The Last Shot

FREDERICK PALMER

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SYNOPSIS.

At their home on the frontier between the Browns and Grays Marta Galland and her mother, entertaining Colonel Westerling of the Grays, see Captain Lanstron of the Browns injured by a fall in his aeroplane. Ten years later. Westerling, nominal vice but real chief of staff, re-enforces South La Tir and meditates on war. Marta tells him of her teaching children the follies of war and martial patriotism, and begs him to prevent war while he is chief of staff. Lanstron calls on Marta at her home. She tells Lanstron that she believes Feller, the gardener, to be a spy. Lanstron confesses it is true and shows her a telephone which Feller has concealed in a secret passage under the tower for use to benefit the Browns in war emergencies. Lanstron declares his love for Marta. Westerling and the Gray premier plan to use a trivial international affair to foment warlike patriotism and strike before declaring war. Partow, Brown chief of staff, reveals his plans to Lanstron, made vice chief. The Gray army crosses the border line and attacks. The Browns check them. Artillery, infantry, aeroplanes and dirigibles engage. Marta has her first glimpse of war in its modern, cold, scientific, murderous bru-fality. The Browns fall back to the Galhouse. Marta sees a night attack The Graya attack in force. Feller leaves his secret telephone and goes back to his guns. Hand to hand fighting. The Browns fall back again. Marta asks Lanstron over the phone to appeal to Partow to stop the sighting. Vandalism in the Galland house. Westerling and his staff occupy the Gal-land house and he begins to woo Marta, who apparently throws her fortunes with the Grays and offers valuable information. he calls up Lanstron on the secret telehone and plans to give Westerling infornation that will trap the Gray army. Westerling forms his plan of attack upon what he learns from her. The Grays take

CHAPTER XVI--Continued.

you to be!" he said. "You are right." He caught her hand, inclosing it entirely in his grip, and she was sensible, in a kind of dazed horror, of the thrill of his strength. "Nothing can stop us! Numbers will win! Hard fighting in the mercy of a quick end!" he declared with his old rigidity of five against three which was welcome to her. "Then," he added - "and then-"

"Then-" There the devil ended the sentence and she withdrew her hand and felt the relief of one escaping suffocation, to find that he had realised that anything further during that interview would be banality and was rising to go.

"Bociety turned on Minna for a human weakness, but I-I'm not a human nounced the loss of a position as being! I am one of the pawns of the machine of war!"

Walking slowly with lowered head as she left the arbor, she almost ran into Bouchard, who apologized with the single word "Pardon!" as he lifted his cap in overdone courtesy, which his stolid brevity made the more conapieuous.

"Miss Galland, you seem lost in abstraction," he said in sudden loguecity. "I am almost on the point of accusing you of being a poet,"

"Accusing!" she replied. "Then you must think that I would write bad poetry.

"On the contrary, I should say excellent-using the sonnet form," he re-

"I might make a counter accusation, only that yours would be the epic form," answered Marta. "For you, too, seem fond of rambling."

There was a veiled challenge in the hawk eyes, which she met with commonplace politeness in hers, before be again lifted his cap and proceeded on his way.

For the next two weeks Marta's role resolved itself into a kind of routine. Their cramped quarters became a refuge to Marta in the trial of her secret work under the very nose of the staff. With little Clarissa Eileen, in the neighborhood. On sunshing the urn on a table at four-thirty as in the old days.

No member of the staff was more present at Marta's teas than Bouchard, who was developing his social instinct late in life by sitting in the background and allowing watched and listened. In his hearing, Marta's attitude toward the progress of the war was sympathetic but never tion with Clariesa Eileen, who was in her own part, which never escaped danger of becoming spoiled by officers her consciousness. One chamber of who had children of their own at home. her mind was acting for him; a sec-After the reports of killed and wound- and chamber was perfectly aware that which came with such appalling the other was acting. gularity, it was a relief to hear of ie day's casualties among Clarissa's The chief of transportation ad supply rode her on his shoulder: ak with her; the chief engineer fanks." wift her a doll house of stones with

mustn't get too set up over all in keeping her to her part. tion, Clarices Elleen, my riald Marta to the child, "You | men now, Lanny," she said.

were sinking deeper under a heavier frown. His duty being to get information, he was gaining none. His duty being to keep the Grays' secrets, there was a leak somewhere in his own department. He quizzed subordinates; he made abrupt transfers, to no

Meanwhile, the Grays were taking the approaches to the main line of defense, which had been thought relatively immaterial but had been found shrewdly placed and their vulnerability overestimated. The thunders of batteries hammering them became t routine of existence, like the passing of trains to one living near a railroad. The guns went on while tea was being served; they ushered in dawn and darkness; they were going when sleep came to those whom they later awakened with a start. Fights as desperate as the one around the house became features of this period, which was only a warming-up practice for war demon before the orgy impending assault on the main line.

Marta began to realize the immensity of the chessboard and of the forces engaged in more than the bare statement of numbers and distances. If a first attack on a position failed, the wires from the Galland house repeated their orders to concentrate more guns and attack again. In the end the Browns always yielded, but grudgingly, calculatingly, never being taken by surprise. The few of "This is like you-like what I want | them who fell prisoners said, "God with us! We shall win in the end! and answered no questions. Gradually the Gray army began to feel that it was battling with a mystery which was fighting under cover, falling back under cover—a tenacious, watchful mystery that sent sprays of death into every finger of flesh that the Grays thrust forward in assault.

"Another position taken. Our advance continues," was the only news "Then!" she repeated, averting her that Westerling gave to the army, his people, and the world, which forgot its sports and murders and divorce cases in following the progress of the first great European war for two generations. He made no mention of the costs; his casualty lists were secret. The Gray hosts were sweeping for-"I don't feel decent!" she thought. | ward as a slow, irresistible tide; this by Partow's own admission. He anpromptly as the Grays its taking. He published a daily list of casualties so meager in contrast to their own that the Grays thought it false; he made known the names of the killed and wounded to their relatives. Yet the seeming candor of his press bureau included no straw of information of military value to the enemy.

Westerling never went to tea at the was part of his cultivation of greatnates. His meetings with Marta hapthe garden. Only once had he made his thin lips even less than usual, but any reference to the "And then" of their interview in the arbor.

"I am winning battles for you!" he had exclaimed with the thing in his lead with equal candor. eyes which she loathed.

To her it was equivalent to earing that she had tricked him into sending men to be killed in order to please her. She despised herself for the way he confided in her; yet she had to go on keeping his confidence, returning a tender glance with one that shudder when he spoke of a loss of "only ten thousand." In order to rally to her task, she learned to picture the peri lines of his face hard-set with fiveagainst three brutality, while in comthey formed the only feminine society fort he ordered multitudes to death, and, in contrast, to recall the smile Galland was usually to be of Dellarme, who saked his soldiers to found in her favorite chair outside undergo no risk that he would not door; and here Minna set share. And after every success he would remark that he was so much nearer Engadir, that position of the main line of defense whose weakness she had revealed.

> "Your Engadir!" he came to say. "Then we shall again profit by your information; that is, unless they have

do the talking while he fortified since you received it." "They haven't. They had already fortified!" she thought. She was always seeing the mockery of his words interrogatory, while she shared atten- in the light of her own knowledge and

"One position more—the Twin Boulder Redoubt, it is called," he announced at last. "We shall not press hard in front. We shall drive in chief of tactics played hide-and- masses on either side and storm the

This she was telephoning to Lan- formed!" concluded Turcas, returning the own hands; and the chief medical stron a few minutes later and having, grimly to his point. was as concerned when she in return, all the news of the Browns cold as if the health of the The sheer fascination of knowing what both sides were doing exerted its spell

"They've lost four hundred thousand only little girl and I am the "And we only a hundred thousan

are as bad as Westerfing and I am worse than either of you! I-I an nounced the four hundred thousand as if they were a score-a score in a game in our favor. I am helping, Lanny? All my sacrifice isn't for nothing?" she asked for the hundredth time.

"Immeasurably. You have saved us many lives!" he replied.

"And cost them many?" she asked. "Yes, Marta, no doubt," he admitted; "but no more than they would have lost in the end. It is only the mounting up of their casualties that can end the war. Thus the lesson must be taught."

"And I can be of most help when the attack on the main defense is begun?" "Yes."

"And when Westerling finds that my information is false about Engadir-

She had never put the question to him in this way before. What would Westerling do if he found her out?

"My God, Marta!" he exclaimed. "If I'd had any sense I would have thought of that in the beginning and torn out the 'phone! I've been mad, mad with the one thought of the nation-inhuman in my greedy patriotism. I will not let you go any further!"

It was a new thing for her to be rallying him; yet this she did as the strange effect of his protest on the abnormal sensibilities that her acting had developed.

"Thinking of me-little me!" she doggedly. called back. "Of one person's comdestiny of millions is at stake! Lanny, our infantry positions on his return, you are in a blue funk!" and she was laughing forcedly and hectically. "I'm going on-going on like one in a trance who can't stop if he would. It's all right, Lanny. I undertook the task myself. I must see it through!"

After she had hung up the receiver her buoyancy vanished. She leaned against the wall of the tunnel weakly. Yes, what if she were found out? She was thinking of the possibility seriously for the first time. Yet, for only a moment did she dwell upon it before she dismissed it in sudden reac-

"No matter what they do to me or what becomes of me!" she thought. "I'm a lost soul, anyway. The thing is to serve as long as I can—and then I don't care!"

CHAPTER XVII.

Thumbe Down for Bouchard, Haggard and at bay, Bouchard faced the circle of frowns around the polished expanse of that precious heirloom, the dining-room table of the Gallands. The dreaded reckoning of the apprehensions which kept him restlessly awake at night had come at the next staff council after the fall of the Twin Boulder Redoubt. With the last approach to the main line of defense cleared, one chapter of the war was finished. But the officers did not manifest the elation that the occasion called for, which is not saying that they were discouraged. They had no doubt that eventually the Grays would dictate peace in the Browns' capital. Exactly stated, their mood was one of repressed professional irritation, No until the third attempt was Twin Boulder Redoubt taken. As far as results were concerned, the nicely planned Gallands' with the other officers, for it | first assault might have been a stroke of strategy by the Browns to drive ness to keep aloof from his subordi- the Grays into an impassable fire sone. pened casually when he went out into formed!" exclaimed Turcas, opening us to check off his report intelli- sota newspaper back in the '80s con- longer causes irritation, thus ending

> "Exactly. We have no reports of their artillery strength, which we had belief that Bordir was weak, which greatly underestimated," said the chief of artillery.

twisting them in a significant manner

as he gave his words a rasping em-

phasis. The others hastened to follow

be less correct if revealed to us for of a dead officer of the Browns found purposes of deceit. Again and again in the Twin Boulder Redoubt," said we have thought that we had them | the vice-chief, "which showed that in surprised, only to be surprised ourselves. In short, they know what we ted to our own troops for the first are doing and we don't know what herself when she grew faint-hearted | they are doing!" said the tactical ex- emy."

vision took the defensive.

"They certainly don't learn our plans with their planes and dirigibles!" he with red in a way not pleasant to see. declared energetically.

"Hardly, when we never see them over our lines." "The Browns are acting on the defensive in the air as well as on the tion was coming.

bring little news," said Turcas. mean, those that return," he added

pungently. "And few do return. My men are not wanting in courage!" replied the chief aerostatic officer. "Immediately we get over the Brown lines the Browns, who keep cruising to and fro. are on us like hawks. They risk anything to hring us down. When we descend low we strike the fire of their high-angle guns, which are distributed the length of the frontier. I believe both their aerial fleet and their highangle artillery were greatly underestimated. Finally, I cannot reduce my force too much in ecouting or they

might take the offensive." "Another case of

He looked at Bouchard, and every that could be made against an officer one began looking at Bouchard. If the The chosen men of the staff, tested Gray tacticians had been outplayed by through many grades before they their opponents, if their losses for the reached the inner circle of cabinet seground gained exceeded calculations, crecy, lost the composure of a council. then it was good to have a scape. All were leaning forward toward Bougoat for their professional mistakes, chard breathless for his answer. n reach. If there | We're whittling them down," answered | Bouchard was Westerling's choice for chief of intelligence. His blind loy- grounds," said Bouchard. "I have been ing them down! What a sity was pleasing to his superior, who, against their staying from the first. setty expression!" she gasped. "You hitherto, had promptly ellensed any 1-

suggestion of criticism by repeating the offensive to be better informed than itself. But this time Westerling let the conversation run on without a word of excuse for his favorite.

Each fresh reproach from the staff, whose opinion was the only god he of his suspicions. knew, was a dagger thrust to Bouchard. At night he had lain awake worrying about the leak; by day he had sought to trace it, only to find every clew leading back to the staff. Now he was as confused in his shame as a sensitive schoolboy. Vaguely, in his distress, he heard Westerling asking a question, while he saw all those eyes staring at him.

"What information have we about Engadir?"

"I believe it to be strongly fortifled!" stammered Bouchard. "You believe! You have no infor-

mation?" pursued Westerling. "No, sir," replied Bouchard, "Nothing-nothing new!"

"We do seem to get little information," said Westerling, looking hard at Bouchard in silence—the com bined silence of the whole staff.

This public reproof could have bu one meaning. He should soon receive a note which would thank him politely for his services, in the stereotyped phrases always used for the purpose before announcing his transfer to less responsible post.

"Very little, sir!" Bouchard replied

"There is that we had from one of fort when hundreds of thousands of our aviators whose machine came other women are in terror; when the down in a smash just as he got over said the chief aerostatic officer.



Bouchard Faced the Circle of Frowns

was in a dying condition when we picked him up, and, as he was speaking with the last breaths in his body, naturally his account of what he had seen was somewhat incoherent. would be of use, however, if we had

"Yet, what evidence have we that Partow or Lanstron has done more than to make a fortunate guess or show military insight?" Westerling asked. "There is the case of my own proved correct."

"Last night we got a written tele "Our maps of their forts could not graphic staff message from the body an hour after our plans were transmitattack they were known to the en-

"That looks like a leak!" exclaimed There the chief of the aerostatic di- Westerling, "a leak, Bouchard, do you hear?" He was frowning and his lips were drawn and his cheeks mottled

Stiffening in his chair, a flash of desperation in his eye, Bouchard's bony, long hand gripped the table edge. Every one felt that a sensa-

"Yes, I have known that there was "But our own planes and dirigibles a leak!" he said with hoarse, painful deliberation. "I have sent out every possible tracer. I have followed up every sort of clew. I have transferred a dozen men. I have left noth-

ling impatiently.

in the grand headquarters of the army under our very noses. I know it is not a member of the staff!"

plain, if you want to be considered be readily forthcoming.

Here was the blackest accusation

that the defensive always appeared to drowned by the outburst of one of the younger members of the staff, who had either to laugh or choke at the picture of this deep-eyed, spectral sort of man, known as a women-hater, in his revelation of the farcical source

"Why not include Clarissa Eileen? some one asked, starting a chorus of

satirical exclamations. "How do they get through the line?" "Yes, past a wall of bayonets?"

"When not even a soldier in uniform is allowed to move away from his command without a pass?" "By wireless?"

"Perhaps by telepathy!"

"Unless," said the chief of the sero static division, grinning, "Bouchard lends them the use of our own wires through the capital and around by the neutral countries across the Brown frontier!"

"But the correct plans and location of their forts and the numbers of their heavy guns and of their planes and dirigibles-your failure to have this information is not the result of any leak from our staff since the war began," said Turcas in his dry, penetrating voice, clearing the air of the smoke of scattered explosions.

"All were staring at Bouchard again What answer had he to this? He was in the box, the evidence stated by the prosecutor. Let him speak!

He was fairly beside himself in a paroxysm of rage and struck at the air with his clenched fist.

"____ Lanstron!" he cried. "There's no purpose in that. He can't hear you!" said Turcas, dryly as

"He might, through the leak," said the chief aerostatic officer, who considered that many of his gallant subordinates had lost their lives through Bouchard's inefficiency. "Perhaps Clarissa Eileen has already telepathically wigwagged it to him."

To lose your temper at a staff courcil is most unbecoming. Turcas would have kept his if hit in the back by fool automobilist. Westerling had now recovered his. He was again the su perman in command.

"It is for you and not for us to locate the leak; yes, for you!" he said. "That is all on the subject for the present," he added in a tone of mixed pity and contempt, which left Bouchard freed from the stare of his colleagues and in the miserable company of his humiliation.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NOTHING NEW IN JOKE LINE

Foolish is the Humorist Who Would Insist That This "Has Never Been Sprung Before."

A reader of the Docket in New York city cut out the item relating to the disolution of partnership, in which one partner makes the statement that "those who owe the firm will settle with him, and those that the firm owes will settle with Mose," and sends it back to us with this notation: "This was an old chestnut when I lived the which was in 1855."

To this charge we enter a plea of confession and avoidance. We contend that the courts will take judicied notice of the fact that there is nothing new under the sun, and in our judge ment the jokesmith is well within his rights in resurrecting a joke which was old in 1855.

The incident brings to mind the forplans of the forts that would enable lowing story: "The editor of a Minnecocted the following: 'You Youson put | four sticks of dynamite in the stove last Sunday to thaw them out. The handles were nickel plated and only cost \$10." A professor of English Hterature in an eastern university wrote a very interesting article on this joke, claiming that it represented a distinctly American brand of humor and that it could not have happened in any other country or at any other

But alas for the professor of English literature—for there is nothing new under the sun. Reference to II Chronicles, Chapter 16, Verses 12 and 13, produces the following:

12. And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceedingly great; yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.

13. And Asa slept with his fathers. West's Docket.

Would Handle Wheat in Bulk. Australian wheat, at the present time, is transported in bags, a system which involves not only a considerable cost, but is also uneconomical in the use of labor. In consequence, the governments of New South Wales and Vie toria are considering proposals for handling it in bulk, based upon the re-"With no result?" persisted Wester- | ports of engineers, who made inquiries as to this method in Canada, the Unit "Yes, always the same result: That | ted States and South Africa. The exthe leak is here in this house-here perts also say that the change would the telegraphers or the clerks. It is ever, that the steamship lines, which have been approached on the subject. "Have you gone out of your head?" are not agreed that under existing cirdemanded Westerling. "What staff- cumstances the shipment of grain is officer? How does he get the infor bulk is practicable, though it is bemation to the enemy? Name the per- lieved that if adequate supplies were sons you suspect here and now! Ex- guaranteed the necessary space would

Arrest for Debt.

While imprisonment for debt as i at one time existed in English and American law, by which a debter might be arrested and imprisoned for mere liability to pay his creditor, me longer exists in the United States, the statutes of the majority of the states "There are three women on the provide for the arrest of a defendant in a civil action under certain condi tions, such as fraud, or tests, or

SLUGGISH BOWELS

No sick headache, sour stomach, biliousness or constipation by morning.

Get a 10-cent box now.

Turn the rascals out—the headache biliousness, indigestion, the sick, sour stomach and foul gases-turn them out to-night and keep them out with Cascarets.

Millions of men and women take a Cascaret now and then and never know the misery caused by a lary liver, clogged bowels or an upset stom-

Don't put in another day of distress. Let Cascarets cleanse your stomach; remove the sour, fermenting food; take the excess bile from your liver and carry out all the constipated waste matter and poison in the bowels. Then you will feel great.

A Cascaret to-night straightens you out by morning. They work while you sleep. A 10-cent box from any drug store means a clear head. sweet stomach and clean, healthy liver and bowel action for months. Children love Cascarets because they never gripe or sicken. Adv.

Long Drawn Out.

Uncle Jeff, an aged negro driver of Augusta, was piloting several northern visitors around just after the first golf links had been put in there. Uncle Jeff was a little short in his knowledge according to St. Andrew, but long on local pride.

"How many holes have they," inquired a visitor, "eighteen?"

Uncle Jeff pulled up to make his answer more impressive.

"More'n dat, suh," he said, "dey's got a passal er land and de holes ain't bigger'n a tin can—i reckin dey's got a thousand holes already, suh."

WHEN KIDNEYS ACT BAD TAKE GLASS OF SALTS

Eat Less Meat If Kidneys Hurt or You Have Backache or Bladder Misery -Meat Forms Uric Acid.

No man or woman who eats meat regularly can make a mistake by flushing the kidneys occasionally, says a well-known authority. Meat forms uric acid which clogs the kidney pores so they sluggishly filter or strain only part of the waste and poisons from the blood, then you get sick. Nearly all rheumatism, headaches, liver trouble, nervousness, constipation, dizziness, sleeplessness, bladder disorders

come from sluggish kidneys. The moment you feel a dull ache in the kidneys or your back hurts, or if the urine is cloudy, offensive, full of sediment, irregular of passage or attended by a sensation of scalding, get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any reliable pharmacy and take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia and has been used for generations to flush clogged kidneys and stimulate them to activity, also to neutrailze the acids in urine so it no

Jad Salts is inexpensive and cannot injure: makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which all regular meat eaters should take now and then to keep the kidneys clean and the blood pure, thereby avoiding serious kidney complications,-Adv.

Not an Original Remark.

"Ah, my dearest Angelina!" exclaimed Ferdie, as he slowly settled to his knees at the feet of his adored one after having imprinted a kiss upon her ruby lips, "a kiss from you is indeed a taste of heaven on earth."

Placing her gentle hand upon his contracted brow, she remarked in a low, soulful tone of voice: "Bah! Can't you say something original? Forty different young men have got off that same stereotyped remark."

NO MORE GRAY

Restore Youthful Color. No One Will

Know You're Using Anything. Physicians advise against harmful hair stains nd dyes. But why use them when you can bring back the natural, youthful color with Hay's Hair Health? This is accomplished by action of air, due to an element co tained in this famous preparation. Absolute harmless; so positive in results that drugglet will refund money if it fails. Keeps new gra hairs from showing. Route dandruff; scalp; makes the hair strong, rigorous and bean tiful, 25c, 50c and \$1.00 at drug stores or direct on receipt of price and dealer's name. Philo Hap Specialties Co., Newark, M. J. Adv.

Prosperous Appearance.

Some men live for their stomachs." "That's true, but the man with an unusually large abdomen has a prosperous look withal, and if he can drape a heavy watch chain across it the illusion is complete."

Among the Elite. "Then they never have a family

"They ocasionally have what might be termed a family jardinters. As aristocratic people they only quarrel in a very refined way."

For the treatment of colds, sore throat, etc., Dean's Mentholated Cough Drops give sure relief -- 5c at all good Druggista.

People cause no surprise by saying they enjoy good health. Why shouldn't

The heart of a protty girl may be an allly as a ddg's nose.