

**Webster
—Man's
Man**

By PETER B. KYNE

Author of "Cappy Ricka," "The Valley of the Giants," etc.

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In the meantime Ricardo, with his hand on the knob of the door leading to the room where Webster was having his wounds dressed, paused suddenly, his attention attracted by the sound of a soft, low-down and impressively pathetic. He listened and made up his mind that a woman in the room across the entrance hall was bewailing the death of a loved one who answered to the name of Caliph and John, darling. Further on-dropping convinced him that Caliph, John, darling, and Mr. John Stuart Webster were one and the same person, and so he lifted his hand on one side like a cook-rubin and considered.

"By Jingo, that's most interesting," he decided. "The wounded hero has a sweetheart or a wife—and an American, too. She must be a recent acquisition, because all the time we were together on the steamer coming down here he never spoke of either, despite the fact that we got friendly enough for such confidantes. Something funny about this. I'd better sound the old boy before I start passing out words of comfort to that unhappy female."

He pressed on into the room. John Stuart Webster had, by this time, been washed and bandaged, and one of the Sarros servants (for the ex-dictator's routine still occupied the police) had, at Dr. Padonov's command, prepared a guest chamber upstairs and furnished a night cover of ample proportions to cover Mr. Webster's behatted but otherwise naked form. A stretcher had just arrived and the wounded man was about to be carried upstairs. The late faithful harbor of the revolution was looking very pale and dispirited for once in his life his exhausted, haggard, haggard, haggard. His eyes were closed, and he did not open them when Ricardo entered.

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Two Personal.

At Denver, a colored woman presented herself at a registration booth with the intention of enrolling and casting her first vote in the ensuing election. She gave her name, her address and her age; and then the clerk of registration asked this question: "What party do you affiliate with?" The woman's eyes popped out. "Does I have to answer dat question?" she demanded. "That is law," he told her. "Den you yes' scratch my name offen dem books," she said. "If I got to tell his name I don't want to vote. Why he an't got his divorce yet!" And out she stalked.

I told you I was going to bring to dinner, and that's enough for you to know for the present. Vaya, you idiot, and bring her in here, so I can assure her my head is bloody but unbothered. Doctor, throw that rug over my shanks and make me look pretty. I'm going to receive company."

He glared, bent steadily on the door, and in a moment, bright with fairness, frequently to be observed in the eyes of a terror standing expectantly before a rat hole. The instant the door opened and Dolores' tear-stained face appeared, he called to her with the old-time enthusiasm, for he had crossed from his mind, for the moment, the memory of the tragedy of poor Don Juan Cafeterra and was concerned solely with the task of banishing the tears from those brown eyes and bringing the joy of life back to that sweet face.

"Hello, Seccross," he called weakly. "Little Johnny's been fighting me," and the bad boys gave him an all-out walloping."

There was a swift rustle of skirts, and she was leaning over him, her hot little palms clasping eagerly his pale, rough cheeks. "Oh, my dear, my dear!" she whispered, and then her voice choked with the heavy tears and she was sobbing on his wounded shoulder. Ricardo strove to drive her away, but John Stuart bent upon him a look of such feignedness that he drew back abashed. After all, the past 24 hours had been quite exciting, and Ricardo reflected that John's humor was first and frightened and probably hadn't eaten anything all day long, so there was ample excuse for her hysteria.

"Come, come, buck up," Webster soothed her, and helped himself to a long whiff of her fragrant hair. "Old man Webster had one leg in the grave, but they've pulled it out again."

Still she sobbed.

"Now, listen to me, lady," he commanded with mock severity. "You just stop that. You're wasting your sympathy; and while, of course, I enjoy your sympathy a heap, just pause to reflect on the result if those salt tears should happen to drop into one of my numerous wounds."

"I'm so sorry for you, Caliph," she murmured brokenly. "You poor, harmless boy! I don't see how any one could be so foolish as to hurt you when you were so distinctly a non-combatant."

"Thank you, let us forget the tragic conference for the present, however. Have you met your brother?" he whispered.

"No, Caliph."

"Ricardo."

"Yes, Jack."

"Come here, Rick, you scheming, unscrupulous, blood-thirsty adventurer. I have a tremendous surprise in store for you. The sweetest girl in the world—and she's right here—"

Ricardo laughingly held up his hand. "Jack, my friend," he interrupted, "you're too weak to make a speech. Don't do it. Besides, you do not have to." He turned and bowed gracefully to Dolores. "I can see for myself she's the sweetest girl in the world, and that she's right here." He held out his hand to her. "Jack thinks he's going to spring a surprise," he continued maliciously, "quite forgetting that a good soldier never permits himself to be taken by surprise. I know all about his little secret, because I heard you mourning for him when you thought he was dead." Ricardo favored her with a knowing wink. "I am delighted to meet the future Mrs. Webster. I quite understand why you fell in love with him, because, you see, I love him myself and so does everybody else."

With typical Castilian courtliness he took her hand, bowed low over it, and kissed it. "I am Ricardo Luis Ruy," he said, anxious to spare his friend the task of further exhausting conversation. "And you are—"

"You're a consummate jackass!" growled Webster. "In only a dear old family friend, and Dolores is going to marry Billy Geary. You impudent idiot! She's your own sister, Dolores Ruy. She, Mark Twain, and I have ample cause for common complaint against the world because the reports of our death have been grossly exaggerated. She didn't perish when your father's administration crumbled, Miss Ruy, this is your brother, Ricardo. Kiss her you damn fool—forgive me, Miss Ruy—oh, Lord, nothing matters any more. He's gunned everything up and ruined my party. I wish I were dead."

Ricardo stared from the outraged Webster to his sister and back again.

"Jack Webster," he declared, "you aren't crazy, are you?"

"Of course, he is—the old dear," Dolores cried happily, "but I'm not." She stepped up to her brother, and her arms went around his neck. "Oh, Rick," she cried, "I'm your sister. Truly, I am."

"Dolores, my little lost sister, Dolores? Why, I can't believe it!"

"Well, you'd better believe it," John Stuart Webster growled feebly. "Of course, you can doubt my word and get away with it, now that I'm flat on my back, but if you dare cast aspersions on that girl's veracity, I'll murder you a month from now."

He closed his eyes, feeling instinctively that he ought not to spy on such a sacred family scene. When, however, the affecting meeting was over and Dolores was ruffling the Websterian forehead while her brother pressed the Websterian hand and tried to say all the things he felt, but couldn't express, John Stuart Webster brought them both back to a realization of present conditions.

"Don't thank me, sir," he piped in pathetic imitation of the small boy of melodrama. "I have only done my duty, and for that I cannot accept this purse of gold, even though my father and mother are starving."

"Oh, Caliph, do be serious," Dolores pleaded.

He looked up at her fondly. "Take your brother out to Mother Jenks and prove your case, Miss Ruy," he advised her. "And while you're at it, I certainly hope somebody will remember I'm not accustomed to reposing on a center table. Rick, if you can persuade some citizen to put me to bed, I'd be obliged. I'm dead tired, old horse, I'm—ah—sleepy—"

His head rolled weakly to one side, for he had been playing a part and had nerved himself to finish it gracefully, even in his weakened condition. He sighed, mumbled slightly, and slipped into unconsciousness.

CHAPTER XVII.

Throughout the night there was sporadic firing here and there in the city, as the Ruy followers relentlessly hunted down the isolated detachments of government troops which had escaped annihilation and capture in the final rout and fallen back on the city, where, concealing themselves according to their nature and inclination, they indulged in more or less sniping from windows and the roofs of buildings. The practice of taking no prisoners was an old one in Sobranite, and few presidents had done more than Sarros to keep that custom alive; ergo, firm in the conviction that his tender was tantamount to facing a firing squad at daylight, the majority of these stragglers, with consummate courage, fought to the death.

The capture of Buzagventura was alone sufficient to insure a brief revolution, but the capture of Sarros was ample guarantee that the resistance to the new order of things was already at an end. However, Ricardo Ruy felt that the prompt execution of Sarros would be an added guarantee of peace by effectually discouraging any opposition to the rebel cause in the outlying districts, where a few isolated garrisons still remained in ignorance of the momentous events being enacted in the capital. For the time being, Ricardo was master of life and death in Sobranite, and all of his advisers and supporters agreed with him that a so-called trial of the ex-dictator would be a rather useless affair. His life was forfeit a hundred times for murder and treason, and to be ponderous over his elimination would savor of mockery. Accordingly, at midnight, a priest entered the room in the presence where Sarros was confined, and shelved him. Throughout the night the priest remained with him, and when that early morning march to the cemetery commenced, he walked beside Sarros, repeating the prayers for the dying.

Upon reaching the cemetery there was a slight wait until a carriage drove up and discharged Ricardo Ruy and Mother Jenks. The sergeant in command of the squad saluted and was briefly ordered to proceed with the matter in hand; whereupon he turned to Sarros, who with the customary sang froid of his kind upon such occasions was calmly smoking, and bowed deprecatingly. Sarros actually smiled upon him. "Adios, amigos," he murmured. Then, as an afterthought and probably because he was sufficient of an egoist to desire to appear a martyr, he added heroically: "I die for my country. May God have mercy on my enemies."

"If you'd cared to play a gentleman's game, you blighter, you might 'ave lived for your bally country," Mother Jenks reminded him in English. "Wander if the beggar'll will or will 'e go through snuffin' like my saluted 'Enery on the same spot."

She need not have worried. It requires a strong man to be dictator of a roman candle repulse for 15 years, and whatever his sins of omission or commission, Sarros did not lack animal courage. Alone and unattended he limped away among the graves to the wall on the other side of the cemetery and placed his back against it, negligently, in the attitude of a devil-may-care fellow without a worry in life. The sergeant waited respectfully until Sarros had finished his cigarette; when he tossed it away and straightened to attention, the sergeant knew he was ready to die. At his command there was a sudden rattle of bolts as the cartridges slid from the magazines into the breeches; there followed a momentary halt, another command; the squad was aiming when Ricardo Ruy called sharply:

"Sergeant, do not give the order to fire."

The rifles were lowered and the men gazed wonderingly at Ricardo. "He's too brave," Ricardo complained. "D—him, I can't kill him as I would a mad dog. I've got to give him a chance."

The sergeant raised his brows expressively. Ah, the ley fuga, that popular form of execution where the prisoner is given a running chance, and the firing squad practices wing shooting. If the prisoner manages, miraculously, to escape, he is not pursued!

A doubt, however, crossed the sergeant's mind. "But my general," he expostulated, "Senor Sarros cannot accept the ley fuga. He is very lame. That is not giving him the chance your Excellency desires he should have."

"I wasn't thinking of that," Ricardo replied. "I was thinking I'm killing him without a fair trial for the reason that he's so infernally ripe for the gaol that a trial would have been a joke. Nevertheless, I am really killing him because he killed my father—and that is scarcely fair. My father was a gentleman. Sergeant, is your pistol loaded?"

"Yes, General."

"Give it to Senor Sarros."

As the sergeant started forward to comply Ricardo drew his own service revolver and then motioned Mother Jenks and the firing squad to stand aside while he crossed to the center of



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the cemetery. "Sarros," he called, "I am going to let God decide which one of us shall live. When the sergeant gives the command to fire, I shall open fire on you, and you are free to do the same to me. Sergeant, if he kills me and escapes unhurt, my orders are to escort him to the bay in my carriage and put him safely aboard the steamer."

Mother Jenks sat down on a tombstone. "God's truth!" she gasped, "but there's a rare plucked 'un. Aloud she croaked: "Don't be a bally ass, sir."

"Silence!" he commanded.

The sergeant handed Sarros the revolver. "You heard what I said?" Ricardo called.

Sarros bowed gravely.

"You understand your orders, Sergeant?"

"Yes, General."

"Very well. Proceed. If this prisoner fires before you give the word, have your squad riddle him."

The sergeant backed away and gazed coldly from the prisoner to his captor. "Ready!" he called. Both revolvers came up. "Fire!" he shouted, and the two shots were discharged simultaneously. Ricardo's cap flew off his head, but he remained standing, while Sarros staggered back against the wall and then recovering himself gamely, fired again. He scored a clean miss, and Ricardo's gun barked three times; Sarros sprawled on his face, rose to his knees, raised his pistol halfway, fired into the sky and slid forward on his face. Ricardo stood beside the body until the sergeant approached and stood to attention, his attitude saying:

"It is over. What next, General?"

"Take the squad back to the arsenal, Sergeant," Ricardo ordered him coolly, and walked back to recover his uniform cap. He was smiling as he ran his finger through a gaping hole in the upper half of the crown.

"Well, Mrs. Jenks," he announced when he rejoined the old lady, "that was better than executing him with a firing squad. I gave him a square deal. Now his friends can never say that I murdered him."

He extended his hand to help Mother Jenks to her feet. She stood erect and felt again that queer swelling of the heart, the old feeling of suffocation.

"Steady, lass!" she mumbled. "Old on to me, sir. It's my bally banerism, Gor—I'm—chokin'—"

He caught her in his arms as she lurched toward him. Her face was purple, and in her eyes there was a queer fierce light that went out suddenly, leaving them dull and glazed. When she commenced to sag in his arms, he eased her gently to the ground and laid her on her back in the grass.

"The nipper's safe, 'Enery," he heard her murmur. "I've raised 'er a ldy, s'elp me—she's back where—you found 'er—'Enery—"

She quivered, and the light came creeping back into her eyes before it faded forever. "Comin', 'Enery—darlin'," she whispered; and then the soul of Mother Jenks, who had a code and lived up to it (which is more than the majority of us do), had departed upon the ultimate journey. Ricardo gazed down on the hard old mouth, softened now by a little half-smile of mingled yearning and gladness: "What a wonderful soul you had," he murmured, and kissed her.

In the end she slept in the niche in the wall of the Cathedral de la Vera Cruz, beside her saluted 'Enery.

Continued in next issue.

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Evening Up.

"Did the laundryman find those cuffs he lost last week?"

"No, John."

"The shirts are no good to me without the cuffs."

"Evidently he figured it that way, too. This week he lost the shirts."

—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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Do Not Understand.

Men seem neither to understand their riches nor their strength. Of the former they believe greater things than they should; of the latter, less.

—Bacon.

Christ—The Subject of All Scripture

By REV. B. B. SUTCLIFFE

Extension Department, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.



The only absolutely true history in all the world is found within the pages of the Bible. Wherever Scripture touches history, unlike the historians of the world, it touches it with a true hand. The historians of the world are naturally unable to look at history from any but prejudiced eyes. The very perfections of their national heroes, as recorded in their writings, leave us with the impression that these were supermen and almost incapable of wrongdoing. But we know that they were men of like passions with us, however unlike us they appear on the pages of the histories. But when the Holy Spirit wrote history, though it be the history of a David, He told us all the truth, and the man David stands before us as he really was. While the Bible contains the only wholly reliable history in all the world, its object is not merely to record history, but to set before the reader the person of Jesus Christ.

The only true philosophy is found recorded on the pages of the Bible. All the philosophies of the world, unable to rise higher than their source, can have no fuller message than "Man, know thyself." But because of inherent inability, man alone can never know himself nor come to the knowledge which tells him whence he came or whether he goes; he continues on his way like a ship without rudder or pilot, knowing neither the port from whence he sailed nor the harbor to which he is bound, and the reason for his being upon the sea of life at all remains an unsolved enigma to him.

But the philosophy which comes from the Bible begins by saying, "Man, know God," and then graciously proceeds to reveal God to man. In that revelation man may know both the God who speaks and himself besides. But while the Bible contains the only true philosophy in the world its object is not to give man more philosophy, but to bring to man the knowledge of God as revealed fully in the supreme subject of Scripture, Jesus Christ.

Again, the only true moral code in the world is found within the Bible. Like the philosophies of the world, the moral codes formed by man rise no higher than himself, and have in view man's relation to man only; they do not deal with man's relation to God. But the moral code of the Bible begins with man's relation to God, followed by man's relation to man. The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39). But while it contains the only complete moral code in the world, its subject is not that merely, but is Jesus Christ.

Without Christ the Bible would never have been written. He is the Key which unlocks all its mysteries; the Light that reveals all its hidden excellencies. The Bible is like the temple of which the Psalmist says, "Every whit speaks of His glory" (Psalms 29:9). Jesus said: "Ye search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27). "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 24:44).

When "holy men of God wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit" (I Peter 1:21) they wrote of Jesus Christ. From the beginning to the end of the Book, through the histories and the prophecies, the poetry and the Psalms, the one radiant object presented to our view in type, symbol, ceremony and prediction is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the supreme subject of all the Scriptures, and we read our Bibles to little profit if we fail to find Him there as we study its pages. But finding Him, we will come to know the truth that God would have us learn for our comfort and profit, and for our growth in grace and spiritual power. As we read the Bible, depending upon the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us (John 16:13) we will come to know, in ever-increasing blessing and delight, the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, Friend and Lord. As He is the supreme subject of the Bible, to know Him should be the supreme object of our Bible study.

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