

THE APOSTASY OF BIG LOGAN

BY PORTER EMERSON BROWNE

WITH A DRAWING BY F. C. YOHN

WHEN the sun at length had set, and the deck no longer fried the soles of a man's feet, Big Logan sprawled his huge body and long limbs over the hard surface, so that the soft, fragrant breeze of the tropical night might play as freely as possible over the vast expanse of scantily draped nudity that he exposed to its cooling breath.

His head, pillowed upon one knotty arm, was turned toward the shore, where black mountains drew a ragged skyline against the star-studded heavens. At the water's edge, he could see the lights of the little city in which sizzled the pot of strife that the U. S. S. Eagle lay watching, lest, in the event of its boiling over, it should scald some American citizen.

Big Logan's eyes dwelt long upon the nestling city, then wandered morosely down the tossing, scintillating paths of radiance that led from it even to the very sides of the floating fortress upon which he lay. At length he heaved an explosive sigh that might have meant many things, but surely not contentment.

"I wish," he observed at length, "that them Eskimos would take a chance at a rev'lution, an' give us a show ter get cooled off good just once!"

Spider McCann, who lay next him, turned upon his elbow.

"Kickin' again?" he murmured wearily. "Wha' d' ye want—the earth? Yer oughter be glad y' ain't in jail instead o' hollerin' because yer can't spend the fulness of yer glorious young manhood hangin' out in a Cooney Island dance-hall."

McCann was a philosopher. Logan turned upon him disgustedly.

"You gimme a pain in the neck," he vouchsafed disgustedly.

"The same ter you, an' many of 'em,"

returned McCann politely, as he rolled over upon the flat of his back.

There was a pause, broken only by the soft lapping of the waves against the steel sides of the ship, and the quavering melodies of a distant band borne upon the night wind from the city before them. It was Logan who broke the silence.

"I've got enough o' this," he grumbled, "an' I knows when I've got enough. I fought for Uncle Sam now fer eight year, an' all I got ter show fer it is a hole in me arm as big as yer head." Logan's Irish ancestry would protrude itself at times.

"It's too bad ye didn't get a hole in yer head as big as yer arm, ye big, overgrown Turk!" muttered McCann by way of response. "If it wasn't for Uncle Sam, ye'd now be settin' by a peat fire with no shoes on yer feet, an' a cold spud in yer dinin'-room, an' the next one two days off an' liable ter be further!"

Logan heeded him not.

"I've always wanted ter live like a man instead of a bloomin' barnacle," he muttered sullenly. "This ain't livin'. I want ter be round where there's men an' women an' lights an' theayters an' beer, an' where you can sleep at night if ye want an' stay awake if ye don't, an' where some little two-cent guy don't come along an' tell ye ter do this an' ye gotter do it, an' ter do that an' ye gotter do that, too. The sea wasn't never meant for men, nohow. It's fer fishes!"

"Well, what did ye come fer?" queried McCann pertinently. "You wasn't shanghaied, was ye?"

"Because I was a fool," returned Logan. "That's why."

"We was onto that before," said McCann insultingly.

Logan raised himself again upon his elbow.

"Well, what did *you* come fer?" he demanded.

"Twenty-four dollars a month an' keep," returned the practical McCann.

"And to fight for the flag," added the Kid, just enlisted.

Logan scowled truculently.

"Ter fight fer the flag!" he repeated sarcastically. And then, savagely, he cried, "T' hell with the flag!" and again, "T' hell with the flag!"

He rose shamblingly to his feet and stumped forward. McCann and the Kid turned and watched his retreating figure, the latter wonderingly, the former understandingly.

"He said, 'T' hell with the flag!'" murmured the Kid in awed tones.

"He meant it, too," replied McCann. "He means it now, an' he may mean it ter-morrer. If he does——"

"Do you s'pose," began the Kid, afraid to voice awful fears, "do you s'pose——"

"Yes, I do," interrupted McCann. "Logan 'll desert."

And he did.

II

THE plaza lay in the semi-darkness of a tropical city after night had fallen, for the light from the pitiful little lamps that adorned curb and café died even before it reached the spreading trees across the roughly cobbled street.

With his head erect and his arms swinging loosely, Logan elbowed his way cheerfully along the crowded sidewalk. He was clad in a black frock coat that had long since shed a luster like that of stove-polish to take on a dull, sickly, weather-beaten green. It failed to come within eight inches of meeting across his chest, and the ends of the sleeves clung tightly to his arms midway between wrist and elbow. Upon his head was a battered derby hat, a memento of some uncompromising tourist, and about his massive legs flapped the loose fulness of his navy trousers. In his mouth was the end of a long and exceedingly black cheroot, and in his heart was a sense of delight that had not been his since the days when he had "skun away" from the halls of learning in "de Ate" to shoot craps and

pitch pennies behind Gold Dollar Murphy's Bowery saloon.

The frowning glances of the populace, which greeted him with a respect that his size demanded and with a disrespect which his nationality commanded, dimmed his prospect not at all. The fact that his country was down in red ink in the black books of this little republic of the tropics disturbed him even less than if he had been told that "de gang" had incurred the enmity of the Houston Street Day Nursery. If the "dagoes" didn't like him, they knew what they could do. Pulling placidly on his cheroot, he stopped to look across the lamplit plaza and to wish that Maggie O'Brien were with him, so that they could occupy one of the benches which he could indistinctly see in the darkness across from where he stood.

"A bench without a girl is worse'n a girl without a bench," he soliloquized; then, being of a gregarious turn of mind, and likewise thirsty, he swung on his heel and entered the café behind him, from which came the light, fleshless music of a string band. Gaily clad men and women, black-eyed and black-haired, were seated about the room, but the laughter of the place was dead, and in its stead was the sullen spirit of unrest. At the far end of the room was a small stage, and before it was seated the orchestra that he had heard.

Big Logan seated himself at a vacant table and beckoned a waiter to his side. The waiter came reluctantly, with bristling mustache and sullen, shifting eyes. Logan nodded to him pleasantly, as befits a man care-free and dutilless—a man who woos pleasure for pleasure's sake.

"'D evenin'," he said, his big bass ringing even above the wailings of the orchestra. "Bring me a slug o' rye, Bill. I'm dry as a covered bridge; an' have somethin' fer yerself."

The waiter's reply was an expostulating flood of bastard Spanish. Logan waited patiently for a time; then, when he deemed that the waiter had held the floor long enough, he interrupted.

"All right, all right," he said. "Tell yer hard-luck stories ter the cops. I'm thirsty."

Again the waiter broke forth into a rollicking flood of musical vowels. But



IN ANOTHER SECOND BIG LOGAN HAD THE SINGER BY THE
SCRUFF OF HIS NECK

musical vowels were not what Logan wanted. He rose to his feet and pointed to a glass on a neighboring table.

"The same," he said threateningly. "*Pronto!*"

It was brought him. Sipping from his glass and puffing on his cheroot, Logan turned pleased and patronizing eyes upon the stage, where now a vaudeville performance was in progress. Of course it was not like that which one might see any night at One-Eyed Doheny's place on Third Avenue, but still it wasn't so bad. A black-haired girl, who was a "dead ringer" for Maggie O'Brien, danced better than any that he had ever seen, except possibly those that he and McCann had watched when on shore leave at Tunis.

And when the girl had finished, the approving applause of big Logan's hands rang through the café like the report of a rapid-fire gun. Praise where praise is due was one of Logan's main creeds, and the girl had done well. Hence, notwithstanding the black, sullen glances that the other spectators cast upon him, he clapped for an encore. When that was refused, he philosophically lit another cheroot and called for another drink. This time the drink was brought him without the accustomed flow of language, and he turned again, in pleased contemplation, to the stage.

Then from the wings there leaped a man in the uniform of the country—a uniform which is, however, but seldom seen upon its barefooted, rag-bag-dressed soldiers. His red coat with its gold frogs and his snow-white trousers and gaiters flashed alluringly in the footlights, and the shining sword that he drew Delsartianly from its scabbard and waved about his head as he began to sing in a wild, musical minor, gleamed bravely against the dull back-drop. And then, when he finished the first verse of the song, and, drawing from the breast of his coat the triple-barred flag of the little republic, waved it madly above his head, a storm of enthusiasm swept through the place. The spectators rose to their feet and vented their approval in shrill, excited cries.

It pleased Logan, too, even more than had the dance which preceded. He had seen that before. This was new. And

the thunderous applause of his ham-like hands rent the air even above all the tumult about him.

"You're all right, Bill!" he assured the singer in stentorian tones. "You've got 'em goin'. Give us the next verse an' then the dance, an' show 'em you ain't no supper show!"

When the ringing applause had subsided so that the wailings of the orchestra were again audible, the singer, with another flourish or two of his sword, began the second verse. The audience eyed him tensely, eagerly, enthusiastically with that ever ready frenzy of feeling—that ill-balanced, unweighing, irrational emotion that is the very root and fiber of the Spanish-American peoples. And Logan, too, leaning back in his chair and puffing contentedly upon his cheroot, gave himself up to the enjoyment of the scene.

As before, at the conclusion of the verse, the singer drew from beneath his coat a flag. But this one he did not wave above his head. Instead, he cast it upon the boards at his feet, and, pointing his sword at it, spat upon and trampled it. The audience shrieked approval, for it was the accursed flag of that doubly accursed nation, the United States.

III

For a moment Big Logan sat paralyzed. Then, with a bellow like that of a wounded buffalo, he charged across the café. Tables, chairs, spectators all went down before him like reeds before an elephant. Seven leaps took him to the stage. The musicians in the orchestra and their instruments were scattered to right and left. In another second Big Logan had the singer by the scruff of his neck and was beating him with the flat of his own sword as a conscientious hired man beats a dusty carpet.

"Ye murderin' bla'guard!" he roared. "Wha' d' ye mean, ye poor, pop-eyed little dago, by playin' them shady tricks around where there's white men? Why, ye fat-headed lobster, if it was any other flag, I'd make ye eat it! I'd make ye eat it twice! I would so! Ye poor, ign'rant, hod-carryin' little Guinea!"

Every word the sailor spoke was accompanied by a blow that brought dust from the red coat and white trousers, and

yells from the half-throttled man of songs. With a final whack, which broke the sword, Big Logan held the singer out and drop-kicked him over the footlights. Then, stooping, he raised from the floor the dishonored flag, and, draping it about his neck carefully, that no fold might touch the stage and thereby attain further contamination, he faced the audience.

They did not keep him waiting unduly. With savage, staring eyes, and wild, furious yells, they charged forward. Logan saw them coming, and made ready by leaning over and plucking a chair from the orchestra. And the first citizen of that tropical republic to reach the stage struck on the back of his head among the musicians, with two legs and a round of the chair dangling about his neck. And Logan roared, "One!"

Number two, a small man with a large mustache, the waxed ends of which were a constant menace to his eyes, joined number one with another leg of the chair, and was scored with a vociferous "Two!"

Numbers three, four, and five he kicked under their respective blue-black chins as they were trying to crawl over the footlights, and number six he caught on the point of the jaw with a left swing that carried him clear over the heads of his many prospective victims.

Numbers seven and eight were swept from the stage, after gaining a foothold, by a swinging blow with the remainder of the chair, and number nine Logan caught in the pit of the stomach with the toe of his heavy shoe. Thereupon number nine, who was more than usually corpulent for that climate, ceased to take an active and immediate interest in the doings of his fellow republicans.

Numbers ten, eleven, and twelve he caught with a sweep of the last leg of the chair, which was all that remained of that useful weapon; and they, too, disappeared from view. At this numbers from thirteen to one hundred and eighty-nine, inclusive, hesitated; and had it not been for one unnumbered person, Logan in all probability would have been the Nelson of that particular Trafalgar. The unnumbered one was the black-haired girl who was a "dead

ringer" for Maggie O'Brien, and, who, creeping stealthily out from the wings, leaped upon Logan from behind and wound her arms about his neck.

Now Logan, of course, could not hit a lady with a chair-leg, particularly when that lady was a "ringer" for Maggie O'Brien; and numbers from thirteen to one hundred and eighty-nine, inclusive, seeing how were the mighty fallen, swarmed over the footlights like bees in August. In an instant the sailor and the black-haired girl were covered with seven layers of tropical republicans with rage in their hearts and knives in their hands.

The very thickness of the covering, however, proved a saving grace, for it prevented it from using its knives. And before it could reorganize itself for accurate and successful stabbing, a squad of bluejackets entered the café. They were out looking for Logan, and, hearing a tumult, had decided, and rightly, that Logan was there. It was a theory that any one who knew Logan might evolve without excessive strain upon his deductive faculties.

As the bluejackets entered the café and stopped short to survey the scene before them, they heard percolating through the heap of struggling, yelling, cursing humanity some good Eighth Ward English that did not suffer through effeminacy.

"Lemme up, confound ye, lemme up! Lemme up an' I'll fight the whole gang with me hands tied behind me back an' me feet in me lap. Lemme up, I say, lemme up!" and the whole pile surged and rolled.

"Leggo me neck, Maggie girl!" came trickling again through the crevices of the heap of cat-like humanity. "Leggo me neck, can't ye? How can I gouge 'em with you hangin' onto me like a Twenty-Third Street counter-jumper onto a Broadway car? Leggo me neck! Leggo!" And again the pile rocked and heaved.

At this juncture the squad took a hand. McCann, Slattery, and Shorty Emmons undertook to disintegrate the heap, and the rest formed in a line to the nearest window. As each struggling, fighting, clawing, cursing tropical republican was torn from the pile which

covered his prey, he was hit on the jaw, his knife taken away from him, and then he was quickly passed along a waiting line to be precipitated out through the window. The first man took the sash and both blinds with him. For the rest it was more simple.

At length they excavated Logan, who hit the helpful McCann a left-hand swing on the jaw before he discovered his identity. But the language that burst from McCann quickly revealed to Logan that at last he was in the hands of friends. The black-haired girl, also perceiving this, unwound her arms from Logan's neck and stood beside him, sullen and defiant, disdaining to run, her bosom heaving.

Logan slowly rose to his feet. One eye was closed, two teeth were missing, and his firm, hard flesh was visible through half a hundred rents in his green frock coat and sailor pants. Observing the girl, he extended his hand.

"You fought foul," he said, "but you was game. Shake!"

The girl did not take his hand. Instead, she glared at him defiantly, vindictively, and hissed in sibilant Spanish.

"What does she say?" demanded Logan of McCann.

"She says, 'On yer way, ye big stiff,'" replied McCann, voicing the girl's thoughts, if not her words, with surprising accuracy.

Logan turned back to the girl.

"Well," he said, "if that's the way ye feel about it, all right. But if ever ye come ter old N' York an' I'm there, I'll show ye the time o' yer life. Look me up at Gold & Dollar Murphy's. So long!"

Then it was that the Kid's eyes fell upon the flag.

"Hello," he said, "what's that?"

"The flag," returned Logan. "What did ye think it was—a necktie?"

"But how did it come there?" questioned the lieutenant in command of the squad, who had just returned from watching the last tropical republican's exit through the window.

Logan told him. The lieutenant smiled.

"Logan," he said, "I think I understand why you are away without leave. You came ashore with the quartermaster, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir," answered Logan.

"And then you got separated from the squad in the darkness," continued the lieutenant, "and you were trying to find the other men when you chanced to look in here and saw this singer insult the flag, and——"

"Why, no, sir," interrupted Logan. "It was this way. I——"

McCann nudged him quickly and forcibly in the ribs.

"Say 'yes,' ye big lobster!" he whispered.

Logan understood. "Yes, sir," he said quickly.

"And of course," continued the lieutenant, "you couldn't stand by and see that happen, so——" he waved his hand about him comprehensively.

"Yes, sir," said Logan. "That's right, sir. I'm a ole lady if you don't tell it better'n I could meself!"

The lieutenant thought a moment.

"Well," he said at length, "under the circumstances I think that I can make explanations for you, and there will probably be no charges preferred"; and the lieutenant, who was a man as well as an officer and a gentleman, grinned.

"Yes, sir. Thank ye, sir!"

And Logan grinned, too, though his grin was not as successful as it doubtless would have been if one eye had not been closed and two teeth missing.

"And by the way," went on the lieutenant, "that coat"—he surveyed the stained and sadly dilapidated garment critically—"is scarcely becoming to your style of beauty. Suppose you shed it. It's a warm night, and the Watch and Ward Society are not over strict down here."

On the way back to the landing-pier, the Kid edged over to Logan's side.

"Say, Big," he said with tentative timidity, "it was the flag that started it all, wasn't it?"

"You're on," nodded Logan.

"But," objected the Kid, "you yourself said, 'T' hell with the flag!' I heard you."

Big Logan turned his one open eye upon the lad.

"Me boy," he said, "there's many the time I've called meself a liar an' a fool; but nobody else ever called me so an' kep' out o' the horspittle or the morgue!"

FROU-FROUS AND FRILLIES

BY J. ELSTNER ROGERS

THE STORY OF A LOST BIRTHRIGHT

WH-R-R-R—WH-R—WH-R! One long, two short.

"Bobby's ring!" said Frances, her hand pressing the latch-button. She opened the door of the flat and waited. He had climbed the first flight already; now she could see the brown derby nearing the top of the second—then he looked up and saw her standing in the doorway, silhouetted against the gas-lit background.

"Hello, Bobby!"

"Hello, Frank!" he called cheerily, as he bounded up the remaining steps and caught her hands in a hearty grasp. When he had laid aside his hat and rain-coat and she had turned the gas higher he put his hands on her shoulders and whirled her around to face him.

"You are not looking fit. What's the matter?" he asked, his quick eyes noting the thinness of her cheeks and the bigness of the red-brown eyes. Such a slim, youthful thing she seemed in the short, dark skirt and white blouse, open at the neck; the boyish little head with its red-brown curls was set so daintily on the slender throat.

"Oh, the summer, I guess—it's been pretty hot," she answered, with a shrug of her shoulders under his hands. "But *you* are looking fit." She pushed a big chair toward him.

"What has become of the Other One?" he asked, with a glance at the curtained doorway.

"Oh, she's on her vacation—on a real farm—think of it, Bobby—where there is grass, with no signs up—grass to walk on, and trees and birds—and cows and—you know the things in the country, Bobby—I must have forgotten some of them, they seemed such a lot in her letter. Oh, yes, and new-mown hay—not

in a bottle, Bobby, but out in the fields! It sounds good, doesn't it?"

She turned her face up to him—an eager face, with its wide, red mouth and little, tip-tilted nose and frank, boyish eyes that held an unaccustomed wistfulness in their depths.

"I know what's the matter. We've been selfish pigs, going off leaving you here to fight it out all by yourself. And you've gone and got overworked and homesick and thin. It's a shame, little chap!"

He pushed his hands deep into his pockets and looked at her with keen self-reproach. The quick tears sprang to the girl's eyes at his sympathy and solicitude, but she smiled and nodded at him brightly.

"Yes, that's it; it has been lonesome. But it is all right, now that you've come back. The Other One will soon be here and the old jolly times will begin again—and I am fit enough. But it *has* been hot. Have you had anything to eat?" she asked, turning to the cupboard.

"No, bless you, and I'm as hungry as a bear. Let me forage," he added eagerly, putting her aside. "You might overlook something."

She laughed and shook her head.

"There isn't much. If I had known you were coming——"

"Why, I wrote. Didn't you——" He fumbled in his pockets, and drawing out a bulky letter, handed it to her shamefacedly.

"I didn't mail it, but you see I wrote it."

She took it quickly and laughed.

"Isn't it just like you, Bobby? But I am glad you wrote," she said softly as she put it on the mantel. "I'll read it when you are not here to talk to."