accusation is made against me that I have taken or concealed the priceless Emerald Bell which we captured when we took the federal party prisoners.

Of course you know that I know nothing of it. I am told further that, if it is restored, or positive information is given which will lead to its restoration, I will be released.

As to the repairs to the automobile that we spoke of, I would take the machine at once to the United States, as no repairs can be made here. You must take the machine at once as the delicate mechanism will ruin if kept here more than ten—I wish I could write hours. If you know anything about the jewel send word. I am firmly convinced that the old priest who has turned up here either has it or knows where it is.

You can see what they are saying about me across the border. They accuse me of having stolen the accursed Bell. I cannot imagine where it can be unless the old priest has taken it. Of course he has, but equally of course he will never acknowledge it.

I fear that if they shoot me I will have lost more than my life, for this attack on my honor will leave me in worse case than death. After it is all over, save my honor for me if you can. Write my statement at least that that accusation is untrue.

He clipped from the paper the article which intimated that he had stolen the Bell and pinned it with a bit of splinter to his note, to be given to the messenger. As the courier

walked off to the great chinaberry tree under which his horse was tied, Kynaston thought cheerlessly of what the result of the mission must be.

The messenger was gone an hour when a sudden flurry at the post of the guard set the camp alight with excitement. An aid came hastily to the house, demanding admission.

"Your letter was received, senior, by Senior Upton, who declined to read it," said the aid. "He said that he was a caballero of blood and refused to receive messages that were sent him by the hands of a common soldier. He demanded that El General Obispo send a commissioned officer to talk with him. Accordingly Major Gutierrez will go up at daylight to arrange matters."

Kynaston spent a sleepless night. Early in the morning the camp was awake, the noise and excitement forecasting a move. An hour later an officer, furious with anger, entered with four men. He seized the American roughly and tied his hands behind him with a strip of rawhide.

"Los perros!" the officer greeted. "To treat with men like that—el general wishes to see you, gringo."

"What is it? Well to ask! That thief of the world, Senior Upton—bah! He is a ladrone, a picaron, a thief! Done? What has he done? El General Obispo sent this morning to talk with him about you and the jewel, which we need as a thirsty man needs water. His emissaries were el Commandante Major Gutierrez and el Coronel Mayez, who is the chief of our artillery."

"They went up under a white flag, senior, and had a talk with the American. They could come to no terms, so the two left him and started back. When they reached the bottom of the hill naturally enough they lowered the white flag—"

"Yes, yes! Where are they now?" The blind priest of Trocanto, who had approached, answered the question.

"They are prisoners in the hands of Senior Upton. He sent word back to el General Obispo that if the soldiers lay hand on thee he will hang the two officers as high as Haman. Doubtless thou canst learn the details from el general."

It was difficult to learn anything from the general, who, angry at being outwitted, spat like a cat and was equally intelligible. It was from his first acquaintance that Kynaston learned what had happened.

"Yes, senior, the two went up with a soldado—common soldier—carrying the flag of truce. You can see it is a mile away; between us is the belt of alamos—cottonwoods—low-lying in the valley."

"Their talk, senior, came to nothing. We know now that Senior Upton did but talk to gain time. When they left they walked down the hill, and when they reached the valley where the alamos grew, they dropped their flag of truce, sat down, and lit cigarettes."

"It was in that moment, senior, that a gray-headed old pirate stepped from behind a tree, shoved a great pistol under the nose of the valiant coronel, broke the rifle of the soldier, and told him to go back to—el general will pardon me—to the stealer of horses who commanded here, with the message that the two officers would be hanged if a hair of your head is touched—saints and angels, senores, what is it now?"

For another white flag was waving from the house and a shot had been fired to attract their attention.

Kynaston looked up eagerly.

(Continued next week)

MAX PLEADS NOT GUILTY

Minneapolis, June 30.—Max Zimmerman pleaded not guilty in district court before Judge Hale yesterday of obtaining \$2,000 from P. U. Uttley by pretending to be a member of the firm of Barret & Zimmerman. According to the indictment, Zimmerman represented that he and John H. Garrett were organizing a subsidiary company to be known as the Agricultural and Industrial Exposition company, and sold \$2,000 worth of stock to Uttley, who says that he bought the stock on the representation that Zimmerman was a member of the established firm. Zimmerman was released on \$2,000 bail.

Zimmerman who was arrested while putting on a Market Day celebration at Crosby is the same man who conducted a market day in Williston some weeks ago.

The Home Circle Column

Pleasant Evening Reveries—A Column Dedicated to Tired Mothers as They Join the Home Circle at Evening Tide

Crude Thots from the Editorial Pen

THE QUALITY OF FRIENDSHIP

Ralph Waldo Emerson was a good soul, else he would not have said, "The only way to have a friend is to be one." It doubtless would distress the sage of Concord beyond measure were he capable of realizing that there is a well founded suspicion that the art of friendship is dying out among us.

The friendship of the ancients was very exacting. In modern times we should look a long while for such mutual regard as that of Damon and Pythias.

Friendship in our crowded days covers a wider area, but as in the case of all extensive development it has lost its intensity. Instead of friendships we have visiting lists. Not those whom we love, but those whom we would prostitute, we invite to dinner. Those who would prostitute us invite us in turn and permit us to eat their food and air our views.

We live, alas, in the suburbs of each other's hearts.

The man without friends, or at the least without one dependable friend, can accomplish very little in this world. Depending on his own strength alone, his mightiest endeavors are as nothing. At harvest time he gathers nothing but leaves.

But the man with friends—strong friends, true friends and loyal friends—who have confidence in his integrity and ability to do things, has great power. When he leads they will follow him, and all working together unitedly bring victory. This is the reason why some men achieve great success with moderate abilities, while their more brilliant competitors fall short.

This is true in every business and profession. It does not matter so much whether a man has enemies or not as that he has true friends who will never desert him.

To have loyal friends is worth all else. To have friends who can be depended on is to gain success in life.

But there is one thing to be borne in mind: To have true friends you must be one. The quality of loyalty you get depends on the quality you give.

The word need never shed a tear for its sainted dead. They are safe as the harvest is when the farmer has bound it into sheaves and stored it away or as the roses are when the gardener has wrapped their roots in straw and housed them from the storm. They are safe as the larks that fly singing from the green earth out of reach of the huntsman's snare and the aim of the cruel sportsman. They are safe as warriors who march beneath worn battle flags no more, but sit down with conquerors to feast.

Work is a moral and physical uplifter. It is a panacea for sorrow; idleness brings moral and decay and furnishes an incentive to crime. The avalanche of crime that is sweeping over our beautiful land is largely due to the fact that to omany would rather steal than work. The life of duty, not the life of mere ease or mere pleasure, is the end of life which makes the great men and women. The best prize that life offers is the chance to work at work worth doing.

Target Tips and Hunting Helps

by Alfred P. Lane

Send questions to Mr. Lane care of this paper.

WHY RIFLE BARRELS JUMP AND WHIP

Anyone who has ever fired a rifle is familiar with the fact that when the cartridge goes off, the barrel jumps backward and upward.

There are other effects of the recoil which sometimes produce apparently impossible results.

Those of you who have used various light loads in your high power rifles sometimes find that the bullets do not go higher or lower according to the power of the load. Such results do not seem to follow the ordinary laws of mechanics and the shooter is much perplexed.

Just a little while ago a man sent in some targets shot with a Krag rifle. The location of the shot holes showed that the rifle shot quite a bit higher and a little to the left with light loads, as compared with regulation full charge ammunition. This was at short range too. One of my revolvers shoots the same with both full charge and mid range ammunition.

It is interesting to know how such apparently inconsistent shooting can be produced by an otherwise well regulated and housebroken firearm.

Scientists and ballistic experts have known for some time that a rifle barrel vibrates and that this vibration caused various queer effects, such as the example described above. They say that the waves of vibrations caused by the explosion bend the barrel into little wrinkles. So long as the load remains the same these wrinkles act in the same way and consequently the barrel shoots 'short' after shot into a small group. If the load is changed the barrel wrinkles in a different way and the wrinkle right at the muzzle may sometimes cause the barrel to joint up and sometimes down, which accounts for the change in the position of the group. Now don't get the impression that the barrel does a snake dance. The waves of vibration are very small. The point is that changing the load may make the barrel vibrate in such a way as to get the greatest possible variation.

From a theoretical point of view it is possible to produce a barrel exactly balanced and mount it in such

LECTURER HOLDS OFF ANGRY MOB WITH GUN

Wynndmere, N. D., July 8.—Twenty men who were threatening A. D. Bullman, a lecturer and writer, stopped just short of the stage from which he was speaking when they found themselves looking into the business end of an automatic pistol. Bullman was delivering an anticatholic lecture. When he pulled his gun the trouble makers stopped short and contented themselves with breaking up the furniture. Bullman today swore out warrants for the arrest of eight of the leaders.

MANITOBA JAILS EMPTY WITH PROVINCE "DRY"

Winnipeg, July 8.—J. A. MacLean, chief liquor license inspector, has returned from Brandon, Man, the second city in the province, and reported there has not been an arrest for drunkenness in the Brandon or Virden districts since Manitoba went dry.

Try Jap Rose
The wonderful "Sunday Morning Bath" Soap