Ten Years' Trial

By Gen. CHARLES KING

************** almost entirely to the enlisted men-Nathan's believing he did and would have openly rejoiced had Nathan preferred charges against him. It would have been bliss to disprove them. As for the captain's angry rebuke based offer. It was a boyish ebuilition on the spur of the moment, May having carriages and caissons, cutting down led on with a "Come ahead, fellows! the number of horseshoes, condemning I'm not going to trail behind that dashed pawnbroker," and the rest having impetuously followed. But it was done. and their regrets were on account of the regiment, not for Nathan. It was bad form, as they owned, to show to civilians contempt for a brother officer, no matter how much they might feel it. These episodes growing out of Lang-

don's departure were the talk of the club and indeed of every household on the post the rest of the week. The inspector general could not help hearing them, but said not a word. The colosnel commanding was a sorely perturb ed man. He felt that if he did not punish somebody—do something to vin-dicate the good order and discipline of from department headquarters, possibly from Washington, and this was more than a candidate for the star of a general officer could contemplate with equanimity. He excused himself the moment dessert was over at Nathan's dinner party that evening and, though it was after tattoo, began an investigation of the affair. A dozen of the butterymen and all the junior officers present at the station were summone to the adjutant's office, and in five minutes he had the facts. There was not the faintest attempt to equivocate or dissemble. Lieutenants May, Woodrow, Sparrowe and Le Due said they heard the call for three cheers, and May said that, though be didn't shout, he swung his cap and had all the appearance of it. He disclaimed any disrespect for the court, the reviewing authority, the president or the post commander. Mr. Langdon was his best friend. He was sorely distressed at his dismissal, and he did come within an ace of cheering, only he knew Langdon himself would have disapproved. The colonel used some rasping language, in the course of which as a cavalryman he reflected on the sense of subordination and discipline that did not appear to prevail in the batteries, thereby antagonizing every gunner at the post, and then, dismissing the officers, with no little asperity in his reprimand, he summoned Sergeant Raucey, an Irish idol in Battery D, and whirled on him with the stern query, "Is it true you called for 'three cheers for Lieutenant Langdon, the best officer in Battery D?" "True as shootin, sorr," was the

sir," said the colonel, and without the quiver of a muscle of his sun tanned face the Irishman spun on his heel and stalked out. Then Sergeant Blossom, a down east Yankee, was summoned

"Go to your quarters in close arrest,

"Did you join in the cheers for Lieu tenant Langdon?" asked the colonel. "Yes, sir." was the emphatic answer. "Didn't you know that was tantamount to mutiny?"

"No, sir. There was no such thought sympathy for a beloved officer and an unfortunate man; that was all."

The colonel wheeled impatiently i his chair. He loved the old style soldier, who knew nothing beyond the will of his superior officer. These modern evolutions of soldiers in the ranks men of education who read and thought for themselves and spoke better English than some of the officers, were thorns in his flesh. He did not know just how to take Blossom, much less what to do with him, but compro mised by bidding him stand aside until he had questioned the others. One after another a dozen came in, prompt ly acknowledged that they had cheered the departing officer, disclaimed all imputation of disrespect and inferentially any expression of regret. Every mother's son of them seemed to wish to be understood as maintaining that he had a perfect right to cheer, and if be hadn't he was ready to take his punishment. "Confound it," said the colonel to his silent adjutant, "if I slap 'em in arrest Nathan won't have a sergeant for duty. The whole but tery seems to have been in it. Tell them to go to their quarters-go to grass-go to Ballyhack-but there must

be no more cheering. I won't have it."
"There won't be," said his staff officer dryly, "now that Langdon's gone." He, too, had loved the fellow and was sore hearted over his downfall. "There's nobody else they'll be apt to cheer for unless it's Melville."

The colonel turned suddenly and glared, but the adjutant's face was placid and unconcerned as he quietly stepped to the outer room and in low tone bade the assembled throng disperse. Then in allence he rejoined his

"You're always quoting Major Melville," said the latter petulantly. "Is there no one in your own corps worth considering?"

"Plenty," answered the adjutant, "yet none just like Melville, There's the man to straighten out this matter, colonel, if you really want it done."

"I can straighten out post matters without having to call on an-an-an outsider," answered the colonel haughtily, for he had the same conception of his corps that the Chinese had of China-everybody not of it was an outside barbarian. Moreover, he was distinctly jealous of Melville, and it kept cropping out in the most absurd and pulpable way. Early in the spring, when ordered to the command of this important station, the department con had said to him: "We have applied for Melville to command your artillery, He'll be a tower of strength to you and relieve you of all responsibility in the management of the batteries." And just the opposite effect. The colonel

or responsibility, did not wish it to be | artifley was a supposed he needed a tower of west feed and is than he had ever strength. He was one of a small but becaused a good redoubled. somewhat prominent class among our senior officers who rejoice in extended in a conauthority or power to anybody else. He was so oddly constituted, moreover, Now, Woodrow and taken no part in that he would gladly have added to his the cheer-that was a matter confined functions the ladling out of medicines. and the distribution of hospital stores. but he had no objection whatever to His manla was for scraping and saving for Uncle Sam. He would spend hours of valuable time pruning off a dollar from the estimate of the post quartermaster or squeezing a cent a bushel from the hay or grain contract. upon the ostentatious disrespect with He had never before served with which the party of subalterns had mounted artiflery, but unhesitatingly charged past his carriage on the up assumed supreme control of the affairs hill drive. Woodrow had no defense to of the batteries, criticising and forbidassumed supreme control of the affairs ding the expenditure of paint for the the amount of grain and hay fed out in the daily allowance and putting a stop to shell and shrapnel practice as being viciously extravagant. "It will all be straightened out when Melville comes, said the gunners, but it wasn't. The colonel had never met Melville before but had had him dinned into his cars every time he talked with an enthusias tic artilleryman, and, to use his own expression, "it made him tired." "Melville is a sort of demigod according to these artillery fellows," said be, "but I propose to run my own post, and

no man shall run me."

So when Melville arrived and report

ed for duty the colonel met him witi

much solemnity and state. Ordinarily his command-there would be a rap offhand and impulsive in speech and manner, he now assumed an imposing dignity of mien that filled his adjutant with merriment and did not deceive Melville in the least. That clear sighted, grave mannered soldfer listened with every appearance of courteous in terest to the colonel's exposition of what he considered the needs of the batteries and the batteries' discipline and instruction, but as his own views were neither asked nor desired gave no expression of them. The colonel called upon the new arrival at the quarters of Captain Cannon that even ing and found a dozen red striped fellows there, all clustered about their demigod, and the colonel's manner was If anything more awfully impressive than in the morning. He remained but ten minutes, and thegranners drew a long breath and looked at each other as he left the room and burst into irre pressible laughter as he stalked away from the gate. But Melville came back to their midst with Captain Cannon, they having seen the colored safely down the steps, and not a line in Melville's face betrayed the fact that he saw anything comical in the situation. Within the week he was partially settled in his new quarters and fully engrossed in his new duties. He found the post commander pottering about the battery stables and gun sheds day after day, giving orders direct to stable sergeants, farriers and blacksmiths, but not a line of his face or a tone of his voice betrayed the faintest irritation or disapprovat. Irate captains came to him to protest, and he said, "Patience," and nothing the impetuous post commander could say or do ever eemed to throw him off his mental balance for a moment. He was ever grave, exquisitely courteous and entirely subordinate. For a month the colonel had things all his own way. Then one day, all unannounced, there dropped in an imspector, who gave two days to the batteries and two hours to the rest of the command. The colonel isisted on being with him everywhere. The inspector found fault with the condition of the horses' feet and declared them insufficiently shod. He was referred to the order of the post commander. He said all of the horses looked too finely drawn, as though they had come in from a hard campaign, and was shown the post commander's order cutting off two pounds of grain per diem. He said the gen carriages looked dingy and was informed of the post commander's probibition of further use of paint. He criticised their neglect of gun practice with service ammunition, and again the post cor mander had to shoulder the bland He dined with that dignitary, as did Melville and Nathan and two or three cavalrymen that evening, and the colo



"You think he was a very good soldier, I am told." nel drank much of his own champague policy, on which point the inspector and the gunners were diplomatically silent, but within a week of the former's departure down came a letter from department bendquarters embodying all his criticisms and directing the post commander to take measures post commander was fuming with and Laurdon stood among them an wrath and the consciousness of de- slien and a stranger. They looked at feat, Melville allowed not a trace of him queerly when the clerk came out, exultation to be visible, not a word of hooded to him and held open the door. who erowed in their delight and by ut women were clicking at typewriters. ter superiority of his mental equipoise and was shown into a small,

And yet also soldler in blin compeller responsibility and who prefer hours of being it. One of a control saidler did personal work to delegating one tota of part five in all the said of who knew but and and and ampliager. Fure in speech, the gut and word and and to principle, a min to who some with was well nigh as the that the said contrades studied have no use for soldiers." him in only for fault or folble, and enofficers were then who a quarter of a stons on waich my regiment was no centure before and hern his punits in tied to protect your property against how comprendedly stupld a cadet might be never was Meiville tempted brake or fire an engine as well as the few years back were the gray at the roughing it." Point when Melville was their honored | communicant, the position of all others in the army of the United States which has the greatest influence on the character and development of the young othlers of the nation, the position of all others most difficult to fill, and Melfille was the idol of the corps of ca-At the different stations where Monroe and at the Presidio of San Francisco-be had left his impress ever glorled in was the mountain campaign fastnesses of an unexplored wilderness to all tids that his home life was as beautiful as his professional career had been well nigh flawless, and even and dizzy. It was noon, and he had crotchety, fault finding, Jenlous old had no breakfast save a 5 cent cap of "Cnt" owned himself powerless to pen-etrate the armor of Melville's perfections, and May and Woodrow, thinking sadly of the comrade lost to them, found the words constantly springing sies of the officers' club at Fort Monto their lips, "If Melville had only

e enriler." And yet, my we have seen, it was unlikely that Melville could have prevailed in a matter such as Langdon's, who had done so much to hart his own president in New York did not com-cause. The under tail discovered the mand instant recognition at the genergood points in the post commander much sooner than the latter would admit that there was anything remarkable about Melville. By mid-October, however, the genuine soldler in "Cat's" constitution had compelled in him an admiration and respect for the gravely courteons artilleyyman that, in spite of faint from lack of food, knowing not the lingering leniousy to felt, made him desire Melville's friendship. Long ere this he had realized that battery horses were built on far different lines from the "treopera" he loved and, be-ing much heavier-haulers instead of the arched doorways of those towering arriers and fed and shod for draft and repared for severe and sudden strain should never have been cut down from their allowance with the view of making them conform to his ideas of tering device above the visors danced have a horse should look. "Cat" rue before his eyes, the soldierly forms fully admitted, to bimself only, that he had come near spolling some 250 ly staggered toward them. draft animals and nearer still to makng one ass who should be nameless. It vas not until a month after Langdon's departure, bowever, that he mustered up manliness to say to Melville: "How much a fellow thinks he knows about some other fellow's business until be tries. Now, I had no more iden that a battery horse had to be so much heavier. Course I could have read it all up in the tactics, don't you know, but I hate books, somehow, and I ought to have realized that battery commanders like Hatnor and Singer, at least, knew

believe it's best to leave it all to you." And the two gravely shook hands "Cat," as has been observed, had a onscience. After a moment's silence he began again: "Then there's another thing. That adjutant of mine-impudent fellow at times if he is a good officer-has never forgiven me about Langdon. He deesn't speak of it, of course, except when I draw him out. 1 wouldn't stand that, you know. he says if I'd been here longer and had known more 'bont Langdon and as much about Nathan and Torrance as I do now I wouldn't have been so hard on him. He says I ought to have sought your views. Well, p'r'aps I ought, Melville, but I didn't get to know you at first. Where is that fellow now, anyhow? D'you ever hear

like a Yellowstone buffalo. Why, I had

to give him hades the first week I got

here, and he gave me a swell dinner.

But I just wish you would consider you're at the head of the artillery part

of this establishment now, Melville, 1

"I have heard once or twice," answered Melville gravely. "But he pre-fers to say nothing of his occupation. His creditors, at least, are furnished

with his address."
"You think he was a very good solder, I am told." said "Cat," looking keenly into the major's face a moment then furning to scrutinize as keenly the column of herse just moving lelsurely in from morning drill.

"An exceptionally fine one," said Melville

And at that moment the exceptionally fine seldler, but in hand, was standand talked incommutiy in defense of his ing patiently, silently, in the antercom of a great railway superintendent. The half dozen chairs had long been occupied by others as wistful looking as There were a dozen more si himself. lent, shabbily dressed men wearlly lounging about. They had been walt ing since 8 in the morning for an aujust the opposite effect. The colonel of victory. The colonel was forced to bim. A well dressed, handsome man the conclusion that the sculer major of 50 was nervously pacing the floor.

Holding out a race, the superintend-

"You brought this from-from our president, Mr.-Mr. Langdon, What do you know about raffronding?" "Next to nothing, sir, practically, as

I told the president." "Then I can't see why he should send you to me. What line of work have you been at?" "Soldlering."

The superintendent found time to laugh. "That's bad preparation for analyzable - s a because as ordered his the work we require of our men. We

"No?" said Langdon, his pale face in an among his elder flushing a triffe. "I recall two occathe section reases of "the old academ- your own men, and now that you're in where they well aigh worshiped for another strike I thought you'd be "News," said they, "so matter glad to hire men who would stick to their posts. I can at least handle a to use an important word." Among the clerks and typewriters you are sending younger officers were those who only a out to do it, and I'm more used to

> "D'you drink?" asked the official bluntly, then wished he hadn't, as he studied the pale, clean cut features, the clear, untinching eyes, "Er-no. You don't look it."

"I have on a few occasions. I do not

"Are you willing to go west of the Mississippi and take your chances of being killed as a scab and can you go today?"

"Yes." the same. They spoke of him as the "Hold on a minute, Gregory," said the gentleman who had been pacing the traditions which his old regiment the floor, but now stood an interested listener. "Mr.-Langdon, is it? Didn't gainst a flores and recalcifrant tribe I hear something of you at Fort Pawin which Mclville led his gans into the nee? Weren't you in Captain Nathan's company? I thought so. We have no

When Eric Langdon reached the street and the open air, he felt numb coffee at a little street stand. upon a time the president of this great corporation had visited the Hygeia and become the recipient of all the courte roe. On departing he had somewhat

pomponsly said to Langdon, "If I ever can serve you in any way, sir, be sure to let me know." And Langdon marveled that the letter written by the al offices in Chicago. His last dollar had been spent to take him thither, and he stood at high moon in the heart of this great thronging hive of trade and traffic, a stranger in a strange land, stunned and wounded, cast out by the class with which he had foregathered, where to turn for help or comfort, when strode toward him through the hurrying throng, sturdily holding their own against the human tide that twice business blocks in the wonder of the western world, two soldlers in the warm blue overcoats and trim forage caps of the regular service. The glitwere swimming in midnir, as he blind-

"My God, Jimmy," said the nearest as he caught the fainting man in his brawny arms, "it's-it's Lootenant Langdon!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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without delay. They were all of the post commander's devising, and, "without the road" occupied every monot the road and the road and the magnate's time. Clerks were found the road and the magnate's time. Clerks were found to a feather of the turning of a hair," as the boys expressed it, without a word of altercation or exposinisation. Melville had won the hattle. He mer the colonel with the same grave, imperturbable coursest, with that utterly unimpeachable respect of manner. Even though the post commander of the magnate's of grave impost commander of the magnate's time. Clerks were increased and out. Other officials, with anxious faces, came and went. Every now and then some of the waiting party would slip quietly out and, retarning hold whispered conferences with others of their kind. They were all, apparently, men of spect of manner. Even though the

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