--- ---

CHAPTER XIV-Continued.

-12-"We've been talking about food," Leslie Branch advised his commanding officer. "Miss Evans isn't a burning patriot like the rest of us, and so of course she can't share our ravenous appetite for beef cooked and eaten on the boof.'

"So?" Lopez's handsome face clouded. "You are hungry, then?"

Norine confessed that she was. "I'm starving!" said she. "I haven't had a decent meal for a week."

"God be praised! I know where there is a goat, not two leagues away!" said the colonel.

"But I don't want a goat," Norine complained. "I want-well, pickles, and jam, and sardines, and-candy, and-tooth-powder! Real boardinghouse luxuries. I'd just like to rob o general store."

Lopez furrowed his brows and lost himself in thought. Later, while the others were talking, he drew Ramos aside and for a while they kept their heads together; then they invited Judson to join their council.

When O'Reilly joined Judson for supper the latter met him with a broad grin on his face. "Well," said he, "You can get ready to saddle up when the moon rises."

"What do you mean?"

"The colonel took Miss Evans at her word. We're going to raid San Antonio de los Banos-two hundred of us-to get her some pickles, and jam, and candy, and tooth-powder."

Certain histories of the Cuban War for Independence speak of "The Battle of San Antonio de los Banos." It is quite a stirring story to read and it has but one fault, a fault, by the way, not uncommon in histories-it is mainly untrue.

In the first place, the engagement was in no sense a battle, but merely a raid. The number of troops engaged was, perhaps, one-fifth of the generous total ascribed by the historians, and as a military maneuver it served no purpose whatsoever. Nevertheless, since the affair had a direct bearing upon the fortunes of several people connected with this story, it is, perhaps, worth relating.

Lopez and his troop approached the wn in the early morning. As they deployed for the attack the colonel issued private instructions to certain nembers of his command.

"O'Reilly, you and Senor Branch will enter one grocery store after another. You will purchase that jam, those sardines, and whatever else you think Miss Evans would like. Captain Judson, you and Major Ramos will go to the apothecary shop-I understand there is a very good one-and look for tooth-powder and candy and the like. I shall see that the streets are cleared, then I shall endeavor to discover some pickles; but as God is my judge, I doubt if there is such a thing this side of Habana."

Leslie Branch, whose temper had not improved with the long night ride, inquired, caustically: "Do you expect us to buy the groceries? Well, I'm broke, and so is O'Reilly. If you don't give us some change, colonel, we'll have to open a charge account in your name."

"Caramba!" muttered Lopez. "I intended to borrow from you gentlemen. Well, never mind-we'll commandeer what we wish in the name of the republic."

Lopez' attack proved a complete surprise, both to the citizens and to the garrison of the town. The rebel bugie gave the first warning of what was afoot, and before the Castilian troops who were loltering off duty could regain their quarters, before the citizens could take cover or the shopkeepers close and bar their heavy wooden shutters, two hundred ragged horsemen were yelling down the streets.

There followed a typical Cuban engagement-ten shouts to one shot. There was a mad charge on the heels of the scurrying populace, a scattering pop-pop of rifles, cheers, cries, shrieks of defiance and far-flung insults directed at the fortinas.

O'Reilly, with Branch and Jacket close at his heels, whirled his horse into the first bodega he came to. The store was stocked with general merchandise, but its owner, evidently a Spaniard, did not tarry to set a price upon any of it. As the three horsemen came clattering in at the front he went flying out at the rear, and, although O'Reilly called reassuringly after him, his only answer was the slamming of a back door, followed by swiftly dimin-

ishing cries of fright. There was no time to waste. John nie dismounted and, walking to the shelves where some imported canned tage of whatever shelter there was, goods were displayed, he began to select those delicacies for which he had restraint: he seized whatever was most

tunity for loot Jacket's soul flamed savagely and he swept the shelves bare as he went.

"Hey, Leslie! Get something to carry this stuff in," O'Reilly directed over his shoulder.

Spurred by O'Reilly's tone and by a lively rattle of rifle-shots outside, Leslie disappeared into the living-quarters at the back of the store. A moment later he emerged with a huge armful of bedclothes, evidently snatched at random. Trailing behind him, like a bridal vell, was a mosquito-net, which in his haste he had torn from its fastenings.

"I guess this is poor!" he exulted. Bedding! Pillows! Mosquito-net! I'll sleep comfortable after this."

Dumping his burden of sheets, blankets, and brilliantly colored cotton quilts upon the floor, Branch selected two of the stoutest and began to knot the corners together.

He had scarcely finished when Judson reined in at the door and called to O'Reilly: "We've cleaned out the drug store. Better get a move on you, for we may have to run any minute. I've just heard about some Cuban prisoners in the calaboose. Gimine a hand and we'll let 'em out."

Sharing in the general consternation at the attack, the jail guards had disappeared, leaving Lopez' men free to break into the prison. When O'Reilly joined them the work was well under way. Seizing whatever implements they could find, Judson and O'Reilly went from cell to cell, battering, prying, smashing, leaving their comrades to rescue the inmates. While the Americans smashed lock after lock, their comrades dragged the astonished inmates from their kennels, hustled them into the street, and took them up behind their saddles.

The raid was over, "retreat" was sounding, when Judson and O'Reilly ran out of the prison, remounted, and joined their comrades, who were streaming back toward the plaza.

Colonel Lopez galloped up to inquire. anxiously, "Did you find those eatables,

"Yes, sir, and a lot more." "Good! But I failed. Pickles? Caramba! Nobody here ever heard of

one!" asked.

"Not one. But Ramos was badly

"So? Then he got to close quarters with some Spaniard?" "Oh no!" The colonel grinned. "He

was in too great a hurry and broke open a show-case with his fist." The retreating Cubans still maintained their uproar, discharging their

their invisible foes, and volcing insult-



O'Reilly Whirled His Horse Into the First Bodega.

ing invitations to combat. This ferocity, however, served only to terrify further the civil population and to close the stutters of San Antonio the tighter. Meanwhile, the loyal troops remained safely in their blockhouses, pouring s steady fire into the town. And despite this admirable display of courage the visitors showed a deep respect for their enemies' marksmanship, taking advan-

The raiders had approached San Antonio de los Banos across the fields at been sent. The devoted Jacket was at the rear, but Colonel Lopez led their his side. The little Cuban exercised no retreat by way of the camino real which followed the river bank. This ried him as carefully as they could handy, meanwhile cursing ferociously, road for a short distance was exposed | throughout that long hot journey, he as befitted a bloodthirsty bandit. Boys to the fire from one port; then it was never ceased his bubbling and never hundred miles from the place you were are natural robbers, and at this oppor- sheltered by a bit of rising ground.

O'Remy, among the last to cross the one of fire, was just congratulating himself upon the fortunate outcome of the skirmish when he saw Colonel Lopez ride to the crest of a knoll, rise in his stirrups and, lifting his cupped back toward the town. Lopez was followed by several of his men, who like- covered how really ill Esteban Varona wise began to yell and to wave their arms excitedly.

now, as if to cap his fantastic perform- an appalling possibility, one to which ances, had dismounted and was de he could not reconcile himself. To exposed, and a spiteful crackle from the her whereabouts, and yet to be unable him down. Mauser bullets ricocheted hours of that ride were among the among the rocks-even from this dis- longest O'Reilly had ever passed. tance their sharp explosions were audiof fish were leaping.

When Johnnie looked on in breaththen he climbed up the bank, remountrange.

Now this was precisely the sort of harebrained exploit which delights a and reminded O'Reilly that nature has greeted with shouts and cheers,

"Caramba! He would risk his life for a clean shirt. . . . There's a fellow for you! He enjoys the hum of these Spanish bees! . . . Bravo! Tell us what the bullets said to you," they cried, crowding around him in an admiring circle.

O'Reilly, unable to contain himself. ourst forth in a rage: "Lopez ought to court-martial you."

Infuriated, he rode over to where Captain Judson was engaged in making a litter upon which to carry the sick prisoner they had rescued from the fall. "This chap here is all in," said Judson. "I'm afraid we aren't going to get him through."

Following Judson's glance, O'Reilly seheld an emaciated figure lying in the shade of a nearby guava bush. The man was clad in filthy rags, his face was dirty and overgrown with a month's beard; a pair of restless, eyes stared unblinkingly at the brazen sky. His lips were moving; from them issued a steady patter of words, but otherwise he showed no sign of life.

"You said he was starving." Johnnie dismounted and lent Judson a hand with his task.

"That's what I thought at first, but ne's sick. I suppose it's that infernal dungeon fever. We can swing him beween our horses, and-

Judson looked up to discover that Johnnie was poised rigidly, his mouth open, his hands halted in midair. The sick man's voice had risen, and O'Reilly, with a peculiar expression of amazement upon his face, was straining his ears to hear what he said.

"Eh? What's the matter?" Judson inquired.

frozen in his attitude, then without a your silly lives for may come in handy, vord he strode to the sufferer. He bent forward, staring into the vacant, upturned face. A cry burst from his throat, a cry that was like a sob, and, kneeling, he gathered the frail, filthy figure into his arms.

"Esteban!" he cried, "Esteban! This is O'Reilly. O'Rail-ye! Don't you know me? O'Reilly, your friend, your brother! For God's sake, tell me what they've done to you! Look at me, Esrifles into the air, shrieking defiance at | teban! Look at me! Look at me! Oh, Esteban!"

Such eagerness, such thankfulness, such passionate pity were in his friend's hoarse voice that Judson drew closer. He noticed that the faintest flame of reason flickered for an instant in the sick man's hollow eyes; then they began to rove again, and the same rustling whisper recommenced. O'Reilly held the boy tenderly in his arms; tears rolled down his cheeks as he implored Esteban to hear and to heed

"Try to hear me! Try!" There was flerce agony in the cry. "Where is Rosa? . . . Rosa? . . . You're safe now; you can tell me. . . . You're safe with O'Reilly. . . . I came back . . . I came back for you and Rosa. . . . Where is she? . . . Is she-dead?"

Other men were assembling now. The column was ready to move, but Judson signaled to Colonel Lopez and made known the identity of the sick stranger. The colonel came forward swiftly and laid a hand upon O'Reilly's shoulder, saying:

"So! You were right, after all, Esteban Varona didn't die. God must have sent us to San Antonio to deliver him."

"He's sick, sick!" O'Rellly said. huskily. "Those Spaniards! Look what they've done to him." His voice changed. He cried, flercely: "Well, I'm late again. I'm always just a little bit too late. He'll die before he can tell me—"

"Wait! Take hold of yourself. We'll do all that can be done to save him. Now come, we must be going, or all San Antonio will be upon us."

O'Reilly roused. "Put him in my arms," he ordered. "I'll carry him to camp myself."

But Lopez shook his head, saying, gently: "It's a long march, and the litter would be better for him. Thank heaven we have an angel of mercy awaiting us, and she will know how to how. General Gomez will soon have make him well."

When the troop resumed its retreat Esteban Varona lay suspended upon a swinging bed between O'Reilly and Judson's horses. Although they carawoke to his surroundings.

CHAPTER XV.

Norine Takes Charge. San Antonio de los Banos he had dis-

was, how weak his hold upon life. old friends from Matanzas by the After listening to his ravings, O'Rellly Johnnie turned to discover that Les- began to fear that the poor fellow's He Branch had lagged far behind, and mind was permanently affected. It was scending the river bank to a place think that somewhere in that fevered where a large washing had been spread brain was perhaps locked the truth them to me. Alberto was an old man; upon the stones to dry. He was quite about Rosa's fate, if not the secret of he had hard work to provide food for nearest blockhouse showed that the to wring an intelligent answer to a abandon me. Oh, they were faithful, Spaniards were determined to bring single question, was intolerable. The patient people! You see, I had walked But Norine Evans gave him new

stream into little geysers, as if a school the sick man upon his arrival in camp; killing. You wouldn't know Matanzas, then in her brisk, matter-of-fact way O'Reilly. It is a desert. she directed O'Reilly to go and gets less apprehension Branch appropriated some much-needed rest. Esteban was around the hut. But I had no means several suits that promised to fit him; ill, very ill, she admitted; there was no competent doctor near, and her own certainty nearly made me crazy. My ed his horse, and ambied slowly out of facilities for nursing were primitive clothes had rotted from me; my bones indeed; nevertheless, she expressed confidence that she could cure him, been a shocking sight. Then one day Cuban audience. When Leslie re- a blessed way of building up a resistjoined his comrades, therefore, he was sance to environment. As a result of her good cheer O'Reilly managed to enjoy a night's sleep.

He was up at daylight to offer his services in caring for Esteban Varona but Norine declined them.

"His fever is down a little and he has taken some nourishment," she re

"Esteban! This is O'Rellly!"

For a moment O'Reilly remained ported. "That food you boys risked

"I dare say he won't be able to talk to me today?" O'Reilly ventured. "Not today, nor for many days, I'm turn put an end to his speculations. afraid."

"If you don't mind, then, I'll hang round and listen to what he says," he told her, wistfully. "He might drop a word about Rosa.'

"To be sure. So far he's scarcely mentioned her. I can't understand much that he says, of course, but Mrs. Rulz tells me it's all jumbled and quite unintelligible."

It was a balmy, languid morning about two weeks after O'Reilly's return to the City Among the Leaves. In Esteban Varona lay, listening to the admonitions of his nurse.

Johnnie O'Reilly had just bade them both a hearty good morning and now Norine was saying: "One hour, no more. You had a temperature again last night, and it came from talking too much. Remember, it takes me just one hour to make my rounds, and if you are not through with your tales of blood and battle when I get back you'll have to finish them tomorrow." With a nod and a smile she left.

As Esteban looked after her his white teeth gleamed and his hollow face lit up.

"She brings me new life," he told O'Reilly. "She is so strong, so healthy, so full of life herself. She is wonderme I thought I was dreaming. Some- ly knows the story." times, even yet, I think she cannot be real. But she is, eh?"

"She is quite substantial," O'Reilly smiled. "All the sick fellows talk as you do." Esteban looked up quickly; his face

darkened. "She-er-nurses eh? I'm not the only one?" "Well, hardly." There was a brief pause; then Este ban shifted his position and his tone

changed. "Tell me, have you heard any news?" "Not yet, but we will hear some be fore long I'm sure."

"Your faith does as much for me a this lady's care. But when you go away, when I'm alone, when I begin to think-'

"Don't think too much; don't permit yourself to doubt," O'Reilly said, quickly. "Take my word for it, Rosa is alive and we'll find her somewhere, someword of her. That's what I've been inspection, but if the meat is properly walting for-that and what you might have to tell me."

"You know all that I know now and everything that has happened to me." "I don't know how you came to be in a cell in San Antonio de los Banos, two ippines has about 39,700 inhabitants, killed. That is still a mystery."

"It is very simple, amigo. Let me see: I had finished telling you about the fight at La Joya. I was telling you

During the next few days O'Reilly how I fainted. Some good people found had reason to bless the happy chance | me a few hours after I lost consciouswhich had brought Norine Evans to ness. They supposed I had been athands to his lips, direct a loud shout Cuba. During the return journey from tacked by guerrillas and left for dead. Finding that I still had life in me, they took me home with them. They were name of Valdes-cultured people who had fled the city and were hiding in the manigua like the rest of us."

"Not Valdes, the notary?"

"The very same. Alberto Valdes and his four daughters. Heaven guided his girls. Nevertheless, he refused to east instead of west, and now I was miles away from home, and the country between was swarming with Spanble-others broke the surface of the heart. She took complete charge of lards who were burning, destroying, "I finally became able to drag myself

> of sending word to Rosa, and the unwere just under the skin. I must have there came a fellow traveling east with messages for Gomez. He was one of Lopez' men, and he told me that Lopez had gone to the Rubi Hills with Maceo, and that there were none of our men left in the province. He told me other things, too. It was from him that I learned—" Esteban Varona's thin hands clutched the edges of his hammock and he rolled his head weakly from side to side. "It was he who told me about Rosa. He said that Cobo had ravaged the Yumuri and that my sister-was gone!"

"There, there! We know better now," O'Reilly said, soothingly.

"It was a hideous story, a story of rape, murder. I wonder that I didn't go mad. It never occurred to me to doubt, and as a matter of fact the fellow was honest enough; he really believed what he told me. After the man had finished I felt the desire to get away from all I had known and loved, to leave Matanzas for new fields and give what was left of me to the cause. I was free to enlist, since I couldn't reach Lopez, and I came to join our forces in the Orient.

"That is how you found me in this province. Lopez' man never delivered these dispatches, for we were taken crossing the trocha-at least I was taken, for Pablo was killed. They'd have made an end of me, too, I dare say, only I was so weak. It seems a century since that night. My memory doesn't serve me very well from that point, for they jailed me, and I grew worse. I was out of my head a good deal."

The two men fell silent for a while. Esteban lay with closed eyes, exhausted. O'Reilly gave himself up to frowning thought. His thoughts were not pleasant; he could not, for the life of him, believe in Rosa's safety so implicitly as he had led Esteban to suppose; his efforts to cheer the other apped his own supply of hope, leaving him a prey to black misgivings. He was glad when Norine Evans' re-

"Have you harrowed this poor man's feelings sufficiently for once?" she inquired of O'Reilly.

"I have. I'll agree to talk about nothing unpleasant hereafter." Esteban turned to his nurse. "There is something I want to tell you both."

"Wait until tomorrow," Norine advised. But he persisted: "No! I must tell it now. First, however, did either of

you discover an old coin in any of my pockets-an old Spanish doubloon?" "That doubloon again!" Norine lifta hammock swung between two trees ed her hands protestingly, and cast a meaning look at O'Reilly. "You talked about nothing else for a whole week.

Let me feel your pulse." Esteban surrendered his hand with suspicious readiness.

"You were flat broke when we got you," O'Reilly declared. "Probably. I seem to remember that

omebody stole it." "Doubloons! Pieces of eight! Golden guineas!" exclaimed Norine, "Why those are pirate coins! They remind me of Treasure Island; of Long John Silver and his wooden leg; of Ben Gunn and all the rest."

Esteban smiled uncomprehendingly. "Yes? Well, this has to do with treasure of the Varonas. My father buried it. He was very rich, you know, and ful! When I first saw her bending over he was afraid of the Spaniards. O'Reil-

Johnnie assented with a grunt, Sure! I know all about it." (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Don't Ask Personal Questions.

Never presume upon your intimacy with another to ask personal questions. No matter how good friends two may be, both have certain matters which they prefer to keep to themselves. The presumption which, under the excuse of intimacy, pushes its way into the privacies of the spirit is unworthy of you. Respect your friends' reserves, and insist that they shall respect yours.

"Diseased Meat."

There is a wide difference in the terms "diseased meat" and "meat from diseased animals." In fresh pork for instance, the absence of live trichinae cannot be guaranteed by the vendor from any known practical method of cooked any trichinae present are killed and hence cannot produce disease.

The island of Mindoro in the Philand those include 18,000 Tagalogs,

7,200 Mangaynes and 2,000 Visayans.

LIFT-OFF CORNS!

Drop Freezone on a touchy corn, then lift that corn off with fingers

Doesn't hurt a bit! Drop a little Freezone on an aching corn, instantly that corn stops hurting, then you lift it right out. Yes, magic! No humbug!



A tiny bottle of Freezone costs but a few cents at any drug store, but is sufficient to remove every hard corn, soft corn, or corn between the toes, and the

calluses, without screness or irritation. Freezone is the sensational discovery of a Cincinnati genius. It is wonderful.—Adv.

Talkative people seldom say much, but as long as they think they do they are happy.

For genuine comfort and lasting pleas ure use Red Cross Ball Blue on wash day. All good grocers. Adv.

The eyes of a South American fish are divided into two parts, the upper being adapted for vision in the air, the lower for use under the water.

Comfort Baby's Skin

When red, rough and itching with hot baths of Cuticura Soap and touches of

Cuticura Ointment. This means sleep for baby and rest for mother. For free samples address, "Cuticura, Dept X, Boston." At druggists and by mai, Soap 25, Ointment 25 and 50 .- Adv. Danger to Ojibway Finger.

An Ojibway Indian would not point

his finger at the moon, as fair Luna would consider it a great insult and instantly bite off the offending mem-

Diary of a Gardener. Monday-Spaded up garden, leveled seed beds.

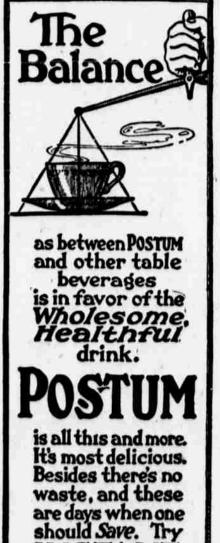
Tuesday-Leveled up seed beds, planted radishes. Wednesday-Made new beds, plant-

ed radishes. Thursday - Killed Jones' blacked his eye.

Friday-Jones' dog bit me, broke hoe on him.

Saturday—Made planted radishes. Sunday-Rain, snow and sleet .-Judge.

Power Plant Planned. The largest hydraulic power system in Europe is to be built in Bavaria and operated as a public utility, according to plans completed recently. The power is to be obtained from Walchen lake in South Bavaria, and will be transmitted by cable from Koechel to all towns and villages throughout Bavaria. A commission, which has been studying the undertaking for two years, has submitted a detailed memorial to the Bavarian diet estimating the cost of the enterprise at 78,000,000 marks. The cost of the system is to be borne proportionately by the Bavarian government and the municipalities benefiting by this great electrical plant.



INSTANT

Postum