

# CARMEN OF THE RANCHO

By FRANK H. SPEARMAN

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## CHAPTER XVII—Continued

But only when their fears had proven groundless, when it became evident that not a living soul was within sight or hearing, did Bowie and Carmen realize that a fountain of water close to the plaza was gushing with a roar into the air and running like a river over the potrero.

They looked at the church but did not recognize it. It dawned on them that the tower was gone. They hurried to the house. Their knocking brought no response. They turned to the door of the church; it was still barred. With the earth shuddering every few moments under their feet, they shouted together, called the names of the two padres and their own names. Slowly and cautiously the church door was unbarred. Padre Martinez opened to them. Every soul—men, women and children—of those at the mission were on their knees, sending supplications up to heaven for help. Carmen, breaking into tears, joined them.

## CHAPTER XVIII

It was days before Santa Clara Valley recovered from the shock of its mighty earthquake. Gradually news from the neighboring ranchos reached Rancho Guadalupe, and the excitement died when it was learned there had been no human casualties.

The earthquake was past; but Bowie's most troublesome problem still confronted him—the squatters.

He resolved to act at once.

"There's nothing to be gained by temporizing—much may be lost," he said to Don Ramon energetically. "The quake has demoralized them—couldn't help but do it. Anyway, I'm going after them in the morning."

"As you think best, senior. Take care of yourself. To lose you would be to lose the whole battle for the rancho."

Carmen listened to the decision with uneasiness and anxiety, but there seemed no alternative. She, too, only begged Bowie to be careful.

Scouting about among the squatters the day before, Simmie had learned that some half dozen of them, chastened by the fright of the temblor, had decided to seek other regions for their abode. But these were the milder mannered of the invaders. The hard cases remained.

At daybreak the next morning Bowie took Pardaloe, Simmie and Pedro with him. Crossing the river, he directed his men to ask the squatters to come out for a talk. When six of them had straggled from their shacks Bowie, on his horse, explained his mission.

"I've called you together for a plain talk, boys," explained Bowie, addressing the six squatters and their following of twice as many scraggly-looking men. "You are claiming land here that doesn't belong to you. Hold on! Don't let me talk to you. Wait till I get through and you can have your say. You've squatted here on a rancho without leave from the owner, without asking leave.

"You are killing the rancho cattle about as you please. You claim it's to feed yourselves; you claim that the owner's got more cattle than he needs and you haven't got any. But you don't say a word about his cattle that you've killed and sold in Monterey, do you? Not a word about his beef quarters and hides that you've traded for whisky there. You don't say a word about raiding the rancho storehouse and helping yourselves to flour and grain and wine. That has happened twice.

"Now, all that's going to stop. I say nothing more about old scores; about your trying to burn the mission night before last and your demanding that the Indian women be sent out to you.

"But take notice: You're headed, one and all, to get off Guadalupe Rancho and off the mission lands in twenty-four hours or to stand your ground with rifles and shotguns. For tomorrow morning I'll be here to clean this whole mess up and it'll be done. That's my say. Now you talk."

Deaf Peterson did talk, and he talked loud and long. "We stand on our rights as bony fide settlers and citizens of the United States of America," he shouted finally. "You can't scare us 'n' we don't surrender our homesteads for you nor for all the greasers in California. Capt'n Blood'll be here tomorrow, boss. Talk to him if you want to. 'N' if you're looking for a fight you can get one right here now where you're horsin' around."

"You've had your warning, boys," retorted Bowie evenly; and without further parley he and his companions rode away.

After supper that night there was a council at the quarters of the Guadalupe vaqueros. Bowie had assembled Pardaloe, Simmie, Pedro, Felipe and three of the hardiest of the cowboys for a conference. The plan of an attack on the squatter stronghold was discussed. The suggestion of a daylight assault was abandoned since it was almost certain to result in more casualties than would be likely in a night raid. It was no part of Bowie's plan to shoot any squatters, but the rancho

must be rid of their trespassing and their increasing depredations.

No fixed plan was arrived at that night. The men chosen were only told to look to their arms, their ammunition, their mounts, and to hunt up a few knots for torches.

Bowie understood the value of suspense to worry defenders of a post and made no move to leave the rancho until the next day had passed. It was after midnight when he called together his men and rode quietly away for the river.

Carmen had refused to go to her room until he started. She was unnerved by the situation and the danger, and she stood with him at midnight in the patio until the last moment. Tears glistened in the moonlight as she lifted her face to the stars in prayer when he rode away.

The raiding party made a wide detour in their approach to the squatter quarter. They forded the river well above it and came slowly down through the hills on the farther end of the settlement.

The moon was high but the chaparral along the river near the Melena afforded some protection as the horsemen wound their way through it.

In the silence after the next half-hour one man, Bowie, emerging from the shadows, stepped to the ramshackle door of the nearest shack. It was built with a patchwork of boards picked up wherever found and dragged by lariat, behind a horse, to the camp site; willow poles chopped from the Melena swamp had been added, together with strips of condemned sails picked up from the water front of Monterey.

Bowie knocked with the butt of his pistol on the flimsy door. "Hello! Inside there, boys! Hello!" he called.

A second and louder summons brought a tardy and profane response. "Get up," said Bowie sharply. "I want to talk to you."

There was some moving and fumbling about inside with more profane questions.

"We're friends," said Bowie, answering a question, "provided you behave yourself. Open the door."

"Open it yourself," came the truculent challenge from within. Bowie kicked the door open and sprang to one side. At the same moment a pistol shot rang from within the shack.

"What are you shooting at?" asked Bowie casually. "Why waste your ammunition? There are twenty men out here. If you hit one you'll be shot or hanged in ten minutes. We're going to fire your shack. If you want quarter, come out now, while you've got a chance."

A tall, gaunt and dirty specimen of the American outlaw frontiersman of his day slowly emerged from the interior darkness into the clear moonlight that shone into the doorway. He was rigged in a loose ragged shirt and loose ragged trousers. He cursed and growled; swore he knew nothing of any summons, had been in Yerba Buena for three days, and ordered the midnight trespassers off his premises.

Bowie made no effort to appease him. He repeated bluntly, "Get your belongings out of this shack if you don't want 'em burned up."

The squatter flew into a rage—apparently a planned one, for he ended it suddenly by pulling a pistol, hidden under his trouser band where his shirt hung loose, and firing it straight into Bowie's face.

It was not quite fast enough, Bowie knocked the barrel aside and laid the butt of his own pistol heavily across the squatter's head as the man sprang to clinch him. He slammed the squatter aside just as a second man sprang like a panther through the doorway, knife in hand.

It was a knife with a long blade. Bowie, taken somewhat by surprise, confessed next day it looked a yard long. He ducked to one side, but the second squatter, a smaller and quicker man, got the knife point into Bowie's left forearm before the latter could escape it. The stab served only to enrage the Texan, and the wiry squatter took a fast beating from the pistol butt while Pardaloe and Simmie threw and bound the tall fellow.

"This buck is a wildcat," exclaimed Bowie, turning his smaller captive over to Pedro. "Look for his knife, Pedro. It's here somewhere on the ground. Felipe, fire this shack. No matter about the belongings. These fellows don't deserve any consideration. But first make sure there isn't someone drunk and asleep inside."

Felipe, with lighted pitch pine, hurried into and out of the empty cabin. The next minute it was ablaze. The two squatters were dragged away and left bound in the chaparral to work themselves free.

A burst of gunfire flashed from the chaparral next the river. Slugs whistled through the air, Felipe was hit but not badly. "Charge 'em!" shouted Bowie, and he spurred at the thicket. They rode down the ambush before the three men within it could reload. Short work was made. Two of the men were stopped and bound. The third, dodging rapidly through the brush, was pursued by Simmie out of the jungle, jerked from his feet by a lariat, and finally trussed up with his companions. Their rifles were hunted up in the thicket, found and thrown into the river. Shack after shack of that group was challenged and emptied. Each squatter was allowed to save what he had. The ranch horses they had stolen were claimed by Pedro, but Bowie quickly repaired his tactical error in claiming them.

"Where can a man get to on foot in this country, Pedro? We want 'em to travel fast and far. Give 'em the horses."

At a point where the river, fed by confluents, broadened, and along the slope running up toward the hills, lay some of the choicest field acres of the Guadalupe rancho. Here Blood, as squatter chief, had fixed his own abode. With the airy assurance of a squatter he had re-



Held his man against the horizon.

solved to take all he wanted for himself and had sworn he would defend himself.

Profiting by the absence of resistance from Don Ramon during his long illness, Blood had built upon his claim a rough attempt at a stockade. It stood on the brow of rise that overlooked the river for miles. The spot had been well chosen for defense and would prove, Bowie realized, a troublesome obstacle to the cleanup.

When they rode up in the moonlight to Blood's place Bowie gave orders to his scouts and vaqueros. "Take no chances here. This man is tough. He will shoot to kill; don't let him beat you to it. Scatter now. Work around by the Melena. Don't expose yourselves any more than you have to."

He had hardly spoken when the scream of a woman surprised everyone. A second scream followed; then a succession of moans, growing fainter.

Bowie's mind worked fast. He passed his rifle to the nearest vaquero. "Spread out and charge 'em, boys. A fight inside is our only chance," he shouted. "Scatter."

Spreading into a fan, they dashed forward. A second surprise greeted them at the stockade—a burst of gunfire. A vaquero was knocked from his saddle; a horse went down. Bowie and his two Texans galloped through the flimsy stockade to find themselves facing five fighting men.

They emptied their pistols, sprang from their saddles and rushed the squatters, who, clubbing their rifles, laid hotly about them. But they were dealing with men familiar with every trick of frontier fighting, and the knives of the quick-footed Texans turned the tide. One of the squatters went down, out. Two of them ran for the cabin, and the remaining two threw up their hands. Pricking them significantly, the Texan pushed them as unwilling shields toward the shack. A gunshot flashed from the cabin. The squatter hostages yelled to the defenders not to shoot and, leaping to the shack door, Pardaloe crashed it in and jumped aside.

There was no further fire from within. The vaqueros came up with loaded rifles, torches were lighted, and the men followed their leaders inside.

An Indian woman, strapped and gagged, lay on the floor. Pedro cut her bonds. She had been kidnapped from the mission. Two men, she told them, had bound and gagged her when she had tried to escape. Who were they? Where were they? Bowie tried to learn. He flung open the back door. The moonlight streamed in. A rifle shot rang out and tore into the lintel above his head. It was from the woods and, as Pardaloe shoved a screaming squatter into the doorway, a second shot came from the woods.

"Hold on, Ben," protested Bowie, pulling the squatter victim away.

"Do you want to murder the fellow?"

"Just want to see how many there is up there shooting," said Pardaloe amiably. And without hesitation he stepped into the doorway himself. No shot greeted him. "Jus's I thought; jus' two uv 'em there. Look here," he said, shaking the squatter savagely, "who's up in the woods?"

"Must be Deaf Peterson 'n' the captain," the squatter mumbled.

"Jus's I thought, Henry—Blood and Peterson," commented Pardaloe.

"Get to the horses," exclaimed Bowie. "We'll see how much fight there is in those fellows. Pedro, look after the woman. Burn the shack and ride after us. That timber is thin; not much chance to hide. Go!"

The run, with Pardaloe and the long-bearded Simmie at Bowie's heels, was across an open meadow that exposed the riders to rifle fire. This was held back until the three men were fair moonlight targets. But the beads were drawn on men springing hard and heading straight at the enemy.

The squatter rifles blazed. Blood, especially, was accounted a dead shot, but the odds that night were against marksmanship from the wood. Pardaloe's horse stumbled. His knees crumpled, and Pardaloe took a cropper. Man and beast rolled violently along the ground. Simmie took a flesh wound under his right arm. Bowie, riding faster, reached the timber before the squatters could reload.

Blood and his companion made no stand. Bowie caught sight of the two dashing through the trees on horseback and gave chase to the one closest. Simmie, more enraged than seriously hurt, took after the other. It chanced that Peterson was Simmie's quarry; Bowie was chasing Blood.

The squatters rode the fresher horses; they were more familiar with the country. And their pursuers, not able at every moment to keep their eyes on the chase and dodge among the willows and laurels, found their hands full.

Bowie succeeded in chasing his man out of the timber to a stretch of open country. Both horses, despite the desperate spurring of their riders, were showing the grueling pace, but both held out till day was breaking.

In the stillness of the early dawn, with Bowie straining every effort to keep his man in sight, the chase, mile after mile, went on; only the flying rhythm of the horses' hoofs broke the silence ushering in a peaceful day. And where nature offered every possible beauty to calm the heart of man, two men thundered in deadly enmity across a field of poppies that turned the dull brown of the cropped grass for miles into a glory of golden blooms.

The Texan with straining eyes held his man against the distant horizon. No thought of relenting, no thought of mercy, restrained him. The insolence and invasion of a squatter might be forgiven. But the Texan's thoughts were set on the cold-blooded murder of an unoffending Indian. That murderer must be held and punished, and his pursuer meant he should be.

With a sharp jerk of the bit Blood wheeled suddenly to the right, away from the poppies and toward the Melena. It was a desperate move for refuge, but if the murderer could gain the swamp far enough ahead of his pursuer he could turn on Bowie and pick him off his horse from hiding.

It was a ten-mile run to the great swamp. Mile after mile fled under the drumming feet of the straining ponies. Yet Blood, even on the fresher mount, could gain but little on his grim pursuer. Every glance backward from the murderer's saddle lessened his hope of a chance to reload for a shot after gaining the swamp, for Bowie, alive to the trick, was bent on defeating it.

Sooner than seemed possible, the two men, racing on narrowing planes, thundered into the lush grass of the Melena border. Blood, glancing back over his shoulder, yelled a defiance and, halting on the very edge of the morass, whipped out a pistol and threw a shot at his pursuer.

It was an impossible shot, made from the saddle on a restive horse at more than fifty yards, yet the slug went home, tearing into Bowie's already pricked right forearm and shattering it between the elbow and wrist.

With an impatient curse the wounded Texan, crouching in his saddle, spurred headlong at his enemy. But Blood did not wait for the attack. Bowie knew that the squatter must have a second loaded pistol or he never would have fired so wild a shot—a shot with which he could at best only have hoped to hit the horse. But Blood did not know that Bowie had thrown away his empty pistols and now carried only a knife. The squatter wheeled and plunged into the bog, Bowie racing after him.

When Blood, hotly pursued by Bowie, dashed into the swamp a feathered scream rose from a myriad of birds in their sanctuary, rudely invaded. Slinking cats scampered madly from under the plunging hoofs of the two horses. The Melena woke in panic.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



## THE SOLDIER OF FLUSHING BAY

"World Fair Site Proposed for Military Training Camp."—Headline. Where Futurama drew the crowds From Maine to Timbuctoo. That's where I'd train to battle for The old Red, White and Blue; The Trylon and the Perisphere Will do to mark the spot Where I got fat feet marching on An exposition lot.

II  
Where General Motors stood I'll let My army life take root; By Railroads on Parade I'll fight And do it all on foot.



Where millions flocked on pleasure bent And marveled merrily I'll drill and drill for Uncle Sam— And think of Gypsy Lee!

III  
Where "Streets of Paris" once held forth I'll master arts of war; (If they would only leave 'em there It won't be such a bore!) Where crowds filed to the midway sights I'll drill on soldier grub; Baked beans and stew won't taste so bad Served near the "Terrace Club."

IV  
I'll learn to swing a rifle near The "Living Pictures" gay, And capture lovely models in My fancy twice a day;



I'll do guard duty many nights In weather vile or nice, Consoled by distant memories Of "Beauties Cased in Ice."

V  
I'll stand maneuvers any time In wintry weather tough Upon the spot where dancers With soap bubbles did their stuff; In fancy I'll hear officers Cry "Ready for a raid!" We've orders for a state of siege Around the Aquacade!"

VI  
From Standard Brands to "Gas" and "Coke," From "Norway" to "The Coast," I'll learn to be a soldier boy Within this army post; Where stood the famous "Court of Peace" I'll learn the blitzkrieg way, And chase that ritzy Borden cow Right into Flushing bay.

VII  
Most training camps are dullish spots— There's little color found; A World's fair site should be a camp Where glamour doth abound.



All wars are dark and deadly things . . . Say, kid, do you suppose The next one could be by chance Be run by Billy Rose?

INSOMNIA  
The final feline riot wane, the mournful mutts are mute And now nocturnal quiet reigns, unbroken, absolute; The ultimate drunk has vanished in the milkman's rumbling wake, And now I'd get some sleep but for the noise the sparrows make. —T. F. Finnerly.

BOARDER-LINE CASES  
The guest that I Consider fun Arrives on Fri.— And leaves on Sun.

The guest that I Award no Praise Arrives on Fri. And stays . . . and stays.

—Nan  
Ice and coal wagons are being used as substitutes for tanks in the militia war games. Which explains a letter to one mother from a boy at camp which contained the paragraphs:  
"Trapped big force of enemy tanks today. Just hung out a sign that we wanted ice."

SOLIDARITY  
Bathrobe workers have just won a pay raise. Had it been refused, the slipper, pajama and shaving cream workers were to have walked out in sympathy. The support of the song writers might, as a matter of fact, gone to them, too.

TOO MUCH MAKEUP  
Although I'm ready to agree My gal is far from sainted I'm positive she couldn't be As bad as she is painted. —Avery Giles

## Booklets in Loose Leaf Ring Binders

By RUTH WYETH SPEARS  
WHENEVER I make a trip to New England I like to bring back something to remind me that there have been about 15 generations of homemakers in America since John Alden and Priscilla set up housekeeping in Plymouth colony. This time my treasure was the pair of ancient flat irons you see here in use as book ends for my work-room library of loose leaf binders. Setting them up reminded me that I have been wanting to



show you my method of fastening booklets in ring binders.

I use 3/4-inch wide gummied tape. Pieces 2 1/2-inches long are folded in half. The fold end is stuck together and punched. These tabs are placed on the rings of the binder and booklet stuck between the open ends. We are inveterate booklet collectors on all sort of subjects. Frequently we cover binders with fabrics or interesting papers so they look attractive on the shelves in any room.

NOTE: Here is a good suggestion for keeping the series of sewing booklets which Mrs. Spears has prepared for our readers. There are five booklets available and a new one is published every other month. No. 5 contains directions for 30 different homemaking ideas, including new fall curtains; useful holiday gifts, and description of the other booklets in the series. When you write for your copy of Book 5 be sure to enclose 10c to cover cost and mailing. Send order to:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS  
Drawer 10  
Bedford Hills New York  
Enclose 10 cents for Book 5.  
Name .....  
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Gas trapped in the stomach or gullet may act like a hair-trigger on the heart. At the first sign of distress smart men and women depend on Bell's Colic Tablets to get gas free. No laxative but made of the fast-acting medicine known for its safety. If the FIRST DOSE doesn't prove Bell's money returns bottle to us and receive DOUBLE MONEY BACK. 2c.

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Taking trouble is the best way of avoiding troubles. The lack of taking trouble has been the means of making trouble in many lives.

## TO RELIEVE MISERY OF COLDS quickly use 666 LIQUID

Strong Binder  
No cord or cable can draw so forcibly, or bind so fast, as love can do with only a single thread.—Lord Bacon.

## Is your child a NOSE PICKER?

It may be just a nasty habit, but sometimes nose picking is a sign of something nastier. It may mean that your child has round worms—especially if there are other symptoms, such as fidgeting, finicky appetite, restless sleep and itching in certain parts. Many mothers don't realize how easy it is to "catch" this dreadful infection and how many children have it. If you even suspect that your child has round worms, get JAYNE'S VERMIFUGE right away! Drive out those ugly, crawling things before they can grow and cause serious distress. JAYNE'S VERMIFUGE is the best known worm expellant in America. It is backed by modern scientific study and has been used by millions for over a century. JAYNE'S VERMIFUGE has the ability to drive out large round worms, yet it tastes good and acts gently. It does not contain santonin. If there are no worms it works merely as a mild laxative. Ask for JAYNE'S VER-MI-FUGE at any drug store. FREE: Valuable medical book, "Worms Living Inside You." Write to Dept. M-2, Dr. D. Jayne & Son, 2 Vine St., Philadelphia.

Co-operation  
Heaven ne'er helps the men who will not act.—Sophocles.

Today's popularity of Doan's Pills, after many years of world-wide use, surely must be accepted as evidence of satisfactory use. And favorable public opinion supports that of the able physicians who test the value of Doan's under exacting conditions. These physicians, too, approve every word of advertising you read, the objective of which is only to recommend Doan's Pills as a good diuretic treatment for disorder of the kidney function and for relief of the pain and worry it causes. If more people were aware of how the kidneys must constantly remove waste that cannot stay in the blood without injury to health, there would be better understanding of why the whole body suffers when kidneys lag, and diuretic medication would be more often employed. Burning, scanty or too frequent urination sometimes warn of disturbed kidney function. You may also suffer nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feel weak, nervous, all played out. Use Doan's Pills. It is better to rely on a medicine that has won world-wide acclaim than on something less favorably known. Ask your neighbor!

## DOAN'S PILLS