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THE BATTLE OF JUAREZ

By "SHORTY" STEWART, '07

"Short" Stewart and Billie Mashburn

Once again the historic city of Juarez, Mexico, has fallen, the capture of the little town this time being effected by strategy and without loss of life and destruction of property that has marked the former attacks on it. The trick was turned this time by General Pancho Villa (pronounced Ve-ia), the commander of the rebel forces, and was as clever a piece of work as anything they have done in the whole revolution.

General Villa was supposed to be in the neighborhood of Chihuahua, some three hundred miles from Juarez. He had been attacking the Federals in that city for three days without being able to cause their surrender. However, he had the city pretty thoroughly surrounded and food supplies were becoming scarce. So to relieve the situation at Chihuahua a trainload of food, ammunition and coal was sent from Juarez, guarded only by a few soldiers, because the railroads had not been interfered with as yet. This is where Villa proved his cleverness as a general. He withdrew from Chihuahua, under cover of the darkness, to a point some 50 miles from the city. There this trainload of supplies and coal was held up by Villa, the small guard that accompanied it offering little or no resistance. The coal cars were unloaded, the train headed the other way and the cars filled with rebel soldiers.

Then the train proceeded to the first station, where a stop was made long enough to enable the rebels to capture the operator there and to cut off communication with Chihuahua. Villa then substituted his own man as operator and instructed him to wire Juarez to the effect that the supply train could not proceed to Chihuahua because the rebels had burned one of the bridges. The authorities at Juarez wired that the train be brought back, so the rebels moved on the next station, where they captured the operator as before and substituted their own man, who reported the progress of the train to the next station. This was done at every station on the line and thus the Federals at Juarez were kept in ignorance of the fact that the rebels were about to swoop down on them. About 2 a. m. Villa had brought his train into Juarez and unloaded his soldiers in the very heart of the city.

It was then that the Federals discovered their plight and at about 2:10 a. m. on the morning of November 15 the Americans of El Paso, which is separated from Juarez merely by the Little Rio Grande, where brought from their beds by the sound of firing. I dressed hurriedly, snatched a pair of field glasses from

"Short" at Juarez