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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BAMBOO TALES ***

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BAMBOO TALES

BY

IRA L. REEVES,
1ST LIEUT. 4TH INFANTRY,

Author of
"Twenty-four Hours on a Mountain," "Looking Forward,"
and other Short Stories.

Illustrations by
J. Alexander Mackay.

Press of
HUDSON-KIMBERLY PUBLISHING Co.
Kansas City, U. S. A.

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KANSAS CITY, MO.

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO THE
“FIRST MAN UP SAN JUAN HILL.”

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How the Spaniards Campaigned in Luzon.

A Translation from a Spanish Officer's Diary Found at San Fernando de Pampanga, Luzon, by an American Officer.

"It happened that we left such a hidden retirement and we went into Taal. We employed more than a whole day on the road, more than half of which we passed in a lagoon with water up to our waists. We arrived on the seventh.

"After six days of rest, on guard every other day, we embarked the thirteenth for Paranaque, where we arrived the fourteenth in the morning, and on the following day we left with rations of sea biscuit for three days, and at the end of the day we arrived at the camp of St. Nicholas, where we found encamped the Division La Chambre, which we joined. [8]

"On the eighteenth we set out with a convoy for Salitran, and after passing a whole day in the water, we had to halt, because neither the darkness of the night permitted us to go any further, nor did the fire of the enemy permit us to follow the road.

"Next morning at dawn we took up the march, arriving at half-past nine. We sent away the convoy, and at one p. m., after having eaten our ration of rice and ham, we started out again for camp, arriving at eight p. m., with some firing.

"The twenty-third we set out on the same road toward Imus, which fell after an hour firing with innumerable loss. Imus was then the center of the insurrection. The General-Coronal, who was not yet wearing his insignia, died.

"On the following day we came upon the second trench of the town above mentioned, and there entered it with guns 'at rest,' as we had promised the most excellent La Chambre. [9]

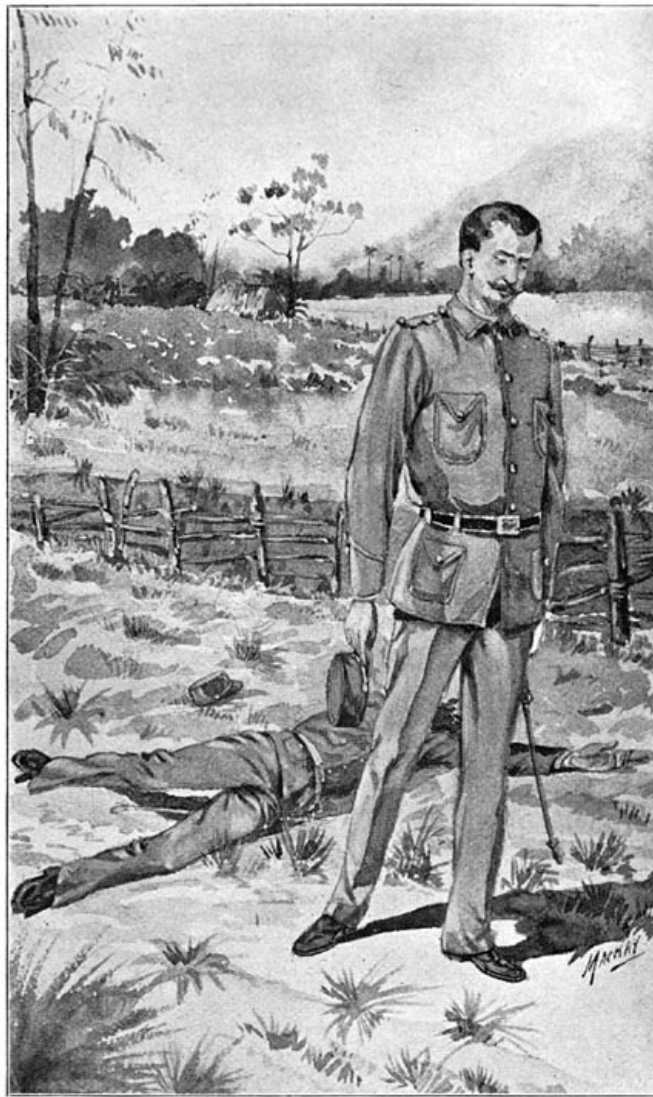
"In this last capture the division lost about forty, the greater part of them officers.

"Until now the officers coming from the Balearic Islands have received no news, but some of the men have.

"It is March 25th, and we have been told that the review of the Commissary is to be passed in Noveleta, which is in the possession of the enemy.

"On the thirty-first of the month we left Ymus, going toward Noveleta, and without following any route we found ourselves at night-fall on the road which goes from Noveleta to San Francisco de Malabon, which is also in the power of the Tulisanes.

"During the day there was some firing, and finally we found a trench, which we captured with the loss of one man. The unfortunate man was the captain from Majorca, who died from a ball which exploded, entering through his left eye and exploding in the middle of his head, so that he died instantly. I could not look at the corpse. [10]



"I could not look at the corpse."

"We slept, as I have said, in the middle of the road, and on the following day, April 1st, we fell like a plague on Noveleta, into which only one company entered with their arms in their hands, since all the rest of the column carried them 'at rest' in fulfillment of the promise above cited.

"During the firing we had the protection of artillery, and we ate our ration without breaking ranks.

"The entrance into Noveleta did not cost more than a loss of fifteen Europeans, but more than thirty of the natives.

"Noveleta was attacked three days after it had been taken without other result than the leaving upon the field a number of the mutilated bodies of the natives, which were buried by our valiant men with respect, not for what they had been before then, but for what they represented at that moment.

[11]

"On the day after taking Noveleta, the important town of Cavite was taken, which was bombarded by our marines till they saw the division coming, which had all our men except four companies, which remained defending Noveleta.

"The column returned the next day from Cavite and then set out for New Cavite, where we took rations for four days of biscuit and wine, setting out the same day for Noveleta, and on the sixth the division started to attack San Francisco de Malabon, last point of Cavite Province in which there was an insurrection. This point was well fortified, and this is what was the death of them.

"In an hour or seventy minutes, the enemy was dislodged, leaving more than fifteen hundred bodies behind the trenches. There was one corpse whose head fell more than two hundred feet from its body, carried off by a ball of artillery. This picture was terrible to look at. We could not look in any direction without seeing a mass of bodies, some in pieces and others burning up as if they had been a mass of straw.

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"We lodged that afternoon, and night in the houses which remained standing, and on the following day set out for the suburb of San Juan, which had been abandoned when they saw that San Francisco was falling into the power of the Chasseurs.

"On leaving San Francisco, we were able to salute the Flag Regiment, No. 70, composed of natives, whose flag was now adorned with the seventh stripe of San Fernando.

"In the same town was found a prisoner of the enemy and wife of the man who had been captain of the 'Guardia Civil,' who had died there when the insurrection of San Frerelledo broke out.

"We set out, as I have said, for the suburb of San Juan, which was abandoned, and in the same state was that of Rosario. Between these two points I could see the ruins of what had been the dwelling of the Augustinos, who also died at the breaking out of the rebellion. [13]

"We reached Noveleta at night-fall, and after two days' rest, set out on the march toward Ymus (or Imus), passing through Zapote and Bacoor, which important points had been taken the day after the entrance to Ymus, of the taking of which I can relate nothing, since at this time I was recovering from illness.

"We reached, as I have said, Imus, passing through Zapote and Bacoor on the afternoon of the eighth, and we were there till the thirteenth of the same month of April, without having in all this time any religious ceremony, except on Palm Sunday, when we had a mass said by an Augustino; one of those who had come from Manila to take charge of the convent, etc.

"The Division La Chambre and the brigades which had been formed returned to Noveleta by means of the steam of a locomotive, which was at the same time used to move the wheels to press the green cane in order to transport it from the plantation to the factory—refinery. [14]

"Being again incorporated in the company, we were ordered to cover the line of security established in the quarter of Piga (?), from which we were relieved on the seventeenth of May—birthday of His Majesty the King, Alfonso XIII.—and day also on which ended the term of indulgence—pardon—granted by the Most Excellent Primo de Ribera.

"We were in Fananan from the seventeenth to the twenty-ninth, when, the brigade having been organized, it was divided into three columns. The second column set out for Banadero on the twenty-ninth, waiting there till the following day, when the aforesaid column, having been joined by another, which came by the way of Mount Semgaid, and by another small force which had come from Bayuyangan; all these forces having been joined together, they fell at the same time upon the ruins of Talisay, which had been taken from the insurgents last October, and later they had taken possession again of its ruins. [15]

"On the evening of the thirtieth we received orders not to set out again until further orders, and on the thirty-first we came upon the trench destined for the third column, which did not arrive in time; and the second column, which was on the left, and in which I was, moved forward more than it ought to have done, by reason of not being able to attack in front; and seeking the right side or flank, we fell upon the enemy without giving them time to defend themselves in the least, so that there was not more than one killed and one slightly wounded. We then united on the same ground with the first and second columns. The first had been reënforced at Cale by a section of volunteers from Albay, who are very conversant with the territory, because they are natives of this district. [16]

"The second column entered Talisay without firing a shot. The flag in the trench was set up by the second lieutenant of the second company of the Thirteenth, Don Carlos Gonzalez Lara, who is orphan on his father's side (!), for his father had been killed by the insurgents because they had demanded from him a thousand pesos, and he replied that he did not have them there, and then they cut his throat.

"About two o'clock p.m., we took up the march toward Bayuyangan to see what had happened to the two companies which from there were to go to Talisay, and which they had not effected, the same as the column Sarralde, which came by way of Mount Semgay, which was not seen until they had taken their position, and which had brought us more than fifteen hundred Tulisanes, which had been presented to them on the road. [17]

"The two companies from Bayuyangan did not show themselves either, because of the narrow passes of the road they had met with resistance and by taking another way the road would have been left free to them, so that they might have escaped; which did not suit us, because in this way they would have fired upon Bayuyangan, and it might be that the reserve force might not be present; the rest would be too few to defend the fort.

"At night we arrived at Bayuyangan, and I was to see again the land watered by

the blood of my captain and friends.

"In memory of my captain mentioned, in building and dedicating the fort, they named it after him—Yena—as being the same place where he died.

"From there we went out the next day, tearing down all the trenches we found on the way. We passed through Banadero. We went on and entered gloriously and victoriously into Yananan, from where, after three days, we were detailed to the two small forts at Cale, where we are very comfortable.

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"I have just learned that I have been promoted to the honorable position of first lieutenant."

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"Cougar" Daly.

"Cougar" Daly's connection with the company had not extended two days till he was duly installed as "dog-robber" for Lieutenant John Buestom, the most handsome, soldierly-looking, and intensely despised officer in the —th "Foot." Buestom—or "Bues," his enemies called him—must have had liver complaint, for his temper was always riled like stagnant water full of crawfish; and when Captain Bobson left the company for a few weeks to go on a hunt up the St. Joe River, the "non-coms" resigned in a body, every man of them, so hot did he make it for them during that brief period. As for the batch of recruits, fresh from the drill-sergeants and bulldozing of the recruiting rendezvous, they deserted by platoons and sets of fours, for the life with them was unbearable. Had the "Old Man" Bobson remained away a few days longer, he would have had no one of his company—the one pride of his life—to greet him upon his return, with the possible exception of Private McCoy, who had been in the service since George Washington was a "lance jack," and who swore that all the damned "shave-tails" in the Army could not drive him out.

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Many hard things were said of Buestom, but not half that could have been told and yet save one's reputation for veracity and secretiveness. Among the things he could not keep were his word and servants. Not even would a Chinaman attend his many wants. His last effort was a big Manchu from northern China; and he had no more than been installed and began his work with the usual celestial energy, till in rushed "Bues," as savage as a bear, and gave him more instructions in a minute than the frightened menial could have executed in a month. To cap the climax, he taught poor "Chino" to stand at attention, and ordered him to ever thus stand when in his august presence.

[21]

This was more than the faithful fellow of the pigtail locks could stand, so he made it known in his own English: "Me squit jlob. Me no dalmn sloder." And he slipped into his pajamas and was gone.

Then came a long series of soldier servants—"dog-robbers"—but none could endure him for more than a day or two, and seldom got their pay for that. The complaints were all similar: "He asked me to bathe his mangy dog;" or, "He ordered me to stand at attention when rocking the damned cradle, so precious are his 'brick-top brats';" or, "She," for Mrs. B. was not angelic, "wanted me to fan the flies off her ring-tailed cat while that animal chose to nap;" and so they ran. Thus they growled and quit their places, usually without giving notice. Then Private Jones, Brown, Smith, or whoever the offender might happen to be, endured his turn of torture and calling-down when at drills and other duty till there was a fresher victim on whom this choleric officer could wreak his vengeance.

[22]

Now came "Cougar" Daly, fresh from the Bowery, with the odor of stale beer and "twofers" on his seven-dollar "cit" suit marked down to five ninety-nine, which was hanging in the orderly room, and which he was sure to don when on "old guard" pass and sober; but Daly was like all soldiers in one respect—he always got drunk in uniform.

Daly, indeed—as true a Dutchman as ever bore an Irish name. Daly, he of the "ingrowing face"; "kidney-foot" Daly; Daly, the man "wid his chist on his back," were just a few of the "handles" he enjoyed.

It was Archie Fettin, lately of the Queen's Own, but now a "buck" private in Uncle Sam's service, who aptly said: "Daly, tek off yer bloomin' 'ed and put it on facin' t' the rare and ye'll hev as foine a brace an' as smaart 'perance as any non-com 'n the Quane's Guayards; mesel', fer example."

[23]

Unfortunately for poor Daly, he could not follow Fetti's advice, and must content himself with his dromedary "set up." The company non-commissioned officers were disgusted with him, for the company enjoyed the reputation of being the best drilled in the regiment, but here came this hopeless recruit to muddle the rear rank at parades and walk on the heels of his front rank man. Corporal Self, the meanest martinet in the outfit, drilled him till his tongue was hanging out, and then reported to the captain: "Sir, there's slight hope fer thet spalpeen o' a rakroot Daly, fer th' more sittin' up ixercise I giv' 'm th' bigger th' lump on 'is schloping shoulders."

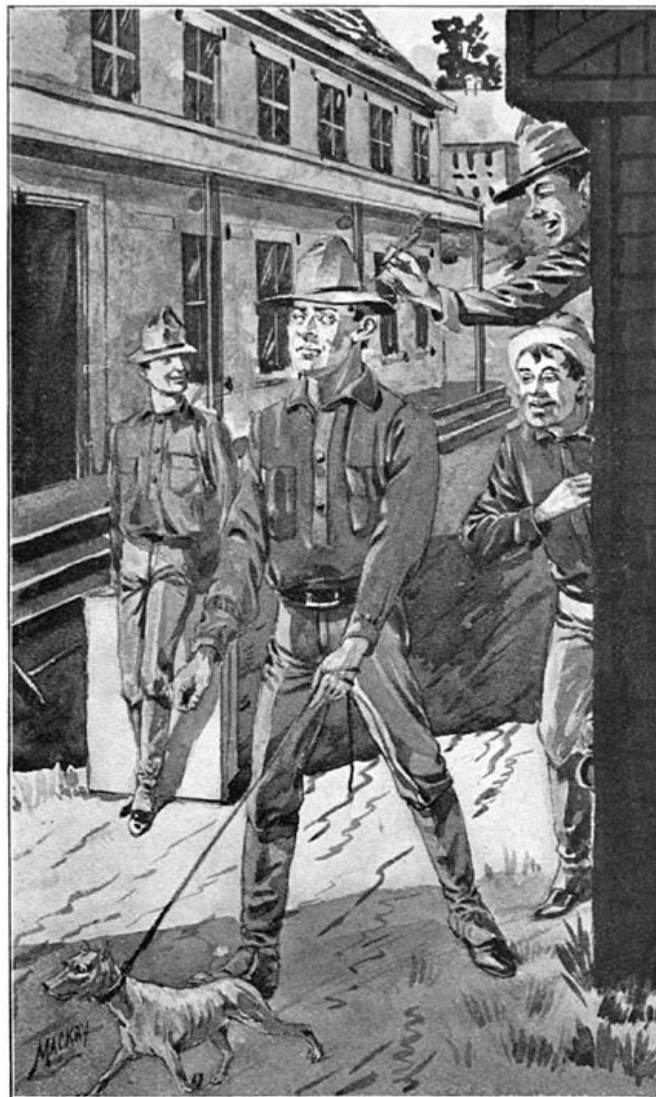
Daly, the newest recruit in the regiment, now "dog-robbing" for "Bues," and excused from cook's police, room orderly, guard, fatigue, and, in fact, everything except drill, and he would have been relieved from that had he not been sorely in need of it. The men hated him more cordially than the devil despises a Christian who refuses to black-slide. A man with the slightest hint of spirit would have resented their insults, heaped so lavishly and frequently, but he was as impervious to the names, epithets, growling, and swearing as a duck's back is to water.

[24]

Rising in the morning long before reveille, he noiselessly slipped out of the barracks, always carrying his shoes in his hand till away from the quarters, and then went to Buestom's house and began his day's work by building fires, preparing the bath, and assisting in the cuisine. He never ate his meals with the company—always served himself in the kitchen or back yard of his master. Master? Yes; for a more menial slave was never sold from the block.

When nothing else to engage him, he had his orders to take the mangy dog out for a walk—and what a dog! What breed? Just dog—the yellow kind. His comrades always spoke of these walks as "two curs out for a constitutional." But that same dog was Daly's only friend, and he no doubt enjoyed his society.

[25]



"His comrades always spoke of these walks as 'two curs out for a constitutional.'"

Then came the great railroad strike, and the tie-up of the mails. The regiment was ordered out to open up the roads. To everybody's delight, Buestom remained behind to take care of the post; but a greater delight was when Daly asked to go with his company in the field, for now he would get more than his share of duty to make good the work thrown on his comrades while he was excused from

everything. The “non-coms” were “laying for him.”

When it came to choosing tent-mates, Daly was left a widow, for even Rasmussen the Swede—“Rouse mit 'em der sweet”—the worst reprobate that ever wore a uniform, refused to pair with him; so he hied himself to the nearest escort wagon and slept under it.

[26]

They marched past miles of obstructed railroad track to Patterson, where the switches were crammed full of freight cars and “killed” engines. The work of clearing the tracks went on for many days, till finally they were cleared, and a train made up to take the first mail through that had passed since the strike began. Soldiers were everywhere—on the tops of cars, on the platforms, inside, on the tender; and riding on the cow-catcher, loaded rifles in hand, were Archie Fettin and “Cougar” Daly.

This heavily guarded train sped on at a lively rate, through tunnels, over cuts and fills, coughing a continuous challenge to the groups of strikers gathered along the way to watch it pass. On it went. The soldier-engineer, taking courage from the docile attitude of the strikers, pulled the throttle wide open, while the soldier-fireman was heaving coal into the fiery furnace, even though the steam was at the time “blowing off.” The giant machine leaped forward like a spurred stallion, easily making fifty miles an hour. Daly and Fettin were holding on like grim Death, for the track was rough and the speed unprecedented for that road—a new one.

[27]

A bad curve was just ahead, but the speed was not slackened. Like a racing horse on a small track, the engine struck it and leaned toward the inner circle, but an instant later straightened up and flew on its way.

Just as the curve was turned, a few hundred paces ahead, stood a small group of tramps. Seeing the train, they hastily broke and ran for the timber along the edge of the right-of-way, but not before one of them hurriedly stooped and placed something on the track. A hundred eyes were on him, and as many rifles were instantly raised to fire, but Daly was the first to pull the trigger, and the man fell backward down the embankment, bearing with him that which he had endeavored to place on the rail.

[28]

In firing, Daly was compelled to let go his hold, which kept him on the train, and he lost his balance and fell forward, crushed into an unrecognizable mass beneath the wheels.

The train was stopped, and a hundred aching hearts, which had melted in the presence of death, went tenderly to their duty of gathering up poor Daly’s remains.

The tramp had been shot fairly through the head, and he had died holding in one of his clenched fists a deadly bomb, which, but for the presence of mind and quickness of action of the despised recruit, would have sent every soul on the train into eternity.

The next day the *Rocky Mountain Daily Eagle* contained this Associated Press report:

[29]

“The late Private Daly, of Company E, —th Infantry, who was crushed beneath the first train out of Patterson, Mont., while firing at Antonio Bressi, the anarchist, was from New York City, where he has a mother and younger sisters and brothers dependent on him for support. His right name was Leonard Dresel, and the name Daly seems to have been assumed when he entered the Army to conceal his identity. There was no apparent reason for this, as he has an excellent reputation for honesty and industry, and he enlisted in the Regulars because he could obtain no employment elsewhere. He worked for officers of his regiment in order to make additional money that his brothers and sisters might remain in school.

“Antonio Bressi, who died from the deadly aim of Daly, was a noted anarchist leader, prominent in the Cœur d’Alène riots a few years ago, which were so promptly quelled by the —th Infantry. It is believed that for this reason he endeavored to blow up the train, for it is known that he is not in sympathy with the striking railroad men.”

[30]

A week later Company E was paid, and that night a money order payable to Mrs. Catharine Dresel, No. —— Baxter Street, New York, for \$150, left on the east-bound train.

In the little cemetery at Fort Meredith there is an elaborate granite monument bearing the inscription:

“Private Patrick Daly,
Co. E, —th Inf.
He gave his life that others might live.

A Dying Spaniard's Request

An auxiliary brigade, consisting of one regiment and one battalion of infantry and a mountain battery of artillery, was formed at Calumpit, on the Island of Luzon, to ascend the left bank of the Rio Grande, and to form a junction with Lawton some distance above. This expedition was accompanied by two gunboats belonging to the “mosquito fleet,” and one launch used to tow the cascoes, or native freight barges, bearing an extra supply of rations and ammunition. This was in May, 1899.

I was provost-marshal of this expedition. When we first entered a town or city, after capturing it, it was my duty to find out what buildings contained valuable property, and immediately place a guard over them, in order to prevent the place from being looted. Large warehouses containing immense quantities of rice, sugar, silks, piña cloth, and other things equally as precious, were frequent finds. They had to be guarded.

[32]

We met with but little resistance on this expedition till we reached the town of San Luis, about twelve miles up the river from Calumpit.

The heavy fire of our infantry and artillery, ably assisted by the little “pepper-boxes” afloat, soon put our dusky enemies to flight; and we marched straight into town, with colors flying, over trenches, barricades, and other obstructions hastily thrown in our way.

Among the largest stone buildings of San Luis was the “tribunal,” or public house, something after the style of our town halls, with the difference that it is always open for strangers, who cook, eat, and sleep in it. Among other useful apartments, it had a cell, probably used as a “jug” into which the native policemen ran the over-exuberant youth who was guilty of imbibing too freely of his cherished “vino,” or the head of the family for the non-payment of taxes, or allowing his water buffalo to play in his neighbor's yard.

[33]

Previous to the occupation of the town by the Americans, this dungeon-like cell had been occupied by Spanish prisoners, who were held by Aguinaldo's army. When I first saw the room, not more than ten minutes after our arrival, I saw one of as sickening sights as any person ever beheld.

This dungeon, or cell, was about ten feet high, the same in width, and about fifteen feet in length. Through one small grated window passed all the light that ever cheered this ante-chamber of hell. The door leading into it was in a dark corner, and when one was on the inside, he scarcely noticed whether it was open or closed.

By the aid of a lighted candle I saw the rock floor scantily covered with coarse rice straw, flatly mashed by the emaciated bodies of the Spaniards who had slept upon it. A few articles of Spanish uniforms, tattered and torn, were strewn about. In the cracks of the walls were hordes of vermin. Filth was present everywhere in its most germ-bearing form. In the center of the room were a few live coals and over them a quart cup about one-third full of boiling rice—probably the entire meal for the six doomed prisoners whose home had been for weeks that abode of lurking death.

[34]

At the end of the room and opposite the window was a raised platform, eighteen inches high, made of rough boards. This was covered with dry blood, and in the center was a large, quivering pool of clotted gore, which had not more than an hour since coursed through the veins of its owner.

Above this platform, a little higher than the height of the average native, was the dangling end of a rope, freshly besmeared with the life-blood of a recent victim.

On the plain white wall was the newly made print of the murderer's hand, who had wiped the warm crimson fluid of the sufferer from the blood-stained hand which held the throat, while the other, with the deadly bolo, severed the head from the trembling body.

[35]

Everywhere were evidences of a recent, horrible murder. A trailing streak of blood led from the platform toward the door and faded when the street was reached.

I diligently looked for some last message from the victim or victims. The walls

showed nothing but spots of blood thrown there by the struggles of the dying, and armies of pests traveling aimlessly over the cold, bare surface. The plain, rough boards told nothing but that the life had passed from many a defenseless soul while hanging over them. But these boards were not nailed down, I turned one over and looked beneath, but all was darkness. The candle was lowered to the bottom. Nothing was to be seen but great dried pools of blood that had leaked through the cracks above. One stone looked as though it had been recently disturbed. I tried it, it was loose. When raised from its resting-place, I saw a small roll of paper lying beneath. There was nothing more.

[36]

A further search revealed nothing. The gory board was replaced and I gladly walked out of this chamber of horrors, bearing with me the piece of paper.

Reaching the light, I unrolled it. It was dimly written. Evidently a bullet had been pointed and used as a pencil. The greasy sheet had been torn from a prayer-book. Just above a chapter of prayers for Easter Sunday was written in Spanish:

"To the Americanos:

"If my body is here when you make your entrance into the city, give me a Christian burial. I am to die because I refuse to fight you. My five companions have taken arms against you in order that they may not die by the hands of the Tagalos. I prefer death to fighting in the Filipino Army.

[37]

"Francisco Delgado."

The trail of blood showed me that his body had been carried out and probably thrown into the river.

We could not perform his last request.



"The greasy sheet had been torn from a prayer-book."

[38]

Benito.

"A-a-a-hum!" "What's that?" was the waking remark made by Captain Randolph Sever, as he slowly turned over on his back to face the owner of the voice which had so dimly penetrated the dreamless slumber resulting from a twenty-four-hour tour on outpost duty.

He struggled with his sleep-laden eyes and succeeded in opening one, with which he looked at the intruder, but, on recognizing the Colonel's orderly standing at his side, hastily arose to a sitting posture, and proceeded to rub open the other optic; meanwhile repeating his former question, but this time assuming a manner more in keeping with the dignity of his rank.

"Sir, the Colonel presents his compliments, and asks the Captain to step over to regimental headquarters."

Having delivered his message, he saluted and disappeared, leaving his weary superior to gather himself into a more military appearance as well as frame of mind. [39]

Sever looked at his watch and found that he had slept for just forty-eight minutes and fifteen seconds. He mentally berated the whole outfit. "Stepping over to regimental headquarters" meant a walk of a mile and a half through the relentless hot sun of a tropical country; for the dotting of an "i" or the crossing of a "t," which had carelessly been overlooked by both company commander and clerk. Then would follow the hair-splitting Colonel's permission to step back again.

The —th Infantry, arriving at Manila late in the spring of 1899, had taken its turn at doing duty on the outskirts of the city, and was now participating in the nocturnal fights of the interior. It had been at San Fernando de Pampanga for a little more than a month and both officers and men showed the wear and tear of sleepless nights and tropical climate, which tested the hardihood of the stoutest constitution among them. [40]

With temper yet ruffled, Captain Sever retraced his steps to his bamboo hut. When he arrived there, he found three of his brother officers in possession. With that hearty and genial tone of good-fellowship which is only used and felt between men who have passed through hardships together, and know the true worth of each other, they greeted him.

He confided to them the cause of his unusual exertion after a trying night on outpost duty, and wearily dropped himself onto some ammunition-boxes, which were serving the purpose of a chair.

The talk naturally turned to the condition of affairs, but argument waned for lack of an opposing side—the unanimous opinion being that the "gugus" did not and never would know when they were "licked." [41]

Sever arose, walked over to a native bed, and began cleaning his revolver, occasionally glancing toward the enemy's lines. Finally he said: "Say, Parsons, I wish you would reach up in that cracker-box above your head and hand me my glasses."

Lieutenant Parsons was a long, lank fellow, who never exerted himself any more than was absolutely necessary, so he simply unwound one of his arms, which was twisted around one of the posts of the bed, and blindly felt above till he found the article desired. Handing them to Sever, he indifferently asked: "What's going on over there?"

Without replying, Sever took the glasses and looked intently at the "gugu" trenches. Having satisfied his curiosity, he returned to his work of cleaning his "six-shooter"; then answered the almost forgotten question: "Oh, nothing, I guess; only I thought I saw a 'nigger' running. Its such an unusual sight to see one of those fellows 'get a move on,' especially when the sun is beating down like it is now, unless something is after him—looks like there might be something up." [42]

Parsons reached over for the glasses, got up, and walked to the door; but before he raised them to his eyes, he casually glanced to the right and stopped, saying: "Hello! here comes the 'old man's' orderly, 'lickety split.'"

He had scarcely finished his favorite expression, "lickety split," when the orderly

had ridden up, dispensed with the courtesy of dismounting, but hurriedly began: "The Commanding Officer directs that officers get their companies out at once, and proceed to the north outpost line. Messenger just in with information that the Filipinos are swarming over our outposts there."

[43]

He had no sooner delivered his message when the sounds of a few stray shots in the direction named were heard.

Sever, Parsons, and the other officers, experienced campaigners that they were, swiftly buckled on their revolvers, and in an incredibly short time were on the company parade-grounds shouting to their men—the few, who had not already turned out. Most of them had heard the message as it was given the officers, and had hastened to their huts, not waiting for instructions, warned their comrades of the impending fight, and again appeared with rifle and belt.

"Forward, double time; march," and Captain Sever was off with his company—superb fighting machine—for the line of battle.

The fire was now rapidly increasing. What at first sounded like a few heavy drops of rain on a tin roof was now an incessant shower.

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On went the gallant company. Stray shots crashed through the thickets to the right and left of them; struck the earth in front and near them, throwing up great quantities of *débris*; others, singing their death-song, passed uncomfortably close to their ears.

The outposts were now in sight. Some of them had been killed; others, wounded, were bravely striving to repress groans of pain.

It was a desperate fight—few against many. The natives were pouring down on the little handful of men like a great avalanche. The sure and deadly aim of the Americans alone served to impede the over-powering onslaught.

Reënforcements arrived none too soon. Just as the insurgents, intoxicated on "vino," beaten and sworn at by their officers, began a mad charge on the decimated ranks of the "Yankees," Sever had finished the deployment of his men in battle formation, and was ready to receive them.

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Meanwhile, other companies arrived and were strengthening the lines to the right and left. Then began those destructive American volleys—one following another in quick succession. No flesh and bone could live under such fire.

The more advanced of the charging column were now within a few feet of the outpost's trenches; but here they wavered. Vacancies occurred in their ranks like the falling of grass before the blade. They hesitated. Their officers rushed wildly to and fro, excitedly waving their swords, shouting in their twangy language above the din of battle.

There was a brief halt; then the line broke, and a surging, terror-stricken mass of humanity trying to escape from this disastrous fire was all that was left of that hopeful army of insurrectos who but a moment before were so near experiencing the exhilaration of victory.

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Word came down the line to cease firing. A moment later the expected charge was sounded by the Colonel's bugler. Up rose that khaki line, and, with that terrorizing American yell, swept like a whirlwind across the fields in pursuit of the flying natives.

It was just another of the many victories. The fight was now over. The enemy was pursued for several miles beyond the limits of the American lines, losing many in killed and wounded.

Most of the troops were withdrawn. Captain Sever with his company was detailed to search the field for killed and wounded.

The outposts returned to their stations, and there was nothing but the faint groans of the wounded, and the presence of the dead, to tell that but a few short moments before a deathly struggle had occurred between two determined armies.

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Sever and his men had just started on their humane duty, performing it with that tenderness and earnestness which the brave alone show to those in their power, when his attention was attracted by a low moan in the tall grass near by. He stopped and listened. Another half-suppressed groan was heard, apparently coming from the cogonales to his left. He parted the grass. There, lying in a pool of his own blood, was a Filipino soldier, frantically endeavoring to conceal himself and smother further groans. The expression on his face was a mixture of fear and pain. Seeing that he had been discovered, he put out his hand as if to ward off a

blow.

It was evident that the boy—for such he looked to be—thought he would be murdered on the spot, or at least unmercifully dealt with.

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The officer spoke to him in Spanish and assured him that no harm would befall him, but that he would receive every kindness and attention.

The poor lad was too weak to say much, but allowed the American to gently bear him to a more comfortable place in the open.

After a few moments' rest, the sufferer opened his eyes and beckoned Sever to draw nearer. His whole expression had changed from hatred and fear of his rescuer to that of implicit confidence. In good Spanish he told that he had been wounded when they had charged the "Yankee" line, but, having heard of how heartless and cruel his enemy was, he followed his retreating and panic-stricken comrades till so weakened from loss of blood he could go no further. Knowing they were being hotly pursued, he crawled into the cogonales, hoping to escape the eyes of the hated Americans.

Sever arose to seek a surgeon. The old look of terror returned to the wounded native's face, and he reached out his skeleton-like hand as if to hold him, and implored: "No, Capitan, don't go; the 'medico' may not be so kind as you, and I might die before you came back. I cannot live much longer."

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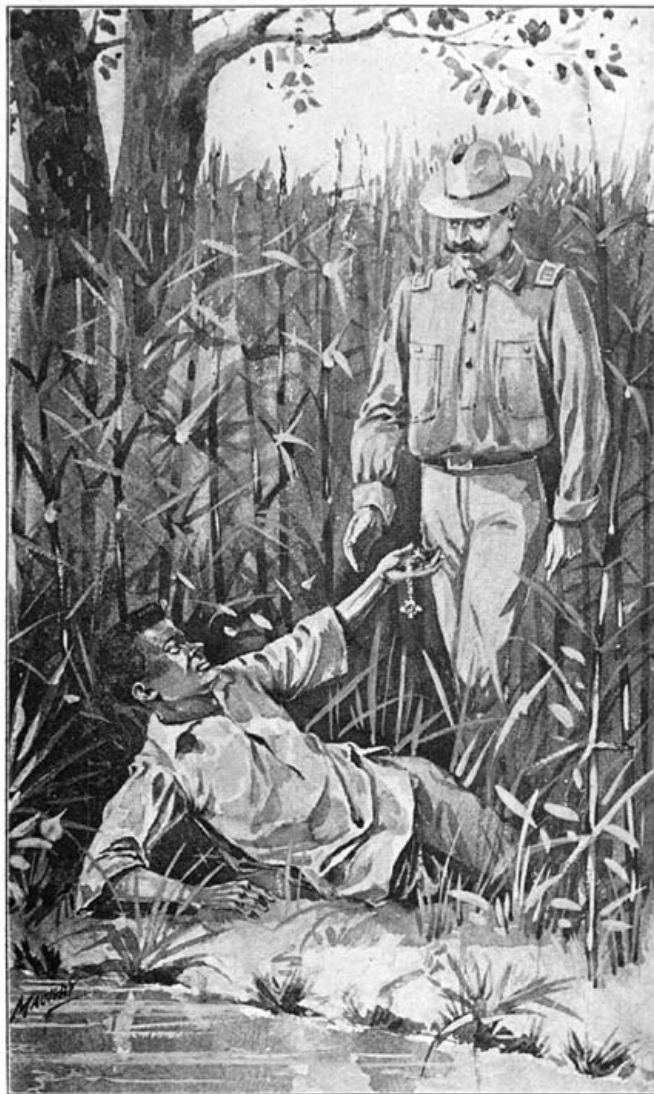
The brave and sympathetic officer then said: "Let me get some of my men who will carry you to the hospital. I cannot remain longer nor do I wish to leave you."

The wounded Tagalo looked wistfully into his face and feebly murmured: "Will you do something else for me?"

The Captain hesitated for a moment, apparently wondering what the request could be, then gave a nod of assent, and stooped to listen, bending closer and his interest increasing as the suffering fellow struggled with his narrative.

It ran: He was called Benito Gonzales, and he had been forced to take up arms by the insurgent authorities. He had a sweetheart named Juanita Tarinto, who had at the opening of the war taken refuge in a convent in Manila. He wished to send her his "anting anting" (his good luck charm), and some little money he had saved before the war began. Would the Capitan take charge of these things and deliver them?

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“Would the Capitan take charge of these things and deliver them?”

Having received assurance that his tokens would be carefully taken care of, he closed his eyes as if in great pain, a moment later a smile passed over his face, and he knew nothing more.

Just then the regimental surgeon approached, and Sever called to him. They gently removed the clothing from the boy, and discovered that he had received a frightful wound in the side. They carefully and tenderly placed him on a litter borne by two Chinamen, and sent him to the town, some distance back.

After this futile attack of the little rebels, the days passed with the same monotony that existed before.

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Captain Sever, hearing nothing more of Benito, sent the remembrances given in his care to his wife in Manila, with instructions to deliver them to their rightful owner.

Mrs. Sever had no difficulty in finding the dusky lass, and, after gently breaking the painful news to the lovely girl with sorrowful-looking eyes and beautiful jet black tresses, offered to lend her any assistance she might need.

Grateful for the kindness, and anxious to earn her own living, she accepted, and was soon domiciled with the “Señora Americana,” as she was pleased to call Mrs. Sever.

One morning, after several fatiguing days on reconnaissance duty waist-deep in mud and water, Company E, of the —th Regiment of Infantry, like a lot of rollicking school-boys on a holiday, were indulging in numerous sports outside their huts in the street. The spirit of the soldiers was contagious—even the native vendors seemed to feel the reaction. Their voices, usually so harsh and unpleasant, had a more cheerful ring as they cried their wares; and the customary stoical expression of their black faces had actually given place to a bearable smile, by this atmosphere of good humor and fine spirits.

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The always-busy commander of Company E, Captain Sever, was engaged with delayed papers and reports, and was writing with an energy seldom seen in that enervating country, when he was interrupted by a bold native at his elbow crying:

"Huevos, leche, mangoes, lucatan. Quiere, Capitan?" ("Eggs, milk, mangoes, bananas. Do you wish, Captain?")

The Captain turned abruptly, and was about to reply with usual American brusqueness, but was halted by the broad smile and unusual intelligent look of the invader of his privacy. As he studied the face trying to recollect where he had seen it before, the expression changed for one of disappointment. Then did he recognize in the strong and athletic figure before him the shrunken and emaciated one he had seen borne off the field of carnage, but four short weeks before. [53]

"Hello, Benito! where did you come from?" he began, and offered a friendly hand to the native; continuing, "You don't look much like the chap I found in the cogonales, trying to hide from me a short time back, beyond the north line. I thought you'd moved from this land of strife, lizards, and mosquitos, and staked out a claim in the celestial regions. Did not know you at first. You must have seen some pretty tough times before I found you if this is how you look after undergoing a month of American cruelty."

He ran on in this train, not giving the dusky soldier-merchant a chance to answer, but all the time studying the face and taking in every line of the splendid specimen of a Tagalo before him. [54]

Benito was taller than the average of his tribe. His muscular limbs showed a strength and athletic training that would be the envy of any Yale man or West Pointer. His back was as straight as the proverbial ramrod and as supple as the leaf of the cocoanut palm. His eyes were brown, and fairly danced with good nature and intelligence. They were frank, too, an unusual thing with a native. All in all, he was a perfect model of the physical man in bronze.

He placed his tray, laden with the luxuries he had cried, on a box near by, and seated himself in such a natural and easy manner, making himself so perfectly at home, that Sever's feeling of surprise at the action, soon changed into one of amusement over the unusual familiarity of a Tagalo toward a hated "Yankee." But he was to find out that this compatriot of Aguinaldo was unusual in many ways. [55]

After talking over his experiences at the First Reserve Hospital at Manila, Sever asked his guest what he intended doing.

Benito replied that his future was undecided. While in Manila he had seen Juanita, and they had decided that he should seek the Capitan and ask his advice. That was how he happened to be peddling along the line.

"You don't intend to return to the army again?" asked Sever.

On receiving an emphatic negative answer, the Captain continued: "How did you happen to cast your fortunes with the insurgents in the first place, and why were you so terror-stricken when first discovered after you had been wounded?"

Benito's answer to this double query was lengthy, but in effect he said: His father had been a captain in the Corps d'Elite, Aguinaldo's body-guard, during the Filipino insurrection against Spanish rule. Hoodwinked and misguided by the juntas as to the designs of the Americans, he continued in the service after the Spaniards had been driven out. During the outbreak against the Americans on February 5, 1899, he was killed. Shortly afterward he received word that he must take his father's place. He knew what it meant to refuse to enter the insurrectionist service after having once been notified. Fearing assassination should he refuse, he at once joined his father's regiment and was given his father's company. [56]

His regiment gradually fell back into the interior as the Americans advanced. Nothing but tales of brigandage, rapacity, and cruelty were heard of the actions of the enemy.

Driven beyond San Fernando de Pampanga, Aguinaldo established his headquarters at Tarlac, and determined to make a final stand; here taking oath that he would take the city of San Fernando inside of a week or lose every man in his command in the attempt. [57]

Then followed the attack in which Benito was wounded. From what he had heard, he expected the Captain's sword to run him through; or worse, be taken alive and afterward subjected to the cruelty of the "Yankee" soldiery, or sold as a slave and shipped to the States.

Now he had seen with his own eyes the benign attitude of his former enemy. His connection with the rebellion had ended.

Sever offered to employ him as his valet.

The beaming fellow arose, bowing obsequiously, and replied: "As you wish, Capitan."

From that moment his bearing and actions changed from those of a friend to those of a servant.

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Benito proved a model valet. His master's wants were anticipated; his shoes looked more like mirrors than prosaic foot-gear, and his clothes were always neatly pressed and immaculately clean. The culinary was not neglected. It was soon noised about the regiment that Sever was the best groomed and fed officer in the Division.

Then came the time when the wily little rebels cut the railroad and telegraph communications, and there was no intercourse with Manila. The morning after this occurrence there was noticeable the absence of Filipino venders of bananas, eggs, and other edibles on the streets of San Fernando. This always meant an early attack. To Sever the most ominous thing was the disappearance that night of his trusted valet, Benito. But he refused to believe that he had turned traitor; he vowed the native would duly appear in time.

Early that evening orders came from regimental headquarters to strengthen the outposts, especially those of the north—the point always the object of attack of the insurgents.

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The south line was reënforced by Captain Sever's company alone. He arrived there about dark, and soon made a careful disposition of his men, personally superintending the placing of each man.

Then came that extreme darkness known only to sentries on posts in tropical countries.

While not expecting an attack from the south, Sever's men were nevertheless vigilant. Their gallant commander refused to lie down, but groped about in the darkness amid interminable underbrush, through banana grove and bamboo thicket, over rice-paddies and briery hedges, instructing and reassuring his men.

Just as he was finishing his two o'clock rounds, and was feeling his way back to the company rendezvous, he was startled by the sounds of the footfalls of a galloping horse in the direction of the city, which were rapidly drawing nearer. He at once knew its import. There must be something serious. Orderlies were not sent out at that hour of the morning unless the cause was pressing.

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He retraced his steps toward the main road leading to the city and down which the now rapidly approaching horseman was coming.

Of a sudden the whole sky to the front was lighted as if traversed by the fiery darts of an electric storm. Then came the sounds of volleys fired at close range, and the crashing of the bullets as they struck near.

He ran toward his men, shouting words of command. A few returned the fire as best they could, but it was too late for that kind of fighting. The insurgents had crawled to within a few feet of the outposts, by a given signal began a murderous fire, then, whipping out the deadly bolo, pounced upon the unsuspecting sentries. It was a death-struggle; a hand-to-hand combat; a few against many.

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This mere handful of Americans bravely wielded the bayonet and clubbed with the rifle, but the odds were too great.

Sever arrived on the scene of action with flashing eyes and set jaws, determined to die with his men. In an instant he was surrounded by a half-dozen grinning natives, brandishing their shining knives in his face. He fought like a madman, effectively using his revolver, but it was an uneven fight, and he fell by a heavy blow which barely missed his head, landing on his right shoulder and sinking deep into his body. He sunk heavily to the ground. Another boloman raised his weapon to administer the final cut which would end his life, but his raised hand seemed fixed in that position. There was another struggle—this time native against native.

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Benito appeared just in the nick of time to save his friend's life.

Hundreds of feet were now heard coming from the rear.

Plunging through the darkness, falling over vines and rice-dykes, into ditches, came the yelling "Yankees." The tide of battle turned.

The insurgents who had broken this weak line and were pouring in toward the city heard that awful and unexpected "Yankee yell." They halted. A moment later there was a clash that lasted but a second. Sweeping everything before them, the

reënforcements changed the fortunes of the fight.

The next day Benito visited his severely wounded master at the hospital. It was then that the Captain learned that Benito had overheard some Filipino vendors inside the city drop a hint of the proposed attack. That night he set out to learn the details if possible. He arrived at the rebel lines safely, unrecognized and not suspected. He soon learned the plan of attack by hiding near a group of officers who were discussing it. He started back to inform his master of what he had learned, but was apprehended when trying to recross the Filipino lines. Charged with being a deserter, he was closely watched that night and the next day. The following night he evaded his guard during the confusion incident to the preparations for the battle, and made for the Americans as fast as his feet could take him, arriving in town at about one o'clock in the morning. Searching for the Captain, he could not find him. He then reported what he knew of the plans of the fight to Lieutenant Parsons, and learned from that officer the whereabouts of Sever and his company, and ran with all his might to warn him, for it was rapidly nearing the hour for the murderous onslaught. Parsons, after listening to Benito's story of what he had learned while in the enemy's camp, immediately started a mounted orderly to the Colonel. That worthy hastily dispatched a warning messenger and reënforcements to Sever. The rest has been told.

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A month later Sever was carried up the gang-plank of an army transport, on his way to the United States to recover from his wound. Benito was by his side. When the deck was reached, he took his master by the hand. Great tears were gathering in his eyes and tracing down his fine, dusky face as he said: "Adios, Capitan."

The American officer struggled to make a reply, but there was something in his throat which prevented him.

The two remained clasping hands for a minute, then Benito turned and slowly descended to the "lighter."

Benito and his wife had urgent invitations to accompany Captain and Mrs. Sever to "God's country," but they chose to remain in their native land.

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The Army Mule.

That republics are ungrateful,
Is adage old as sin;
That only he who has a pull
Can rake the chestnuts in;
And he, the faithful, honest heart,
Who meekly bears his humble part,
Is often dubbed a fool.

Oh, Dewey gets a mighty praise,
And everywhere they shout
And yell for Schley until they raise
Their very livers out;
Of rank and file much praise is heard,
But then you never hear a word
About the Army Mule.

He calmly bears his heavy pack,
And twists his tail in glee;
And chews at night a "gunny" sack,
When corn has "gang a-gee";
But for his patient, loving ways
No annals speak a word of praise
Of that poor Army Mule.

He nobly marched where bullets fell,
With calm and even tread;
And when he heard the bursting shell,
He only shook his head;
And at his post he nobly stood
To help the boys what e'er he could,
That faithful Army Mule.

'Neath burning sun of Cuba's isle,

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He brought the train along,
To furnish Shatter's men the while
They sang the "rifle song";
And but for him supplies were vain;
They must be brought through sun and rain,
By that same Army Mule,

In Luzon where the Army moves,
The festive Mule is nigh;
Too slow the pokey carabao proves,
For Yankee soldiers fly;
In heat or cold, in wet or dry,
In mud or dust, they can rely
On the true Army Mule.

He brings relief to sick and well,
When other sources fail;
His worth the soldier cannot tell,
His glory shall not pale;
And here a monument we raise,
A tribute to the worthy praise
Of the American Mule.

But first and foremost of them all,
In duty or in danger;
With biggest ears and loudest call,
And to fatigue a stranger;
The first on Santiago's brow,
And in Luzon the friskiest now:
Oh, that's the Missouri Mule.

—*W. S. Platt.*

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Comedy and Carnage.

The "Sky Pilot" and the "Dutch" Corporal.—The Mule that Sounded the Charge.
—"Bull's-Eye" Kelley and the Fire-Bug.

War, with all its horrors, laconically described by General Sherman as hell, is not without its comedy. The marching through rain and mud; camping in marshes; digging in trenches, using the bayonet for a pick and the meat-ration can for a shovel; wading rivers by day and sleeping exposed to the elements by night, are all sandwiched with numerous mirthful incidents. Soldiers, above all people, have an eye for the ridiculous, and are ever ready to make merry and laugh over the most trivial matter. Even the horrors of battle are unable to quench the spark of gaiety ever present in the make-up of a "Yankee Doodle" soldier.

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There are even times when comrades are lying about dead and dying, and the missives of death yet speeding by, searching for new victims, or to penetrate the quivering form of the already wounded, that something occurs to bring forth peals of laughter.

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The "Sky Pilot" and the "Dutch" Corporal.

During the mobilization of the Army at Tampa, Fla., at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, an orthodox minister enlisted as a private in one of the infantry regiments. On the 6th of June came orders to break camp and prepare to go aboard transports for the invasion of Cuba.

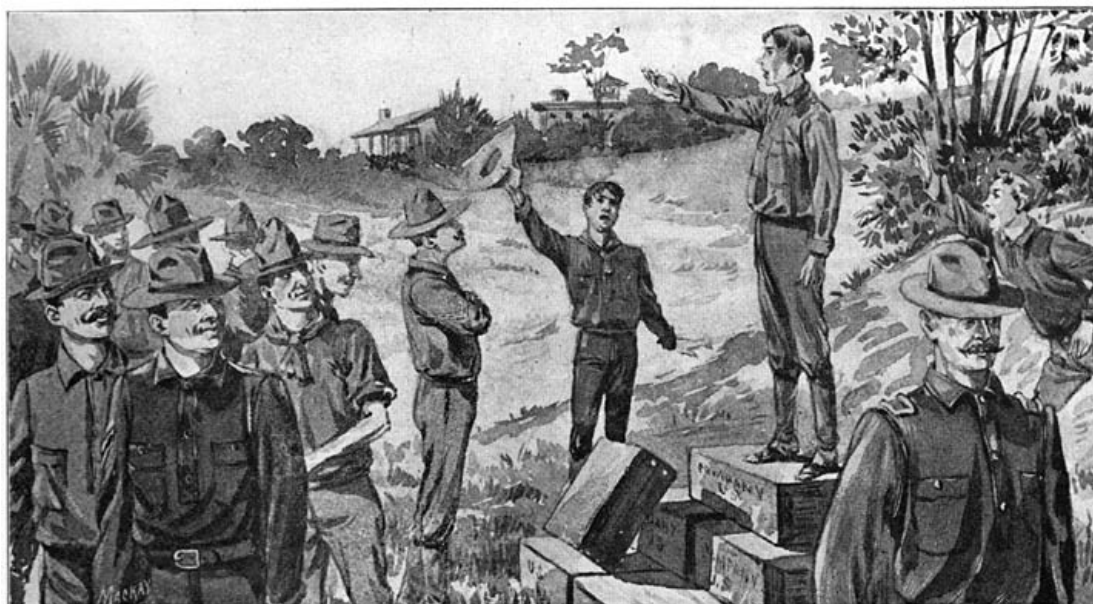
The railroad facilities from Tampa to Port Tampa, where the transports were waiting, were not equal to the emergency. Traffic became more or less clogged, and it was early the next morning when the regiment to which the preacher belonged was entrained. During the early part of the night the men were gathered in groups, some playing "shuffle the brogan," others busy at "nosey poker," while the greater part of them were smoking their pipes and telling yarns, or stretching

their weary limbs on rolls of canvas, or on the bare ground asleep.

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The orthodox minister appeared worried. He was walking to and fro in an aimless manner like a headless chicken. After having paced backward and forward past a pile of mess-chests several times, each time sizing it up, he suddenly began to mount it, planted himself on the very pinnacle, and with a fog-horn voice began a patriotic harangue.

Long, hair-raising, and Spanish-scalping sentences rolled from his lips like crude petroleum from a five-inch pipe. Each inflammatory oratorical flight was dramatically climaxed with the words, "For it is sweet to die for one's country."



"For it is sweet to die for one's country."

The sleeping ones restlessly turned over, rubbed their eyes, and opened their ears to this wonderful address. The entire regiment, officers included, soon became his audience, and all were inspired with the oft-repeated words, "For it is sweet to die for one's country."

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This regiment was one of the first to land in Cuba, and took a prominent part in the attack on El Caney. Its position during this fight, for many hours, was within a few hundred paces of the famous "stone block-house," in a sunken road, and was suffering heavily.

Along about two o'clock in the afternoon matters began to look blue—even a general officer who had fought in many hard battles of the Civil War, and spent the best years of his life combating the Indians on the frontier, was overheard to mutter to his adjutant that he was "afraid we've bitten off more'n we can chew."

There was not a cheerful face to be seen. Men with grinding teeth were soberly looking Death in the face. Sir Orthodox was burrowing his face into Mother Earth in a wild effort to shield himself from Mauser bullets. A German corporal was doing the same thing about fifty feet further down the road.

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As the corporal, better known as "Dutch," was burrowing his face in the mud, an idea struck him, and, like all Teutons, he must make it known. He raised his head and looked up and down the line of prostrate soldiers till his eye fell on the flattened figure of the minister. In a voice that could be heard the full length of the regiment, he bleated out: "Say, dere, Sky Pilots, id aind so schveet to died for vonce countries, aind id?"

The effect was magical. Amid this scene of carnage and death a wild yell of merriment went up that brought courage to many weakening hearts, and Caney had fallen before the men had ceased to laugh at the joke on the preacher.

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The Mule that Sounded the Charge.

He was a Colonel with enough dignity to rule the universe, but he knew no more about music than a pig does of navigation. With his regiment he was slipping up on a Filipino town at night. It was purely a clandestine movement—orders were given in whispered tones by tiptoeing orderlies. The men were holding their bayonet

scabbards against their legs to obviate screeching and rattling, and every effort was made to minimize the sounds of a marching body of men.

The Colonel with the battalion on the right had arrived within charging distance of the insurgent trenches. It was the pre-arranged plan for all the companies to arrive on this line before the general advance would be made. When all were ready, the charge would be sounded by the Colonel's bugler.

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The battalion with the Colonel was all ready for the bloody charge. Not knowing if the companies of the other battalions had arrived, the impatient commander sent his adjutant, mounted on a native charger, and his bugler, mounted on a Missouri mule, down the line to investigate.

When all was in readiness, the adjutant was to have the bugler sound the charge, when the whole khaki-clad line, like a thousand demons, would set up that awful, "gu gu" terrorizing "Yankee yell," and wade into the unwary Tagalos with cold steel.

The adjutant and his bugler found that the companies on the left were yet some distance to the rear. The former, while waiting for the companies to come up, dismounted to tighten his saddle-girth, while the latter busied himself looking for some signs of life in the enemy's trenches not two hundred yards ahead. His mule dropped his head in a dozing attitude. He suddenly appeared inspired, raised his head high in the air, looking toward the insurgent lines. Then, with a grunt, as if of satisfaction, elevated his chin, began working his huge ears backward and forward in a pumping motion, and set up a long-drawn "A-w-e ye! a-w-e ye! a-w-e ye! a-w-e ye!" in threatening tones, which sounded through the midnight air for miles around.

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"He elevated his chin, began working his huge ears backward and forward in a pumping motion, and set up a long-drawn 'A-w-e ye! a-w-e ye!' in threatening tones."

The faithful animal had not finished his challenge when the deep voice of the Colonel rang out completely drowning it, giving commands for the charge. He flashed his saber, and gallantly led the only battalion on the line into the midst of thousands of dusky soldiers—he had heard the mule sound the charge.

It was a brilliant victory. The town fell with but a single American casualty—that casualty left the bugler without a mount.

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"Bull's-Eye" Kelley and the Fire-Bug.

Where is there a soldier whose name is dry on the muster-rolls who has not heard of "Bull's-Eye" Kelley? Kelley gained his enviable name of "Bull's-Eye" by having spent twenty-two successive seasons on the target-range without ever making a "bull's-eye." As a reward for long and honest service—not for marksmanship—he was warranted a sergeant, and went with his regiment to the Philippines.

While the regiment was doing garrison duty at one of the interior towns in Luzon,

it was constantly harassed by the little rebels. One dark night in June they made a determined effort to drive the Americans out. The regiment had run short of officers, so this night Kelley was in command of his company. He was a strict disciplinarian—so much so that when out of his hearing the privates referred to him as the “Duke of Ireland.”

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The night of this attack his orders were to keep his men lying flat on the ground and perfectly quiet. There was to be no talking, whispering, coughing, or smoking; or, as Kelley himself expressed it, “no nothin’” would be allowed.

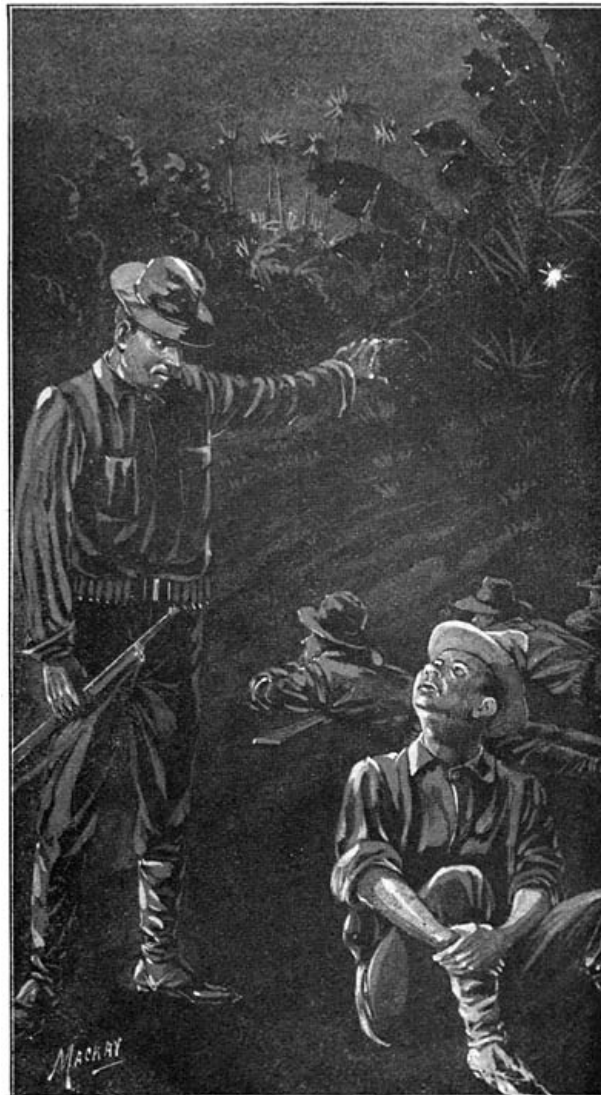
All sorts of insects, including lightning-bugs as big as incandescent lights, were singing and flying about, causing the men to put their hands and faces through a most unique series of gymnastics.

The rebel fire was becoming alarmingly effective. Although they knew nothing of the location of Kelley’s company, yet stray bullets coming that way had already hit two of his men, instantly killing one of them. He suspected that something was betraying his position. Looking down the line, he was horrified to discover what was unmistakably a man smoking. Flushed with anger, he shouted louder than his instructions would have permitted, “Hie there, me man! put thet cigaroot out,” but the light remained undisturbed. “I say there, ye insultin’ divil of a rekroot, put out thet cigaroot,” stormed the enraged Kelley.

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In reply came the low, mourner’s-bench, meek voice of a South Carolina recruit: “It hain’t a cigaroot, Sergeant; it’s a lightnin’-bug as big as a search-light on ‘Pin-Head’ Hebb’s mustache.”

The undaunted Kelley was not to be beaten thus, but sternly commanded: “I don’t give a dom what ‘tis, put it out.”



“I don’t give a dom what ‘tis, put it out.”

[79]

How I Saw Aguinaldo.

An Army Officer's Curious Experience in Luzon.—A Tight Place and a Close Call.

It was during the early part of the month of June that my company was doing outpost duty on the north line at San Fernando, one of the largest inland towns on the Island of Luzon. We had been on the south line, but on the morning on which this incident took place, were directed to relieve a company of another battalion of the same regiment on the north line.

Our arrival at the outpost was very early in the morning; so early that it was impossible to distinguish a man from a high stump at a distance of 100 feet. The lay of the land was new to me; I hadn't the slightest idea of the contour of a foot of the ground to be covered by my company. After getting my men properly stationed along the line, guarding a front of about 1700 or 1800 yards, I took an old, reliable sergeant with me and proceeded to reconnoiter the territory to my front, and to make a rough sketch map, showing on it what I could of the Filipino trenches and their outposts. [80]

We started just as the sky began to turn a deep red in the east, and the "chuck me" chameleon, the harbinger of the early dawn, began his morning challenge. Our progress was very cautiously made through the cane-fields, banana groves, and bamboo jungles, halting and investigating the slightest noise, the rustling of a leaf or the breaking of a twig not escaping our attention. First, I would take the advance and then the Sergeant. When we passed through cane-fields we found the plowed grounds but little less than marshes, for the rainy season had just begun with torrential showers. Our bodies were soon soaked to the skin, for the leaves of the cane and banana stalks were burdened with water. The cane was a trifle higher than our heads, and the wide-spreading leaves of the banana hid the sky from view. [81]

After wading and splashing along toward the Filipino lines for about 1400 yards, we suddenly and very unexpectedly came upon a well-traveled road, fringed with bamboo on either side, with quite a stretch of open ground beyond, in which was lying at the farther edge, the trenches of our enemies, which seemed to be at the time swarming with dusky soldiers preparing their morning meal.

Believing ourselves not have been observed, we withdraw a short distance from the bamboo fringe into a banana grove, a position that afforded us concealment as well as an opportunity to make observations of the position of the trenches and location of the outposts of the rebels. [82]

I was busy making copious notes and my maps, while the Sergeant, with my field-glasses, was making most wonderful discoveries of masked batteries and gas-pipe cannon, when, all of a sudden, a cavalcade of insurgent officers, followed closely by a large body of foot soldiers, appeared down the road to our left, where there was a slight curve, not more than 200 yards away.

What were we to do? At that short distance from our open-eared and alert rebellious fellow-citizens, we could not beat a precipitate retreat, or an orderly one, without disclosing our presence; and that fact once known to this body of armed men meant almost certain death, or worse, to be taken prisoners by this half-savage band. We held a hasty council of war in whispered tones, and decided to hold our ground till the danger passed.

It was but a moment till the little steeds and their haughty riders were directly in front of us, not fifty paces away, and, to our intense surprise and discomfort, halted. There they stood, with the first ray of the rising sun resting full upon them, seventeen horsemen, officers, and just back of them about 5,000 infantrymen, all within a stone's throw of us. What made our position all the more precarious, the infantry was standing at a "rest," and were, as all soldiers do when first halted, looking in every direction in search of something—an enemy, fruit, a stray porker or a fowl. Our chances of being discovered were becoming momentarily greater. We could plainly see them, so naturally, if they would but look in the right direction, they could see us. What may not five hundred busy eyes discover? [83]

The danger of the mounted men seeing us was not so great, for they had

discovered something interesting in our lines and were active with their glasses looking over our heads.

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Sixteen of these officers were dressed in light blue uniforms of some thin cloth, wide-brimmed sombreros, russet leather leggings, and clanking sabers dangling by their left sides, almost trailing the ground, while the trappings of their horses were enough to make the eyes of a militia major snap with envy. The other officer, who rode at the head, and the recipient of the most obsequious attentions, a man about middle age, with close-cropped hair, small restless eyes, and somewhat lighter complexioned than the average inhabitant of those far-away tropical islands, wore a neat-fitting uniform of khaki cloth over his diminutive body, and a helmet of the same color upon his well-shaped head. His mount was a beautiful dapple gray Filipino stallion, some larger than the average-sized native animal, and much more gorgeously caparisoned than the charges of the other officers. This pompously equipped commander wore at his left side a most handsome saber, and on his right he carried a revolver and field-glass case.

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The foot soldiers were of the famous Corps d'Elite, Aguinaldo's body-guard. We knew them by their bright red uniforms. Where Aguinaldo goes, there they go also. They are his constant attendants. They were, of course, all armed with Mauser rifles and laden with ammunition.

We were so interested at the sight of this picked regiment of Tagalos, of which we had heard so much, that we almost forgot our danger, and actually raised our heads higher in order that we might have a better view of them. Just as we were craning our necks and straining our eyes to their utmost capacity, we were suddenly brought to a realization of our terrible danger by the officer in khaki dismounting, throwing the reins to an orderly, and advancing to the edge of the bamboo just in front of us. Like a flash the others followed him, and stood at attention just in his rear, gawking and peering in our direction. This was a trying moment for us. There stood the flower of the Filipino Army, facing two almost helpless servants of Uncle Sam, and, for all we knew, were deciding our fate, for they were discussing some important subject in the Tagalog tongue, all of which was Sanscrit to us. Our hearts were in our throats and kept up an increased throbbing in their new positions. Had we been discovered? Were those snapping, half-savage eyes now resting on us, and was the mode of our death being discussed? We knew not. Our faces were being pushed in the mud till our ears were begrimed in our mad efforts to conceal ourselves. We felt it would be but a matter of seconds till our hides would be perforated with Mauser bullets, or we would be bound, hand and foot, prisoners of a revengeful enemy.

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"We almost forgot our danger, and actually raised our heads."

Their talk became excited. Something was being discussed with great interest and moment. The suspense was awful. Minutes passed as hours. Our skins would cringe when the thought of a volley liable to be fired into our bodies at any moment occurred to us.

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Would they never leave? Their conversation warmed. The khaki-clad officer said a word, and then they faced about, reëntered the road, and passed down it out of sight, one officer alone remaining with the foot soldiers, who gave some directions to the orderlies, and the horses were led across the road and hitched. We slowly raised our mud-besmeared faces. The infantry, still looking and chattering in the

twangy language of their tribe, were holding their ground. We heard the officer in command say something about “aqua” in Spanish, then a few words of command followed. They instantly came to the “attention,” moved forward till the center of the column was opposite us, wheeled to the right by fours, and stacked their arms. “Aqua”; that meant water. We knew they would soon break ranks and go some place, we knew not where, to replenish their water-bottles. So far, then, we had been unobserved. But we remembered that just a few yards to the rear of us, and in a direct line from our enemies, was a rippling stream of crystal water. We exchanged looks. Oh, what looks! The Sergeant’s expression was awful, and I knew mine to be none better. Here they came; 500 of them were moving toward us. Was it too late to run? No. I whispered, “Come on.” We were about to rise and make a wild dash for life, when a sharp blast of a trumpet was sounded to our front. All stopped in their tracks. Another trumpet-call—a rush to arms. The officers came tearing back and remounted.

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We waited for the volley that was to send our souls into eternity. That we had been discovered we were sure.

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Boom! A loud report from our rear. It was unmistakably a cannon shot. An instant later a shrieking shell passed over our heads and tore its way through a stone sugar storehouse, 100 yards ahead, rending demolition everywhere in that vicinity.

The officers madly spurred their diminutive mounts in a wild effort to secure speed. Off they rode at break-neck rate over rice-paddies and small ditches in the direction of the bamboo thickets beyond the open.

But the infantrymen remained steadfast! They kept their close formation, facing us. I ventured to raise my head a trifle higher when I noticed the Sergeant putting his face through a series of grimaces that would tend to make it as muscular as his brawny arms. His struggle was in vain; he could not help it—he sneezed, not once, but twice, and once again.

Five hundred ears pricked up, and as many pairs of eyes were thrown upon us. It was but a second till a dozen rifles were raised to as many shoulders, the muzzles all pointing in our direction.

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As a last effort to save our lives, I yelled to the Sergeant to follow, and started a disorderly retreat toward our lines.

Boom! Was it a volley? No, another shot from the cannon. The shell struck between our enemies and ourselves and exploded. The sky was filled with everything. We looked back over our shoulders, but could not see the red uniforms for flying *débris*.

An instant later we heard a crying, screaming, terror-stricken mass of humanity breaking through the bamboo on the farther side of the road. We halted. There they went, over dykes and ditches. All organization had fled with the winds in their wild efforts to escape the next shot from our artillery.

Now we were safe, and sauntered lazily back to the company, giving our hearts an opportunity to resume a normal state of affairs.

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When we reached our lines we found that a recruit battery of light artillery had come out from the city that morning for target-practice. An experienced non-commissioned officer fired the first shot, which hit the sugar warehouse, the target. A recruit gunner fired the second, which, falling short, saved our lives. They knew nothing of the presence of the Filipinos or of my little reconnoitering party.

The next day our native spies reported that Aguinaldo and his body-guard had come down from Angeles early the morning before, but had immediately returned.

I laughed when I heard this report, for I knew the circumstances.

The dapper little officer in khaki was Aguinaldo, and this is the story of how I saw him.—*Sunday Globe-Democrat*.

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What the Wounded Say and Do.

An American Officer’s True Stories of our Latest War.—Brave Men who Meet Death as Heroes Should.

No two men behave alike when hit in battle. There is just as much difference in their actions as there is in the behavior of the members of a volunteer fire brigade at a country-town conflagration. The look of the mortally wounded is nearly always the same. There is always that deathly pallor that creeps over the face, and that fixed stare—horrible look of resignation—that tells so plainly that all is over with the unfortunate soldier. A few instances will serve to give a general idea of how the victims of the messengers of death receive them.

On the 1st of July, a company of regular infantry, in reserve, was lying flat on their stomachs in a sunken road, a few hundred yards from the stone block-house of El Caney, Cuba. The men were under a terrific fire, but were not allowed to reply to it, for ammunition was growing scarce. For hours they remained in this position. They began to get restless and to shift about. As long as they kept low, there was no danger from Spanish fire, for the bank of the road was sufficiently high to afford security. Curiosity occasionally got the better of a man, and he would poke his head above the embankment and peer in the direction from which the bullets were coming. In the company was a large, muscular German, who had early become restless and curious to see what was transpiring. He would occasionally break out and swear because he was not given a chance to fire at the hated Dons. Of a sudden he ripped out a choice lot of the best in his vocabulary, raised his head above the bank, and shook his huge fist at the line of sombreros to be seen just above the Spanish trenches to the right of the block-house. Ping! ping! thud! "Wasn't that an awful sound?" a dozen soldiers chimed. There is no other sound produced that can be compared with it. It stands alone for all that is sickening and horrible. All knew that some one had been hit. A moment was passed in suspense. The German whispered, in the tones of death, to his comrade at his side: "Wipe the blood off of my face!" It was his last words. He drew his knees to his chin in the agonies of death, turned over on one side, burrowing his face in the mud, and died without a groan. A Mauser had hit him squarely between the eyes.

A short time later a sergeant of one of the companies of the same regiment moved a few yards forward, trying to get a pot-shot at some Spanish sharpshooters who were snugly perched in the spreading tops of some royal palm trees, and were hitting some of our men. He sighted one and had his rifle to his shoulder, taking a fine bead, when all at once the rifle fell to the ground and his hands dropped helplessly by his side. He coolly faced about and walked toward the rear, his arms dangling like pendulums, not even so much as muttering a word. One of his company officers asked him what was the matter, to which he laconically replied, "Hit," and continued on his way to the dressing-station in the rear. He was shot through both shoulders—a serious wound, but he recovered.

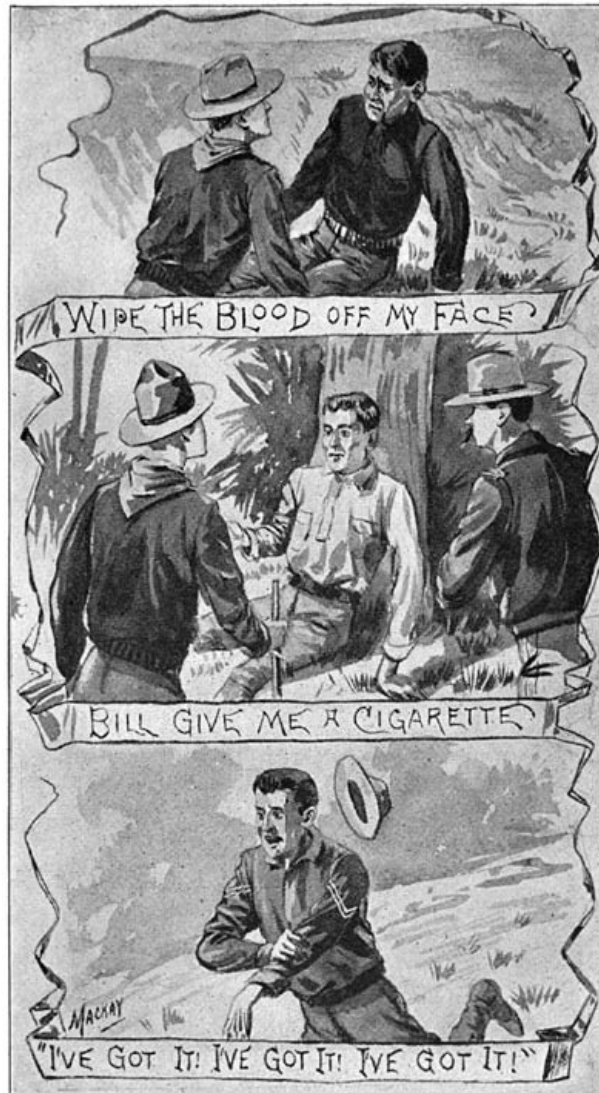
About an hour after the German was killed the same company was ordered to take a position farther to the right. They walked along, goose-fashion, single file, moving by the right flank toward their new position. Next to the last man in the rear was a corporal, a new man, just a few months in the service. Biff! ping! bang! went the deadly missiles. One struck a man's rifle-barrel, cutting it almost in two. Another split the stock of a gun in a man's hand. Then one struck the recruit corporal's left arm, passing through the biceps. With an expression of great surprise he for a moment stood still, saying nothing. His eyes began to dilate, and then of a sudden he threw his fowling-piece high in the air, grasped his left arm with his right hand, and started for the rear at a disgraceful gait, yelling so as to be heard above the din of battle: "I've got it! I've got it! I've got it!" The last that was seen of him that day he had "it," and was taking "it" to the rear with him.

On San Juan Ridge, July 2d, just as Chaffee's brigade had reached the crest, they were ordered to lie down and intrench, using the bayonet as a pick and the hands for shovels. A dashing young fellow of one of the companies on the right of the line was some distance in advance of his fellows when the halt was made. Instead of falling back on the line with the other men, he stopped where he was. One of the officers shouted at him several times to fall back, as he was in danger of his own men shooting him, but he did not hear. The officer then walked down to where he was, grabbed him by a leg, and started to drag him back to the line. He had but started when he felt the man's whole body quiver, and he flopped himself over on his back, saying as he did so, "I'm done for." Some of the men came to the soldier and assisted the officer to carry him to a place of security. With a bayonet one of the men cut off his clothing, when a Mauser hole was seen just above the heart, where the bullet entered, passing through his body and coming out between the shoulders, near the spine. The man said no more at the time. His wounds were bound by sympathetic hands. All except the wounded man returned to the firing-line. The Spanish fire was heavy, and kept up for four hours, occasionally a soldier dropping out, wounded or killed. When all was quiet, the officer and one of his soldiers returned to see if the young man were yet alive. They found him sitting against a small tree. His first words were: "Bill, give me a cigarette." The man is living to-day.

Just about the time this man was wounded a man in the next company on the right suddenly threw down his bayonet, jumped to his feet, paused for a second or two, looking in the direction of the Spanish trenches, then threw both hands to his breast, saying, "I'm hit." He turned about and walked into the dense thickets of cactus and Spanish bayonet, and was never seen nor heard of again. He undoubtedly crawled far back into the heavy tropical growth and died, where the vultures claimed him.

One of the coolest men who ever received a wound was an infantryman at San Fernando, in the Island of Luzon, on the 16th of June. The insurgents made a determined effort to retake the town early on the morning of that day. They opened up simultaneously from every quarter, and the kind and variety of missiles used would be beyond the wildest expectations of that sweet-throated midnight serenader, the Thomas-cat. Out of an old smooth-bore cannon they threw railroad spikes, horseshoes, old clocks, lemon-squeezers, and cobble-stones. From their Remingtons they shot large cubical and irregular-shaped lead slugs. One of these struck this cool man high in the right groin, deeply imbedding itself. The pain must have been excruciating, for the man was terribly lacerated. He hobbled to his company commander, saluted, and asked permission to fall out and lie down, as he had been hit. He was lying near a road where his comrades passed to and fro during the entire fight, but no one heard a word or a groan out of him unless he was spoken to.

During the same fight, in another company of the same regiment, a battalion sergeant-major was ordered to take two squads and proceed to a point about 400 yards down the Angeles Road, where there was a small trench, and defend it. When about half-way down, one of his men, a green "rookie," received a severe wound in the leg. The Sergeant endeavored to start him to the rear, with a man to assist him along, but he protested. Nothing but to continue to the front with his squad would do. He loaded and fired with the other men till the fight was over. This man was recommended for a medal of honor by his captain.—*From Leslie's Weekly, of December 9, 1899.*



What the Wounded Say and Do.

The Flight of “Father Time.”

A Case of Mistaken Identity.

Captain C. was what soldiers call a “fussy” officer. He was constantly prying into matters that concerned him but little, and wasted his energies in performing duties usually within the province of a corporal. In fact, he would march a “set of fours” to dinner. In a fight, however, his soul enlarged, and he was ever to be found at the front directing his men, and doing much to atone for sins committed during less exciting moments. Always in the van, his long, gray whiskers gently flowing in the breezes, his sword drawn and pointing toward the enemy, suggested to the men the pictures they had seen in almanacs of “Father Time”; and when speaking of him among themselves, he had no other name.

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In August, 1899, his company was at Angeles, in Luzon, and was entrenching on the outskirts, for the pesky little “niggers” were constantly threatening and frequently attacking the place.

The Quartermaster Department hired a lot of Macebebes, who had offered their services, to do the harder part of the work of trench-digging, for the men were exhausted by an arduous and exacting campaign.

One bright morning about two hundred of these laborers were put to work a short distance to the front of the trenches under construction, to cut away a dense growth of cane, and open up a field of fire toward the enemy. The faithful fellows jumped into the work with a vim seldom seen in that country, slashing to the right and left with bolos, machetes, knives, hoes, scythes, and a variety of other edged implements, felling the large cane stalks with great rapidity.

“Father Time’s” company was just in rear of them, with rifle and belt, ready to protect them from the insurgents, who hated a Macebebe even worse than a despised Americano.

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The usual activity in the cane-field was soon discovered by the festive little rebels, who promptly proceeded to pour volleys into the place where the cane was so mysteriously disappearing. The unarmed Macebebes stood their ground for a moment, but when the Mauser bullets came whistling uncomfortably close, and one of them had been slightly hit, they could stand it no longer, but, with an unearthly yell of fright, they broke for the rear like a herd of stampeded cattle. A regular race of mad men.

When the firing began, the soldiers threw themselves upon the ground as flat as pancakes. The Captain was busy writing in a nipa palm hut a few hundred yards in rear. He rapidly buckled on his equipment and “took up the double time” to join his men. As he neared the trenches he raised his head to look for his company. Not a soldier was in sight. As he stood in wonderment it seemed that the gates of the infernal regions were standing ajar and the inmates escaping toward him. Two hundred black devils, every imp of them screaming and yelling at each leap forward, were coming for him, armed with bolos and other death-dealing weapons, to mince him in a thousand pieces. He knew his men had been massacred to a man. He alone remained to face this mass of uncivilized warriors eager for every drop of his blood.

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“Two hundred black devils were coming for him, armed with bolos and other death-dealing weapons.”

No general ever more quickly decided upon a definite maneuver, or put one into execution with a more fixed determination than this veteran officer, hero of three wars, decided to decrease the distance between himself and the main body of his regiment in town. Two miles over muddy roads and rice “paddies” is not an easy march for a young man, but when a valiant gentleman of sixty summers covers the distance at a forced-march gait, without a halt, a record has been broken.

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When “Father Time” learned that not a man of his company had been hurt, he was pleased; but the news that he had mistaken a lot of Macebebes, hopelessly stampeded, for a blood-thirsty enemy, had to be broken to him gently by the Colonel.

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Camp Alarms—False But Startling.

The Red-Headed Recruit and the Cuban Dog.—The Charge of the Hospital Corps.—Private Timmons and the Carabao.

In the face of his reputation for undaunted courage and dashing deeds of valor, the American soldier has at times allowed himself to become frightfully alarmed and on the eve of being panic-stricken, when taken unawares. He soon collects himself, however, and is ready to meet all emergencies, let them come from whatever source they will. Even the old “vet” may lose his head for a moment or two, and find some difficulty in establishing his equilibrium. The Yankee soldier is ever ready to obey his officer, and if the latter will but keep his wits, order may be restored out of hopeless demoralization.

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The Civil War was replete with camp alarms, some of them of the most ridiculous type; and our war with Spain and the Filipinos has added greatly to the stock. The tropical countries, with their dense growths of vegetation, myriads of crawling creatures, and hair-raising sounds, form a replete field for alarms, which are usually started by frightened sentries on lonely outposts.

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The Red-Headed Recruit and the Cuban Dog.

One of the most notable alarms that occurred during the campaign about Santiago was within two miles of the “Stone Block-House,” at El Caney, on the night before the attack on that place. The brigade that did the hardest fighting there, and that had been in advance the greater part of the time from the landing at Baiquiri, received orders late in the afternoon of June 30th to move forward and take a position within easy striking distance of El Caney, and to there rest on arms for the night. The march began at dusk, and, by a long, circuitous route, ended at 12 o’clock midnight at an open field, which the guides said was within two miles of

the nearest Spanish position in the town. The march, in single file, up and down hills, over slippery ground, by men as silent as mice, was a tiresome one. All were glad to hear the word passed along in low whispers to quietly lie down, retaining arms and equipment, and bivouac for the night. The silence of death prevailed. The long line of dark figures on the open field, silhouetted against the star-lit sky, and the stillness that reigned, reminded one more of stereopticon views thrown upon canvas, than of the presence of eighteen hundred fighting men, stealing upon their prey.

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It was not a minute after the whispered command to lie down was given till all except a few selected for duty on outposts had stretched their weary limbs on the dewy grass.

The outposts were placed around the main body, some few hundred yards distant, most of them in the direction of the Spanish lines. The command was soon asleep. There was the usual number of disturbed dreamers, and occasionally the snorer would burst out in loud and long-drawn tones, only to be promptly kicked in the ribs by his light-sleeping comrade. The nocturnal cigarette-smoker was prohibited from indulging in his nightly practice, and soon there was a long mass of sleeping humanity, not a sign of wakeful eyes to be seen.

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As sudden as the flash of lightning the woods in the direction of the Spanish lines was filled with yells, screams, and the heavy falling of feet in rapid retreat.

The brigade sprang to its feet as if each man had been lying on a stiff spring and the whole touched off simultaneously by the pressing of a button—every man with loaded and cocked rifle in hand. Then began the low, mumbling sound of a suddenly aroused camp. The efforts of the officers who had kept their heads to keep it down were fruitless. It was a long line of buzzing sounds like the swarming of bees. But the screaming and yelling continued and grew nearer.

Shouting at the top of his voice at every jump, "They're coming! they're coming!" tall, lean, red-headed, and hatless, the recruit sentry came by leaps and strides, and close at his heels a half-starved Cuban dog, playfully pursuing him, soliciting some of the hardtack in the recruit's haversack.

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It was near dawn before complete order was restored. Many eyes were opened by that alarm raised by the panic-stricken recruit that never again closed till closed in death.

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The Charge of the Hospital Corps.

The campaign in the Philippines against the wily Tagalo has been replete with false alarms, owing to the prowling and sneaking nature of the enemy, and the unearthly noises made by the animals of that sun-scorched and water-splashed country.

There is a line of trenches and block-houses around the city of Manila, the average distance being about two miles out from the suburbs. This was called the "firing-line." On first arriving from the United States, regiments were sent out to occupy a part of this position, to recuperate from the long sea voyage aboard crowded transports, and at the same time help maintain the line of defense around the city. Most of the newly arrived regiments were filled up with recruits with but a few months' service; so this position afforded the opportunity to get these men in shape for field-service.

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This line of defense was the theater in which was acted the comedy of the war. Here is where occurred the most foolish alarms and at the same time some serious ones.

There is one famous charge (?) that occurred in a newly arrived regiment, which was spending its first night on the Island of Luzon in these trenches. It is known as the "Charge of the Hospital Corps," and promises to be handed down in army tradition. The gallant leader of this daring advance was a young surgeon, recently appointed to the regular establishment as a battalion pill-dispenser. His command consisted of three privates and an acting steward of the Hospital Corps.

Arguing that he was fighting a savage enemy, not a party to the Geneva Convention, and consequently would not recognize as non-combatants the wearers of the red cross, he succeeded in having a requisition honored by the ordnance officer for five big forty-five caliber "six-shooters," with which he armed himself and command.

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This embryo warrior and his gallant following were tickled with their toys, and flourished them most dangerously during the day, vowing death and destruction to any thousand Filipinos who would dare to face them and their death-dealing weapons.

The doctor, or "Pills," as the men called him, established his battalion hospital in a ravine in a break in the trenches. It was a lonesome place. Night came on, and the corps men retired to sleep their first night on Luzon's soil; but their sleep was not easy. Visions of gore and midnight slaughter passed in review before their drowsy eyes; and just as a black-faced little rebel had them by the throat and was plunging a great long knife into their vitals, they would awaken with a start, feel under their heads for their fire-arms, to reassure themselves, pat the trusty weapon a time or two, call it "good old Bets," and again doze off to sleep, only to repeat the performance. [115]

One hungry, gaunt-looking fellow, who his comrades said had a head that would fit in a regulation full-dress helmet, could stand the nervous strain no longer. The noises that came from the little thickets of bamboo and cogonales into his little "tepee" were more than he could stand. He had listened to them in his mind, enlarged, multiplied, and magnified them in his own imagination, till he was sure the whole insurrectionist army was quietly, inch by inch and foot by foot, slipping down upon him. Up he jumped, revolver in hand, gripping the handle and gritting his teeth, and proceeded to investigate the sounds. Approaching within a few yards of a thick bunch of trees not far in front of the hospital tent, he halted to listen. Yes, they were there beyond all doubt. He could almost see them crawling toward him; a hundred dusky demons upon all fours, with long, glistening, razor-edged knives held between their shining teeth. They must be stopped. With a loud voice, trembling with fear, he challenged: "If you're an American, for God's sake say so, or I'll shoot." The noise made no reply, and the shooting began promptly as promised. [116]

The valiant "Pills" landed on his feet in the middle of his tent, rallying his men, and was soon leading them to the attack. Bang! bang! biff! bang! rang out the loud-mouthed Colt's revolvers. A moment later the Krag's began to pop to the right and left, the alarm traveling up and down the line with lightning-like rapidity. Soon six miles of grim-looking rifle muzzles were pointing toward the innocent nothing to the front, a volley occasionally resounding through the midnight air at an imaginary enemy.

Dawn found "Pills" searching the field of battle for dead and wounded. He discovered numerous bullet-holes in his tent and medicine chests, made by 45-caliber balls; and, lying near the place where the gaunt, hungry-looking corps man first fired upon the enemy, he found poor "Paterno," Company E's monkey mascot, with a short and bloody tail, that member having been lost in the battle—a penalty for his nocturnal perambulations. [117] [118]

Private Timmons and the Carabao.

Timmons was a recruit private in an infantry regiment, and, when stationed in a temperance community, was a mighty good soldier. True to his steel, he met death in the general advance from San Fernando, in August, 1899. He was one of those jolly, good natured fellows who can sit in the mud and crack jokes, and sing standing in water to his arm-pits. And what is better, he possessed the happy faculty of imparting his exuberance to his long-faced, homesick, and downcast fellow-privates. His temper was as smooth as a becalmed sea, and seldom was it that a ripple passed over the smooth surface. There was just one word in the soldier's vocabulary that would disturb him, but this word never failed to bring on a typhoon. This innocent yet magic word was "carabao," the name of the water buffalo, the beast of burden that formed the American "cracker line" in the Philippines before the introduction of the ever-faithful mule. This is how it came to have such a terror for poor Timmons: [119]

His regiment was undergoing its training on the "firing-line," and his company furnished twelve men daily for the "lunette," a kind of detached bastion about 800 yards in front of the line in the direction of the enemy. This was a lonesome detail. Just twelve men to man an isolated little fort, the enemy known to be in great numbers not more than four or five miles away. It came Timmons' turn to go on this duty for, the first time. The detail, in command of a sergeant, marched out at sundown and relieved the men who had been on the previous twenty-four hours. The old guard turned over its orders and at the same time reported having seen some armed "gugus" in the direction of the Mariquina River, which ran in front of [120]

the “lunette” about a thousand yards away, the intervening space being an open rice-field.

The old guard marched off and the new one on, throwing off their blanket-rolls and making themselves as comfortable for the night as possible. But two men at a time were required to remain awake and vigilant.

Night came on as black as the enemy they were fighting, and with it all the breath-stopping and hair-raising noises that the myriads of flying and crawling animals of that war-ridden country produces. There was the “vantriloquist” bird, gifted with a voice that is the essence of all that is frightful and hideous in sounds—forty demons running amuck and coming your direction.

In painful harmony was the low, deep tones the “chuck me,” whose vocal cords are tuned after the left end of the key-board of the pipe organ. Then there were slimy lizards, chameleons, tree-frogs, scorpions, and wonderful bugs, all with voices peculiar to their families. There were lightning-bugs as big as jack-o'-lanterns, and tarantulas with round and velvety bodies, and a spread of legs that would cover a frying-pan. All this and the known presence of a sneaking enemy was enough to test the nerves of veterans, so its effect on recruits can easily be imagined. [121]

Timmons' time to remain awake and go on post duty arrived. Jones, who called himself an old “vet,” because he had served in Cuba, went on with “Tim,” as his comrades called him. Their turn began at midnight. The Sergeant, who had posted them, was soon lying down taking a non-commissioned officer's sleep—one eye closed, the other on the *qui vive*. Both sentries were on the alert. Many suspicious noises came to their ears, and imaginary murderous-looking “niggers” were seen lurking in the grass, behind rice-dykes, and lying crouching on the ground. If “Tim” discovered something that he was certain was a death-dealing boloman, he would tiptoe over to Jones and hold a council of war. That worthy—the old “vet”—would dispense nerve-soothing whispers in his ears, and he would return to his post a less nervous “rookey.” [122]

The time dragged wearily on, and finally arrived when they were about to be relieved. The blackest of the night was on. Jones left his post to arouse the Sergeant and acquaint that official with the hour. “Tim” was now alone. A slowly moving figure loomed up before him not fifty yards away. Then came the sounds of heavy tramping feet. The sounds were rapidly drawing nearer. There, before his dilated eyes, dimly outlined, and within pistol-shot, was the enemy in great numbers, who would soon close around the little garrison and murder them to a man. What should he do? His orders were strict about giving undue alarms, but if he wasted a moment longer, there would be no time for defense. If he left his post to arouse his comrades, the enemy would rush upon them. No. He would give the alarm by firing and one dead Filipino would be the result of it. He nervously raised his rifle, took deliberate aim at the advancing figures, and fired. There was a sickening thud, a heavy fall, and low, deep moans. The men were aroused and manned the fort. The Sergeant ordered a general fusillade. The regiment was in the trenches in a moment and remained there till dawn. [123]

The first light of day revealed, lying in a great pool of his own blood, “Big Bill,” the bull buffalo that drew the headquarters water-cart, who had been out grazing that night. [124]

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An Encounter with Bolomen.

A True Narrative of a Personal Experience in the Philippines.

By a Lieutenant of Infantry.

The organized bands of Filipinos known as bolomen are so called because their principal weapon is the long, broad-bladed, vicious-looking knife called the bolo, with which they do their deadly work. They make many boasts of their prowess and skill in taking human life, and one of their proudest feats is to sever the head from the body with a single blow. Our men in the Philippines who are on detached duty, or who for any cause are away from their commands, are frequently attacked by these men.

As a rule, bolomen do not carry rifles, although many carry revolvers when they can get them. Their work is to kill at short range. With the stealth of a cat they slip up on their victim, strike him a deadly blow, and then beat a quick retreat to their own lines.

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Many of the insurgent officers and soldiers carry bolos, but the genuine bolomen are an organized body belonging to Aguinaldo's army, who have as distinct a work to do as the different branches of our own service. Their work is solely to surprise the unsuspecting outpost, officer or soldier, to dispatch him and run away before the deed has been discovered.

Their feats are commonly committed in the darkness of the night. Then their cat-like tread serves them well. Stealing noiselessly along through banana groves and bamboo thickets, cane-fields and cogonales, they approach within a few feet of their intended victim and lie for a few moments watching him as a snake eyes a defenseless bird.

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During the months of June and July, 1899, my regiment was doing duty at San Fernando, about forty miles from Manila. The companies of the regiment took turns on outpost, going on this duty every fourth day and being in reserve on the outpost line the day preceding that on which they went on post. This gave the companies two nights in houses in town and two on the line out of every four.

My company did duty on what was known as the north line, extending from San Fernando a full mile toward Angeles. The entire distance was an almost impenetrable jungle of bamboo and banana trees, intertwined and interwoven with vines, thorn-bushes, and many other forms of tropical growth.

To the front was an immense cane-field, with a "paddy-field" beyond. The cane was from five to seven feet high. Along this deep fringe of bamboo and matted undergrowth, and near the edge next to the cane-field, our pickets, or Cossack posts, as they are properly called, were stationed at distances ranging from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty yards apart, one corporal and six privates at each post.

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On the tenth of July my company went out in reserve, and early in the morning relieved the company there on the outpost line. Nothing took place during the day except the usual exchange of shots with the insurgent pickets. Most officers when in command of companies on this duty visit their sentries some time during the night, in order to reassure their men, and to see that they are well-instructed and on the alert. I have always followed this practice.

I started on a tour of inspection at about 9:30, visiting first the post on the railroad on the left of the line, then taking the other posts in succession down toward the right. It had rained in torrents for several days, and wide, deep pools of water had formed everywhere along the way. Because of these pools, I was wearing high-topped rubber boots. Shortly after ten o'clock I arrived at the next to the last post on the line, which was about two hundred and fifty yards farther on. Between these two pickets was the most dense growth of bamboo trees and banana stalks to be found in that neighborhood, and the entire distance was a continuous chain of diminutive lakes. There was a path leading through this net-work from one picket to the other.

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It was drizzling. The immense spreading leaves of the banana and thickly matted foliage of the bamboo formed a canopy that shut out every trace of light. No dungeon was ever darker than this path.

Notwithstanding the gloomy surroundings caused by the death-like stillness, the darkness of the night, the water dripping from the overhanging vegetation and completely saturating my clothes, my occasionally colliding with a thorny shrub, or tripping over a low-hanging vine, I was in excellent spirits. I groped along the cave-like way, humming in a low tone "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and had reached a point about midway between the pickets. Then, although I could see no one, I suddenly became aware of the presence of a human being.

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I stopped as if I had been struck dead, and strained my eyes. There, just in front of me, near enough for me to grasp with my hands, I saw the dim outlines of a short, thick-set man. Was he one of my men? No, for no man would dare to leave his post at that time of night. Should he be discovered in such an act, the penalty for his crime would be death.

"Hello! Who are you?" I said. There was no answer from the man; instead, I saw his right hand quickly strike out from his shoulder, and the flash of a glistening blade. I threw up my left hand, and our wrists met in heavy collision; but his blow was stronger than my ward, for I felt a sharp sting in my face just below the left eye, and a moment later the warm blood trickled down my cheek. With my left

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hand I grabbed his wrist just below the thumb and gripped it like grim death, but he was not to be beaten thus. I felt the sinews of his wrist rise, and the grinding of the muscles, and then the same stinging sensation that I had felt in my face I now felt in my wrist.

I could count the cuts as he made them—one, two, three—all on my left wrist and hand, and then the blood began to run down my forearm, as our hands were elevated.

This occupied but a second of time. He raised his left hand, and I saw another flash. What it was I knew not, but I immediately grasped his wrist and tried to force this hand behind him. Before I could do so, he fired, and the ball passed through my left boot-leg. The muzzle was so close to me that the force of the powder almost threw me to the earth. I ground my teeth in a desperate effort to force his hand behind him. My left hand, cut and bleeding, still held his right. Now forcing the fight with the revolver, he tried vainly to raise it and shoot me in the body. Throwing my whole strength on my right arm, I succeeded in forcing back his revolver hand. At this he began to shoot at my feet.

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The first shot missed, but he immediately followed it with another. It struck, for my right foot felt as if it had been hit with a club, and grew numb. Four more shots came in quick succession. One of them—which I cannot tell—struck the same foot and broke the bridge, as I knew from the immediate loss of strength in that member.

Now all was quiet. We stood with our heaving chests touching. I felt his breath in my face, and his heart palpitating against my breast. There was a lull in the battle. I felt safe, as far as the revolver was concerned, for he had emptied that, but the deadly knife was still poised over my head. My life depended entirely on the strength of my wounded hand and wrist, which were holding the knife away from my throat.

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Now I remembered that bolomen never travel alone. That he had comrades within a few feet of me, who were trying to distinguish between us, so that they might be sure that their knives should enter my back instead of his, I was certain. My flesh cringed at the thought; I could almost feel the cold steel enter my body.

It was time for me to force the fight. My right foot was badly wounded, but the knee was yet unhurt. With this I struck the man a blow in the abdomen, and quickly followed it with another. It was evident that he was weakening. He again made a desperate effort to free the hand which held the bolo, but my endeavor to keep him from succeeding was greater. I drew back the right leg as far as I could, doubled up the knee, and, with all the strength that I possessed, drove it again into his abdomen.

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"I drew back the right leg as far as I could, doubled up the knee, and, with all the strength that I possessed, drove it again into his abdomen."

The effect was marvelous; his muscles relaxed, his struggles grew feeble, and his breathing was badly interrupted. This was the decisive part of the fight, and I grasped the opportunity. With all my might I threw him from me. He fell among the bushes, and was lost in the blinding darkness. I drew my revolver from the scabbard, and fired in the direction in which I had thrown him. This shot was answered by a cry which told me he had been hit.

At this moment I heard the twigs breaking and the leaves rustling behind me. Like a flash I faced about and fired at the approaching figures—my assailant's fellow-bolomen. The effect of the shot was to cause a heavy rustling and the sound of many feet in rapid retreat.

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I had been careless enough to come into this jungle with but two loads in my revolver, and these had been fired. When I began to reload, my right foot gave way and I fell. Lying on the ground, I loaded and fired again. The groans of my wounded enemy were getting farther away, and the sounds finally died in the direction of the Filipino line.

I hobbled to my nearest outpost, where one of the men bound my wounds, and later I received the attention of a medical officer. I believe myself to be the first American soldier to live to tell the tale of his fight with bolomen.—*From Youth's Companion of February 1, 1900.*

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"Carabao Bill."

A Midnight Reconnaissance in the Philippines.

"Carabao Bill," from his dress and manner, might be said to be a typical United

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States Army officer. His figure would probably fall short of the standard, but he was no less strong and healthy than his brother knights of the sword. His strength was more to be compared to that patient animal after which he was nick-named, the mighty carabao, but he lacked the grace of form and dignity of bearing that the average wearer of shoulder-straps in Uncle Sam's army is supposed to possess.

The soldiers said he waltzed like a cow and walked like a camel—moving one corner at a time—which was indeed a graphic way of describing his movements.

William Van Osdol was his name, and he was a second lieutenant in the —th Infantry. After several months of hard service in the Philippines he earned for himself the unenviable sobriquet of "Carabao Bill," because his awkward movements, ox-like strength, and slow but sure gait were so much like the sturdy animal that formed our "cracker line" that that name could not but suggest itself. [136]

In Cuba he served as a sergeant in one of the regular infantry regiments. He was the proud possessor of a bayonet scabbard, several times punctured by Mauser bullets, which he had worn in the charge up San Juan Hill. It was for "gallant and meritorious conduct" during this fight that won for him the recommendation for commissioned rank; and it was but shortly after he had returned from fever-ridden Santiago, when in the hospital at Montauk Point, that the much-coveted document, making him an officer in the United States Army, reached him. [137]

Van Osdol was a born fighter. The set of his lower jaw and the quick snap of his light blue eyes left nothing to be guessed at on that line. While he was not a picturesque nor dashing officer, yet his heavy growth of fiery red locks was ever to be seen in the front of the fight and seldom under cover. An Irish corporal, who had once fallen a victim to his disciplining, declared, "The sorril-topped lootenint hain't brains 'nuff to git scart," but this was not true. While not a man renowned for brilliancy of intellect, yet he was a level-headed thinker whose judgment was always good on minor matters. He was frequently selected to conduct scouting expeditions where good "horse sense" and nerve were much more expedient than a superabundance of gray matter abnormally developed with theories of fine tactics and maneuvers. [138]

When the —th Infantry, to which he belonged, was doing duty at a convent some fifty or sixty miles from Manila, on the Manila and Dagupan Railroad, the Tagalos gave the usual annoyance. Their threatenings and feeble attacks came mostly from the west, but as the rainy season approached the torrential showers soon flooded that vicinity, so they changed their base of harassing to a village of bamboo and nipa palm huts on the further side of a river running parallel to the American outpost line on the south, about five thousand yards away. The intervening ground was taken up with rice paddies, banana groves, cogonales, or tall grass, and occasionally a bamboo jungle.

The rebels had no sooner occupied this new position, than they began to entrench, take possession of the huts, and make themselves comfortable in other ways, giving promise to make matters lively for our troops the rainy season. [139]

They were frequently reënforced, greater activity was seen among them, and their boldness was unprecedented. Some days, when the tropical sun was beating down its sweltering rays, and our men were seeking every vestige of shade, the pesky little Filipinos would suddenly emerge into the open rice-field, deploy into line of skirmishers, and advance in a most threatening manner toward the American lines.

The outposts would become alarmed and call for the regiment to support them. Out the companies would rush at double-time, amid swearing and sweat. When the deployments were made and all was ready to receive the dusky foe, he would suddenly face about before he had approached within effective rifle-range. The regiment's orders were to hold the convent; consequently the enemy could not be pursued beyond the outposts' limits.

One morning during the latter part of July, 1899, it was observed that there were no signs of the festive "gugus" in the accustomed place. No smoke; no outposts; no soldiers in short white pants and wide brimmed sombreros. This was an unusual thing—for, while Aguinaldo's men were never known to hold a position against the mad attacks of our boys in blue, the voluntary abandonment of their works was an unheard-of proceeding. [140]

Treachery, or the same thing, Filipino strategy, was strongly suspected. They were playing some game, and the senior officer at the convent determined to learn the trump.

Just as the shades of evening began to gather, on the day when the Tagalos made their mysterious disappearance, "Carabao Bill," who was in command of his

company on outpost, and had it quartered in a church which had once been held by the natives and abandoned under pressure, turned out his men to do the daily police. While he was busy reprimanding a private, who was noted for laziness and shirking his duty, and had just been adding to his reputation for such, a battalion adjutant, a tall and handsome fellow with a slight partiality for legs, came dashing up on a native pony. His knees were bent and elevated toward his chin in order that his pedal extremities might not collide with the frail limbs of his steaming mount.

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Owing to the shortness of his stirrup-straps, he dismounted rather ungracefully, but soon gathered himself into military shape and smartly saluted "Bill," saying: "Sir, the Commanding Officer presents his compliments and directs that at twelve o'clock to-night you take a non-commissioned officer and fourteen privates of your company and make a thorough reconnaissance of the grounds between here and the enemy's position on the south, and determine if possible their whereabouts, strength, and probable intention; and report to him immediately on your return."

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His message delivered, the dashing young officer remounted and rode rapidly back to headquarters.

Van Osdol slowly ran his freckled fingers through his auburn locks, and gave a shrill whistle, his signal for his first sergeant to report to him. That worthy of multitudinous duties immediately appeared and received orders to arrange the detail for the reconnaissance duty.

The night was blindingly dark. There was a density to the darkness that almost excluded the penetration of thought. The mind could pass no farther than the immediate vicinity. Since the sun had set a thick layer of clouds had lined the canopy of heaven, veiling the winks of the brightest stars and the benignant light of the moon.

Sergeant Schriner, with soldierly punctuality, reported with the detail just as the sentry over the rifle-stacks at the church called in a subdued voice the hour of twelve.

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The little party promptly started on its hazardous mission, feeling its way through the matted bamboo jungles fringing the station—the officer leading, the sergeant and men following in "goose formation," single-file; each keeping in touch with the person before him.

The advance was slow, for during the day the border around the place was almost impenetrable—the darkness served to multiply the difficulties.

It was a night to try men's souls. Bolo parties frequently lay in ambush in these places of perfect hiding, and suddenly pounced upon the unsuspecting Americanos, and cut them to pieces before a hand could be raised in defense.

Or there was the possibility of receiving a volley at close range; for it was known that at night the Tagalos invariably approached nearer our lines. Since they had so mysteriously disappeared during the day, there was a strong probability that they would take up a new position that night. Where, no one knew.

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Lonely huts, amid vines and bamboo, that had been deserted when the place fell into our hands, were frequently passed. A half-starved dog, that had refused to follow its master from home, set up a mournful howl that tended to chill the marrow in the bones. The very silence was appalling. The breaking of a twig was as the discharge of a rifle. The lightest footfall resounded in the distance. To the party it seemed their shoes were of iron and the earth a ringing plate of steel.

After a hard struggle with Nature's obstacles, and many halts to locate and determine the cause of suspicious noises, the little band finally emerged from the dense undergrowth into an open field. Almost simultaneously with the entrance into this open space there was a slight break in the clouds, and through the crevice the moon and stars gave sparingly of their light.

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The men were now deployed into line of skirmishers, and moved slowly and cautiously forward. There was just sufficient light to cause the imagination to see an enemy behind every rice-dyke or bunch of grass.

The advance was made to within 150 paces of the river, when a halt was made. A vague outline of the village and trenches could be seen. Someone saw the dim figure of a rebel sentry. All eyes were turned on the spot, but he remained as fixed as the stars.

Van Osdol decided to go alone to investigate the trenches and village, for in doing this there would be less danger of detection.

The Sergeant remained behind to take command of the detachment. The intrepid officer, with revolver in hand, went on his way toward the river. His advance was slow—only a few feet at a time, then he would stop, lower his head to the ground, and listen intently.

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Now the trenches loomed up before him not more than fifty yards away. He strained his eyes in effort to see some signs of a living occupant, but nothing save the fanning of the giant leaves of the banana, and the waving of the tall grass under the gentle breeze of the south wind, was seen to move. There was reigning the stillness of death—that awful omen of lurking danger. A few feet further he wormed his way, now crawling on all fours. Just in front of him was a foot-bridge across the river, made of a single stringer of poles and a hand-rail with which to balance the body.

Over this bridge he began to cross. Not more than two short steps were taken when he heard a low, whistling sound. He halted instantly, squatted on his haunches beneath the hand-rail, and listened, as fixed as a statue. The whistling was repeated; this time nearer, but the direction indefinite.

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Was it the signal of an alarmed sentry, or was it one of the many nocturnal noises which the Island of Luzon produces?

Another low whistle—this time nearer; then the speaking of that instinct that tells us of the presence of human beings in the blackness of the night.

He slowly faced about. There within four feet of him, crouching upon the ground near the water's edge, was a man with a rifle in his hand. Quick as a flash he threw the muzzle of his revolver in his face—remembering his surroundings, he never fired or uttered a word.

Struggling between a whisper and a low talk, breathless through, fear, came the words of Private Holmes: "For God's sake, don't shoot, Lieutenant; it's me."

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The officer lowered his revolver and beckoned the man to draw nearer.

With his mouth to the Lieutenant's ear, the soldier told that the men left behind had seen a number of moving figures in the village and trenches, not twenty-five yards away from where they were then crouching; and that he had been sent to warn his officer of his danger.

Here is where it tried the steel of "Carabao Bill."

The two kept their positions, scarcely daring to breathe lest they be heard. A plan of operations soon formed in the mind of the resourceful young officer. He whispered to Holmes to return and have the Sergeant hold his men in readiness, with magazines filled, for an emergency should he need them.

Before Holmes had covered half the distance between the Lieutenant and the men, there was the sound as the cocking of a rifle; a second later came the flash and sharp report of a Mauser. True to his training, the soldier fell to the ground and lay motionless.

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By the light of the flash Van Osdol saw the black face of the Filipino sentry who had fired.

Soon began that mumbling, chattering, rattling noise that an alarmed camp alone produces. The shrill commands of the little officers in frantic endeavor to steady their men, the patter of many shoeless feet, the breaking of rifle-stacks, and the clanking of bayonets and swords, made a medley of camp music that was hideous to hear.

The alarm was soon quieted. The aroused men returned to their sleep, and soon all was again quiet. The sentry who had fired at Holmes made loud and emphatic assertions in the twangy language of the Tagalo of having seen something at which to fire, but he was disbelieved, his belt removed, deprived of his rifle, and another man put in his place.

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This was pleasant for the squatting American officer on the bridge to behold.

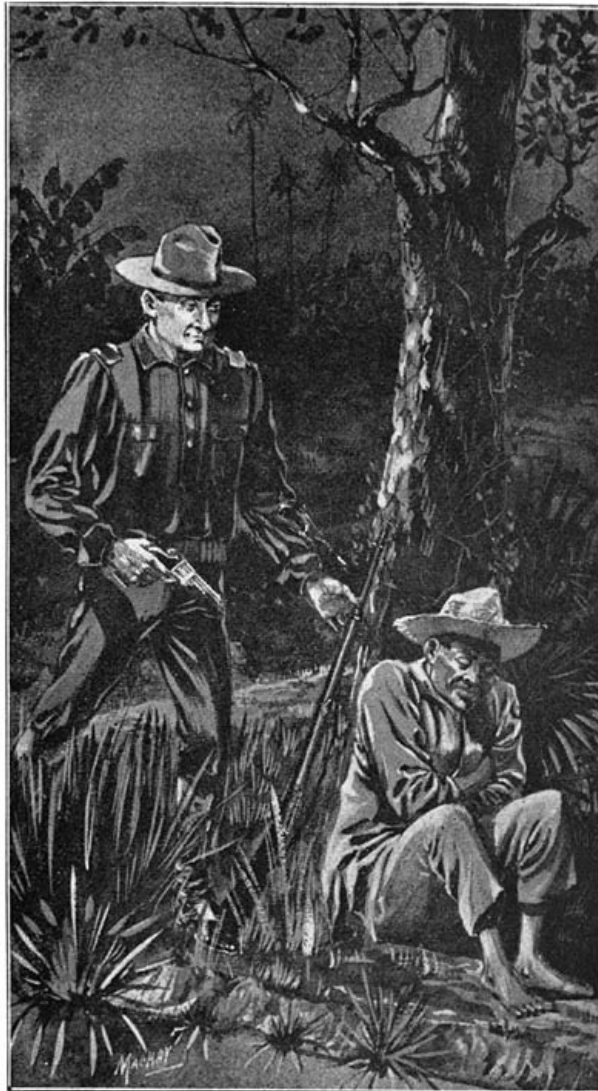
After patiently waiting in deep suspense for more than half an hour, he noticed the substituted sentry stand his rifle against a tree and sit down. A moment later his head fell forward and he was asleep.

Determined to learn more of the enemy's position and strength, "Carabao Bill," inch by inch, silently slipped across the bridge and to the edge of the trench, a few yards to the left of the sleeping sentry. Here he made a rapid survey of the insurgent camp and position. Hundreds of them were lying stretched in sleep

behind the shelter of the earthworks.

His mission accomplished, he slowly turned to the unconscious sentry, thinking to secure the Mauser rifle as a trophy of the trip; but he had no more than grabbed it when the man awoke with a start, and, like a flash, whipped out a shining bolo. Before the native had time to use his weapon, "Bill" raised the rifle above his head, and, with a powerful blow that resounded through the midnight air, sent him reeling over the trench among his slumbering companions. Then, with a shout that would tend to raise the dead, he began to empty his revolver into the rapidly awakening rebel soldiers below.

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"He slowly turned to the unconscious sentry, thinking to secure the Mauser rifle as a trophy of the trip."

Quick-witted Sergeant Schriener had no sooner heard the blow of the rifle and the shout of his commanding officer, till he had taken in the situation.

He gave the order for a charge; and this small band of Uncle Sam's men rushed like demons, screaming and yelling like maniacs, toward the little bridge—then over it, and began to pour an awful, close-range fire into the confused mass of humanity beyond the trench.

The effect was magical. The drowsy enemy, taken unawares, routed and disorganized, beat a disgraceful retreat. In vain their officers tried to make them stand; but the thought uppermost in every man's mind was how to get to a place of security in the quickest possible time.

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In less time than it takes to tell it; there were no Filipinos on the scene of action, excepting the dead and wounded. The number of these, considering the darkness of the night, did credit to American marksmanship.

The sound of retreating feet was occasionally broken by the reports of a poorly directed volley by a few of the bolder characters, who had the rare nerve to halt and fire at the audacious "Yankees."

The situation was ridiculous. Sixteen men had charged and taken a well-fortified position held by at least one thousand Tagalog.

The victors sat down on the bank of the river to talk and laugh over the adventure. Meanwhile, the terror-stricken followers of the misguided Aguinaldo were being rallied by their officers beyond the range of fire. They were now aware of the inferiority in numbers of the Americans.

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To capture and hold the enemy's works was not a part of Van Osdo's instructions. Now realizing this, he decided to return and report. The men were called together, and the start began for the return.

But the bridge! In their wild advance over that frail structure it had been so shaken that it had fallen into the river and was washed away.

The stream was full to the banks and too deep to wade. Not a third of the men could swim it with their arms and accouterments. The rebels were every minute drawing nearer and intensifying their fire. They were truly between fire and water. There were no boats to be had nor could the time be taken to construct a raft of bamboo poles.

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On came the howling, revengeful, murderous black devils, frenzied by their recent defeat by this inferior party. The leaders were frantically waving their swords over their heads, and shouting words of encouragement to their men; offering rewards to the first to reënter the trenches.

Our diminutive army was now on the defensive. They leaped into the ditch and began to take pot-shots at the more daring of the rapidly approaching mass, determined, to hold the place or die in the attempt—indeed, there was no alternative.

They succeeded in arresting the van.

The enemy in turn sought shelter and began a fire that had results, for two Americans were soon rendered *hors de combat*; the trench not affording as good shelter from the side from which the insurgents were approaching as on the other side.

This long-range duel kept up for many minutes. Ammunition grew scarce and was finally exhausted, Van Osdol alone retaining loads in his revolver.

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From the slackening of the American fire, the rebels soon became aware of their scarcity of cartridges, and again began a mad rush for the trenches.

Nothing remained for the bold little band to do but to meet them with the point of the bayonet and sell their lives at a precious price.

The unhurt members of the detachment rallied around their gallant leader with bayonets fixed. Now the foremost of the wildly rushing horde was within a hundred yards.

A brilliant thought struck Sergeant Schriener. He ran forward, grasped a Mauser near one of the rebels who had fallen when the trenches were taken, undid the belt of the lifeless owner, buckled it around his own waist, and returned to his comrades. All followed his example. With their own arms and ammunition the advance of the blood-thirsty enemy was again checked. With the newly acquired arms and ammunition the brave little band inflicted a decided injury to their would-be slayers. Now every shot was expended with the greatest caution.

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Again the American fire slackened, and again the stubborn insurrectos rushed forward. At last the recently acquired belts were emptied. There was now no further hope.

With renewed shouting, and rending the air with their hideous screams, the twice-checked enemy came madly on. Once more the defenders rallied to meet their death together.

On a sudden the yells seemed a hundred times multiplied, and from the rear as well as front. Had they been surrounded? To the rear the shouts were rapidly drawing nearer, but it was not the sharp and broken yell of the Tagalo—it was the familiar "Yankee yell"; that invincible, "gugu"-terrorizing "Yankee yell."

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Five hundred brave defenders of the stars and stripes had heard the first firing, when the trenches were taken, and immediately started to the rescue of their comrades.

Upon his return, "Carabao Bill" reported that he found the enemy.

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“Paterno,” the Disgraced Mascot.

Ostracism in Monkey Society.

There is a certain analogy between the Chinaman’s pigtail and the prehensile appendage of that very astute little animal, the monkey, for the proud possessors of either of these grotesque physical adornments lose social caste the moment they are bereft of them. That there are reasons to believe that the tail of the monkey is his credentials to the polite society of his race the following incident will serve to substantiate:

One day in May, 1899, when one of our infantry regiments which had been ascending the Rio Grande, in the Island of Luzon, in pursuit of the wily and festive Filipino, had halted to rest, it was decided to have an exhibition of company mascots. Each company had a monkey—an even dozen of them all told. There were “Pat” and “Mike,” who proudly wore strips of billiard-table cloth about their necks; and “Aguinaldo” and “Paterno,” named respectively for the leader and brains of the Tagalo insurrection. “Aguinaldo” wore with dignity a little tin sword by his side that one of the men of his company had made from a salmon can, while “Paterno” looked gay and world-wise in a ballet skirt ingeniously contrived by a company tailor from a bit of red mosquito-bar. The others all had names, most of them for some distinguished military commander to whom they were supposed to bear some facial resemblance.

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The show was a decided success. Every contestant put aside his work-a-day tricks, and performed those only that were intended for gala days. “Aguinaldo” was a sure winner from the first, for he had learned to draw his sword, wave it dramatically over his head, cheer for a few seconds in monkey talk, then break and dash to the rear. “Paterno” was an easy candidate for second honors. He gave a giddy dance and looked coy.

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But “pride goeth before a fall.” It was decided to let the mascots have a social gathering. They were brought into a ring formed by grinning soldiers. All went well for a moment or two. They grinned, caressed, and made merry. Just in the very heights of the ecstasies, a playful young monk, that had been exchanging “sheep’s eyes” with “Paterno,” in a fit of playfulness made a grab for the latter’s tail, but lo! there was none. The news spread like the incoming of “amigos” after the capture of a Filipino town. A damper fell upon the meeting. All scorned the maimed fellow with that frosty bearing that a reigning belle bestows upon a promising *débutante*, or the monkey family toward their tailless fellow-monks.

[161]

The disgraced animal begged and entreated for further notice, and a renewal of the general good time that had been so unceremoniously ended by the recent discovery, but his solicitations were in vain—none condescended to again notice him.

With “Paterno,” patience at last ceased to be a virtue. Knowing that the playful young monk who had made the discovery caused his downfall, he looked for a moment at that guileless-appearing creature. The expression of his face rapidly changed from a look of entreaty to that of ferociousness. With a vicious bound, he pounced upon his enemy, clawing, tearing, and biting. The other members of this solemn gathering simply separated the belligerents, none daring to do harm to the socially ostracised fellow.

Finally, giving up the struggle, “Paterno” withdrew from the crowd. In the *mêlée* he had lost his skirt. He looked long and pitifully at his fellow-mascots who had so suddenly turned against him. Great teardrops gathered in his eyes and trickled down his hairy cheeks. Raising his head, he spied a bamboo thicket in the distance. With a wild yell, he sprang through the line of sympathetic soldiers and made for the jungle.

[162]

Company E had had their last sight of “Paterno,” their tailless monkey mascot.

Colophon

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A collection of short stories written—or collected—by an American soldier in the first years Philippine-American War.

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Encoding

Revision History

2008-02-21 Started.

Corrections

The following corrections have been applied to the text:

Location	Source	Correction
Page 38	[<i>Not in source</i>]	"
Page 56	headquart-ters	headquarters
Page 76	[<i>Not in source</i>]	"
Page 126	bambo	bamboo
Page 137	expediitons	expeditions
Page 153	betwen	between

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BAMBOO TALES ***

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