SQUIRE JOHN

A TALE OF THE CUBAN WAR

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

CHAPTER I.

Perhaps a Fool's Errand.

"Stop—we drop off here," sings out Jack Travers, as he thrusts his head from a carriage that has just passed the magnificent Scott monument facing Princes street in the beautiful city of Edinburgh.

The Caledonian Jehu draws up to the curb, and his two passengers alight. Jack seems to be a young man; there is nothing at all extraordinary about his appearance as seen on this moonlit night, only that his quick actions would mark him as a fellow of considerable energy.

His companion, on the contrary, promises to attract an abundance of attention in the streets of Edinburgh, being a Chinaman, who still wears his queue, and insists on dressing, to some extent, at least, in his national garb.

"Well," says Jack, when the vehicle rolls away from the spot, "here we are, Ah Sin, safely landed in Princes street. You see, we have loads of time; twelve was the hour appointed—'that witching hour when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead.' Let us then saunter along Princes street in the direction of Calton Hill; and when we come to the north bridge over the railroad, we cross to High street, from which we can easily reach our destination, the historic Canongate."

If Ah Sin hears he makes no reply, being accustomed to such soliloquies on the part of the remarkable gentleman with whose strange fortunes he has for several years been united.

In adversity as well as prosperity this simple follower of Confucius had proven as faithful as the needle to the Pole. He knows more of Jack's life than any other person on earth, but secrets remain inviolate in his heathen breast.

He walks beside Jack, a trifle to the rear, as though he would not presume. Ah Sin knows his place, and in his eyes this tall young man is a god whom he worships in secret.

Sauntering slowly on, Jack casts an occasional glance aloft, and presently finds that they are exactly under the great clock suspended in air far up the face of the Old Tolbooth.

"We go no further, Ah Sin. This is the camping ground where we are to cool our heels waiting on the pleasure of—well, someone. If we fail tonight, then to-morrow at the same hour—any night this week will do. I've passed through something of wild life as a cowboy and ranch owner, and finally a miner; but the last state that has fallen to my share is perhaps the most singular of all. Don't fancy it—can't believe I have any right to accept; that's why I am here searching for her. Find her yet, if I have to turn old Edinburgh upside down, or follow that rascal over the sea to Havana, whence he came. Will I find what I seek? That's an open question; but since this photograph fell into my hands I must confess to an interest in the hunt second to none in my whole life. Jove! I haven't

The face is that of a young girl.

looked at the divine creature for over an hour."

From a pocket he takes out a notebook, and unfastening the rubber band of this, gently draws out a card photograph.

The face is that of a young girl—a charming face, that could hardly be found outside Scottish borders; for the claims of Scotch lassies as queens of beauty have long been recognized as well founded, and hardly need the inspired pen of a Burns to court the favor of the world's judges.

"Yes," says Jack, almost savagely, "I believe it with all my heart. This is my fate—sweet Jessie Cameron; and could I win her heart, gladly would I forego all those wonderful blessings Fortune has of late seen fit to shower on me. And it is to find her I have come to this northern capital, visiting the Canongate like a thief in the night, and courting not only arrest as a prowler, but what is worse, a cold in the head. Well, here's wishing luck to the most respectable enterprise I ever had anything to do with in the course of my natural life! Who knows but what, if Fortune favors me, it may be the little angel herself I set eyes on next?"

He actually sighs as he carefully replaces the picture in its receptacle, and then casts a quick glance around to discover if anyone has been a witness to his action.

Not a soul appears to be in sight save Ah Sin, and that acute Celestial has his back turned toward his young master, as though he would avoid giving him an awkward feeling—wise old Ah Sin, reader of human nature and pupil of the greatest of diplomats, Li Hung Chang.

Jack has just started to return to his former stamping ground, where he can rest his broad shoulders against the stone stairs leading above, when a strange thing happens—the most remarkable event in his experience so far as the vagaries of chance are concerned.

He hears a sound of wheels, and realizes that a vehicle of some sort is advancing from the direction of High street—a vehicle that is being carried at a rapid pace by the animal in the shafts.

They come spinning on at a joyous pace, and naturally Jack has his eye on the vehicle as it approaches, little dreaming how much of his fate is bound up in that cab.

As though the inmate has become somewhat anxious over his whereabouts, a face appears just as they are passing the lamp-post, a face that is so familiar to Jack that its presence here in old Edinburgh almost takes his breath away.

He opens his mouth as if to call out a name; but before it can leave his lips the strangest part of the whole affair comes to pass.

Why it should happen just there in the presence of Jack Travers must be left to those more skilful in solving the problems of Fate. The three sisters spin their threads, and weave them into athe warp and woof that go to make up the fabric of human lives with marvelous skill; and, looking back, we sometimes shudder to contemplate what a change must have come over our fortunes if certain events, upon which our plans have been based, had not occurred.

At all events, one of the wheels of the cab takes a singular notion to proceed on its own account, having secured a divorce from the axle and its running mate.

The result naturally is a sudden wreck of the vehicle; the horse takes it upon himself to fling up his heels and might have beaten the cab into kindling wood, as the driver sprawled upon the stones, only that Jack springs out and grasps his bit in a firm hand, effectually quelling the devil that had cropped up in the usually sedate animal.

CHAPTER II.

The House With the Seven Gables.

The driver has been momentarily overwhelmed by the disaster that has come upon him without a second's warning; but he quickly recovers his head, and picking himself up from the street, runs to the assistance of the young man.

"I have the beast all right; look you to the passenger—I'm afraid he's been hurt," sings out Jack. Obediently the Jehu turns toward his dilapidated vehicle, and the inmate of the forlorn hansom is assisted out .

Fortune has indeed played him a scurvy trick, for he is badly battered, and doubtless believed the case far worse than it will turn out in the end.

Jack remembers the glimpse he had of the gentleman's face, and is more than curious to ascertain whether it can be possible he knows this unfortunate traveler.

So he bends over him, and discovers he has made no mistake. "Howard Spencer! "he exclaims.

The man, who has been groaning with pain and is evidently considerably bewildered by the blows he received, looks at him vacantly as he mutters:

"That was my name once—heard it somewhere or other. Badly hurt, ain't I? Too plagued mean it comes just when I was about to take a leap into the lap of Fortune. Say, who are you, anyhow?"—to Jack, who bends over.

"Why, Howard, old boy, don't you remember me—Jack Travers?" says the other, cheerfully.

The man on the pavement breaks out into a laugh, that grates on the nerves.

"Tell that to the marines. Jack Travers! Why, he's dead, and I'm his ghost—take my oath on it. Haunted by the name. What's all this? Blood? Then I'm badly hurt ,ain't I? Must go on—promised to be there by twelve. A fortune at stake, you know. Show me the house with seven gables at the corner. I tell you I must get there, or all is lost."

The man has an amazing amount of pertinacity about him; at any rate, he reels forward, takes three steps, and falls headlong, so that it is only a quick movement on the part of Ah Sin that saves him from crashing to the pavement.

"Badly hurt. I will send for help and have the gentleman taken to a hospital," says a police officer who has arrived.

"It would be a wise plan," remarks Jack, for he may have received internal injuries. You see he talks as if he's off his head."

At the same time the words that fell in such broken sentences from the lips of the wounded and dazed traveler seem to have been written on his brain indelibly, as if seared by letters of fire.

By this time numerous heads have appeared at windows along the Canongate, and a small crowd has collected around the broken hansom, which the driver is endeavoring to patch temporarily together, so that he may drag it away to the mews where his quarters are located.

Jack attempts to question the man, whom he has apparently known at some former period of his adventurous past, hoping to discover where he puts up; but the other pays no attention, muttering to himself about his appointment, and swearing horribly every time he moves his wrenched or broken arm.

Turning to the hansom driver, Travers learns that he picked up his fare at the station, the gentleman having come by a delayed train.

Quickly, in response to the policeman's call, an ambulance arrives, showing how systematically everything is done in this beautiful city on the Forth. The unfortunate gentle-

Effectually quelling the devil.

man is lifted into it, and almost before Jack realizes the fact, the vehicle vanishes down the street.

He turns round; the Jehu is also leaving the spot, with his horse towing the wrecked hansom; the little crowd disperses, heads are drawn in from windows, and almost like magic the Canongate resumes its normal state of midnight silence.

Jack rubs his eyes in bewilderment.

"Come, was all this a dream, or did it really happen? That poor devil had an awful shake-up. Once we were chums, and many times have we slept under the same blanket, until that little affair down at Santa Fe separated us. I never could forgive Howard his treatment of that black-eyed beauty. What brings him across my path again, and, of all times, now? Heigho! what o'clock is it up there—eleven fifty? How the minutes drag! Have I really been asleep and dreaming! Ah Sin, did a vehicle smash to pieces here?" he demands, turning on his faithful follower.

(To be continued.)

POINTER FOR THE IMPECUNIOUS.

Scheme That Enabled Young Man to Keep Up Appearance.

The cashier in the candy store who had married the telegraph operator had just returned from her honeymoon, and was receiving her friends in a new flat.

"Did he get on to the way you crimped your hair, Mamie?" asked the mischievous manicure girl.

"I don't know whether he did or not," replied Mamie, "but I twigged the way he pressed his trousers. When he used to call on me I noticed that they were freshly creased every evening, and I knew he couldn't afford that pace at a tailor's. I noticed that before going to bed he straightened his trousers carefully and put the front edge of them into the jam of the bedroom door. Of course he had to get up some time in the night and change sides. But he told me he had been doing it so many years he was accustomed to it.

"He had to be very careful putting them in ,or the door wouldn't shut. But I'll tell you, girls, in the morning he had a crease that had a tailor's job whipped to a suspender button. Men saving up to get married have their little tricks of making a good appearance on little money, just as girls have in making themselves so pretty that men want to marry them."

Stenographer of Old.

Jefferson had just fired the stenographer.

"I had to," he said, sadly; "see what she made of the Declaration of Independence."

"We hold these tooths to the shelf of a dentist—the tall men are crated quail."

Sighing heavily, he finished the rest with his fist.

All in the Family.

Smartleigh (to father-in-law)—Your daughter's extravagance is too much for my purse, and yet I don't want to have any hard words with her so soon after our marriage. Don't you think you could speak to her about it?

Gay old father—I could, but it wouldn't do any good. She's smart enough to know that she inherits all of her bad qualities from me.—Detroit Free Press.

Accounted For.

"Young Spendem insists that he doesn't care for money."

"Of course not. He has none to care for."—Detroit Free Press.

"Shoot! Shoot!"

The exasperated guide hurriedly extracted the empty shells from his rifle and began to reload. The sportsman stood in his tracks. His half-cocked gun rested in his nerveless fingers. In the brush close at hand a deer leaped over obstructions and on to freedom with the irresistible joy of life. As the form of the fleeing animal grew indistinct among the pines the sportsman raised his gun half way to his shoulder with a jerk and fired twice. The bullets went somewhere in the treetops, for the deer never raised its tail to give the signal of having been hit. Shamefacedly and with a heart that thumped painfully, the sportsman turned to receive the remarks of the angered guide.

"Buck fever, hey? It's a wonder ye didn't shoot me when ye got to goin'! Sp'iled the purtiest shot ye'll ever hev, consarn it! Thar he stood eatin' them black cherries, an' ye walked right on him."

Hundreds of enthusiastic men and women plunge boldly along well defined trails in the Adirondack forests each autumn seeking the stately buck. The hunting of deer either from a canoe or upon the forest trail is one of the rarest experiences in human existence. The most mysterious influence with which the hunter has to contend is the "buck fever."

"Just wait 'till you git 'buck fever.'" says an old hunter. "I'll tell ye thet when a man or woman gits thet fever they air likely to do anything. I've known 'em to shoot in the air, shoot through the bottom of the boat and sink her or tremble so thet they could not shoot at all.

"One night I was up a tree with a guide waiting for a deer to come out and feed. After we'd waited nigh an hour we saw the bushes on the edge of the woods above us begin to move. The moon was shinin' an' we could see a fine deer comin' down to the water. Right at the edge of the wood he stopped an' sniffed. He waited a minit and then began to nibble the bark of a tree.

"Thet guide with me shook as if he had the ague. He trembled so thet he could hardly hold on to the tree an' we lost thet deer all on account of thet guide gittin' 'buck fever.' He hed been huntin' deer fer years, but he said he always felt the same way when he saw a deer come near an' he could not see well enough to aim a gun."

"I had the 'buck fever' once," says a woman hunter who visits the North Woods regularly each autumn. "The guides had placed me on a runway and I waited there three hours before I began to hear something moving through the woods toward me. At first 'way off in the distance I heard a dry twig crack. I had been expecting the sound for a long time, but when I heard it my heart began to beat very fast. The deer may not have been three minutes from the time I first heard it in getting into full view, but it seemed an hour to me. I began to think that I would never see him when there suddenly appeared a beautiful buck only a few rods away. He looked straight at me and I could not take my eyes off him. I was simply spellbound. My arms were like lead. I struggled inward to burst some mysterious bounds. The gun lay in my lap ready for use. I appreciated all these things, but was helpless.

"At last, after a great effort I lifted my arms. But they came up with a violent jerk and frightened the deer away. That was some years ago, and although it took me several seasons to overcome the sensation I am now able to shoot like a man once I get a bead on the deer.

"Women now accept with the utmost good nature the conditions of rough camp life which the men thought were not good enough for them. Last October I chaperoned a party of young men and young women on an expedition to a remote lake in the North Woods. The objective point was a primitive shack of the hunter, the principal furnishings of which were a tumbledown stove, a pancake griddle, kettle, frying pan, some crockery, paper plates and blankets. The shack was several miles from the nearest wagon road and we had to 'pack' our stuff in.

"At the end of the wagon ride the women climbed down cheerfully and strapped on fish baskets, in which were supplies of food, while the men assumed the heaviest burdens of well-filled pack baskets, etc. Led by the chief guide we formed single file and struck the trail. It was all uphill, but the trail was dry and well shaded with the bare limbs of the hard wood, letting the sun through in places. We rested now and then, and at midday stopped at the side of the stream, where the guides prepared a meal of lamb chops, pancakes and coffee. We reached camp in the middle of the afternoon, after a journey of nearly ten miles, during which we had climbed about one thousand feet above the starting point.

"I think this log cabin in the woods was the most primitive I ever slept in. It had one room and a loft. The room served as kitchen, dining room and living room, while the loft had the one bed occupied by both men and women. The bed was perhaps twelve feet wide and was made entirely of balsam boughs and blankets.

"After a few moments of intense thought and whisperings the women climbed the ladder to the loft, selected the left-hand side to sleep on, loosened a few belts and buttons and retired. The reflected light from the broken stove below had a weird effect in the loft. Squirrels capered over the roof and aroused the nervous. Finally the men climbed up and crawled under their blankets.

"There was little sleep that night, but we entered into the real enjoyment of rough camp life the next day, after the men got up a tent for us to sleep in. The guides took turns throughout the night at watching the camp fire in front of the tent door, which kept us warm, even though the nights were cold.

"We hunted and fished by day and at night sometimes went upon the lake, where with the aid of lights we could see deer and hear them in the water as they ate the moss and roots of lily pads. While it is unlawful to kill deer at night in this manner, it is one of the most exciting experiences imaginable to be paddled silently over the surface of a lake in the solitude, to hear deer come and go in the water and note their approach or retreat through the woods, the senses becoming more acute every instant, and then to finally approach a deer that is held spellbound by the light so closely that you may almost touch it."—New York Herald.

OF VALUE TO ONE MAN.

Spring Poem Was Not Absolutely Without Worth.

The spring poet, as well as the summer poet, the autumn poet, and the winter poet—all the same man—sat in the sanctum of the editor of The Sunny Smile, awaiting an audience with that august personage. At length the editor looked up with a "What can I do for you?" air.

"The poem I submitted last week"—said the poet.

The editor took the manuscript from a pigeonhole in his desk and handed it to its author, saying:

"I am very sorry, my dear sir, that your contribution is not exactly suited to the needs of The Sunny Smile. Its declination," he continued, unconsciously adopting the language of his rejection slip, "must not be understood as implying any lack of merit. In fact"—and here the editor again became the man—"while the poem is not available for our uses, I know a man who would accept it. He wouldn't pay much, to be sure; but——"

"Anything will be acceptable," said the poet; "unfortunately my muse is dying of starvation and needs bread What is the name of the man?"

"I do not know his name," said the editor. "All I know is that he comes here once a week to take away our waste paper."—Chicago Record-Herald.

A Rope Rudder.

Santos-Dumont, the great inventor of aerostats, says Everybody's Magazine, is able to tilt his craft up and down by means of a simple device. Hanging from the front of the cylindrical-shaped balloon is a rope 60 yards long and 100 pounds in weight. This rope controls the center of gravity of the entire machine. Near the middle of the rope is tied a thin line which extends to the operator sitting in the car toward the stern of the craft. The weight of the rope is so great that when it hangs straight down, the center of gravity is near the bow and the ship points downward. But when the big rope is pulled back from the bow the center of gravity shifts with it and the ship raises her nose farther and farther upward. Right and left motions are accomplished by means of a rudder, and thus between the two the ship may be pointed in any desired direction.

Serene Simplicity.

With his grandchild on his knee
He sits, gazing off at space;
Backward to simplicity
He has wandered. In his face
There's the simple, childish look,
The old honesty, once more,
That he long ago forsook,
That, ere knowledge came, he wore.

Though his tie has worked askew
He nor notices nor cares;
There is lack of smartness, too,
In the raiment that he wears.
Here and there a gap appears
Where an unused button shows;
By the right of many years
He ignores it, if he knows.

In the faces of the twain
There is nature's honesty;
One has left off being vain,
One has not yet learned to be:
Close to earth and unconcerned
By the things the world may think,
One to wander, one returned,
They are sitting at the brink.

Sweet the innocence that lies
In a baby's honest gaze,
Sweet the candor in his eyes
Ere he learns of worldly ways.
Sweet the simpleness of men
After all the strife is past,
The return to nature, when
Vanity departs, at last.

—S. E. Kiser.

No Plush Cars for Kentucky.

It has remained for the Kentucky state board of health to take the first step against the use of plush car seats which collect and hold disease germs until the next passenger comes along to receive them into his system. The board will indict every railway official in the state whom it can reach who is responsible for the use of seats upholstered with heavy plush.

Leather or cane for both sleepers and day coaches are the substitutes the board will permit, and of the two cane is preferable, for the leather seats are hot and uncomfortable. Linen makes a good seat covering, as it can be removed and laundered frequently. The effects of this initiative move may extend to other states until all our railway systems have sanitary car seats.

Making Sure of His Fee.

Dr. James E. Kelly, the well-known surgeon, relates the following anecdote of an eccentric old physician in Dublin:

"Dr. Murphy," he said, "has been a practitioner for many years, and of course is fairly familiar with the failings as well as the ailings of human nature. One day there called to consult him a patient who had a poor reputation for paying.

"'What can I do for you?' asked the old doctor.

"'I called to see you about my utter loss of memory,' replied the patient.

"'Ah! Yes—er—why, of course; but in cases of this kind, you know, I require my fee in advance.'"—New York World.