

SQUIRE JOHN

A TALE OF THE CUBAN WAR

BY GEORGE BATHBOURNE

Copyright, 1897, by F. Tennyson Neely. Copyright, 1899, by Street and Smith.

CHAPTER XXII.

The War of the Elements.
Immediately Jack was on his feet. When danger threatens he is not the man to dream.

"You want to tell me something, old man—something decidedly unpleasant, unless I'm very much mistaken. Now, have it out, without any apology. The sooner these things are known the quicker they can be met."

That is the greeting Job Smithers receives. He is unable to repress his surprise.

"You're a quick one to get on to trouble, sir. But there's no use in disguising matters. These soldiers haven't found out anything wrong yet, but it will soon burst on them like a thunderclap, and then you'll see the wildest scurrying around here imaginable."

"By Jove, you are right, Smithers!" is what Jack instantly exclaims. "The wind has changed."

"It is even so. Presently it will grow stronger, and nothing can prevent that raging forest fire from coming down on us by another route."

Senior Jack is not naturally despondent, and he as a usual thing does not let a loophole that promises results escape him.

"If it came to the worst, perhaps we might let the carriage swing over to the old stand again. There the fire has burned everything possible, and we might be able to stand it," suggests Smithers, though he advances the idea dubiously, as though having little faith in it himself.

"Not with a ton of ammunition in the car," declares his companion, quickly; "that would be inviting death. A single spark, and away we would go, every man of us."

"Well, of course, before the run was made that would have to be removed, and scattered about, since it would no doubt kick up quite a neat little circus. I can see no other plan, unless we all made for the river."

"Six miles away. We would never reach it if the wind grew into a gale, as is possible, and the fire swung round, cutting us off."

"Ah, sir, you are so quick to punch holes in my poor plans, I am sure you have one of your own to submit," laughs Job Smithers.

Jack shakes his head and resumes smoking.

"All I can suggest is that we sit quietly down and resign ourselves to the inevitable."

"Not give up the ship—that isn't your way, sir. There's something lacking of it. You have made a discovery. You believe the situation is robbed of its terrors; hence your serene manner. Tell me what it is, that I may join in your satisfaction."

"The same old story has gone on since the world began—that eternal warfare that will never cease to be."

"Eh?" gasps Smithers, dimly, suspecting his employer's mind may have been affected by the many strange experiences that have of late crowded upon them.

"The war of the elements—between fire and water—a vendetta that can never cease so long as nature exists. Now you grasp the idea?"

Smithers does. He turns his face upward to view the forbidding heavens, and as he does so a drop of rain splashes in one of his eyes. Never was such more devoutly received.

"Sir, you are right. It is coming. The change of wind may precipitate it sooner. Yes, we can hope for a deluge in time."

Just as they have calculated, the wind, having changed its course, begins to increase its force. Presently



"Now, have it out without any apology."

things show a new phase. Up to this time the fire has had a hard time eating up against the breeze, but now it begins to jump.

The soldiers have been made aware of this new danger. They are on the qui vive, and stand ready to meet the emergency. If the fire draws too close before the rain comes it is their intention to dispose of the ammunition and try Smithers' plan, desperate though it seems.

The drops of rain fall faster that before, but as yet without the least benefit. This is not what Jack wants, what he expects, having seen tropical showers ere now. Only a deluge will

satisfy his aspiration under these circumstances.

The rattling, roaring sound increases in volume. It is like a cannonade now as the masses of water pitch down upon the burning forest.

Another minute and the flood gates of heaven seem to be opened.

A tropical storm bursts upon them without the slightest warning. Thunder crashes, and vivid lightning flames about them.

The forest fire is extinguished in a fifty, for in the everlasting warfare between these rival elements water usually proves the victor.

All are relieved, since they have been saved from another grave danger.

The rain ceases after a time, almost as suddenly as it began, though the electric glow continues for quite a period.

Jack, standing in the door of the carriage, sees a singular spectacle whenever the lightning illumines the scene. The Spanish soldiers who were unable to find shelter still stand there, dripping wet, growling anathemas at the fickle fortune that threatens to roast them one minute and almost drowns them the next.

Of course, the expedition can go no further, and their one hope is a safe return to Havana. Betrayed, they have fallen into a snare, and will be lucky indeed to bring half of their number safely into port.

One thing Travers is sincerely sorry for. In asking questions he finds that the gallant Gen. Toledo, to whom they are indebted for a very great favor, has not been seen since the disaster at the bridge, and as he was on the engine at the time, the chances are he will never call upon Jack in Havana to claim the generous contribution which the American promised in return for his kindness.

The night wears away slowly.

The day breaks with a rather dismal prospect ahead, since there is nothing to eat within many miles of them. Travers remains in the compartment of the guard. He hardly cares to face the others, since the senior has undoubtedly seen beneath his disguise, and of course informed his dear friend Spencer.

About nine o'clock a whistle is heard, and when smoke over the outer hill announces the coming of a train, the Spanish soldiers burst into a vociferous cheer that no doubt considerably startles the driver on the engine just coming into view.

Of course their troubles are now at an end, so far as reaching Havana is concerned. Since the bridge is destroyed, there can be no forward movement of the train; and when the soldiers have climbed aboard, the stranded carriage is taken in tow, and the crab-like journey begun. Senior Roblado, having been baffled in the outset of his grand coup to secure possession of the famous Cuban leader, will doubtless think twice before again starting upon such a desperate undertaking, which, if known to the secret sympathizers of the rebels in the capital, would place his life in danger.

About the middle of a hot day the train arrives in Havana, and the whole city is electrified by the startling intelligence that the expedition was ambushed, the train dynamited, and but for the good fortune that placed unlimited ammunition in the hands of the soldiers after the rebels had exhausted their stock, not a man of the military force might have returned to tell the tale.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Dolce Far Niente."

When the train has drawn up in the shed that good Havana citizens term a station, Jack hovers round, eager to have a parting glimpse of the woman he loves.

Senior Roblado gives himself away, now that the danger is a thing of the past. He is reserved and haughty, his very manner telling more plainly than words the fact that he has discovered the truth concerning Jack's identity.

He thanks the foreigners for their assistance, and does not forget to convey the respects of the ladies, excusing their non-appearance on some specious plea.

As for Spencer, that worthy also keeps religiously in the background since he has learned the astounding truth from the old don.

Jack pretends to depart, but hovers near, and is rewarded by seeing the ladies escorted to a carriage by their cavaliers.

He has his eyes glued on the symmetrical figure; there is a yearning in his intense gaze. Perhaps in some subtle, mysterious manner it is communicated to the object of his mute adoration; for Jessie without warning turns her fair head and looks straight at him.

His very heart ceases to beat, but not by the slightest sign does he betray himself. That hateful promise given in Edinburgh stands between—a deadly barrier.

Ah, what causes the blood to leap like mad through his veins? A little web of lace has been shaken toward him. She has seen—she recognizes him! Heaven is kind indeed. Now nothing stands in the way of his raising his hat gallantly and returning her salutation; and that one smile is enough to haunt Jack Travers, for he

is very much in love with his own wife.

They are gone. Jack discovers that the dingy station is no longer illumined. He seeks Smithers, and finds that worthy has had an eye on the party, for the first thing he does is to congratulate his employer on the progress made.

At the house of Lola Montez they find a cool retreat, and do ample justice to the meal that is soon set before them.

Jack is endeavoring to study his companion, but when such a human sphinx is concerned, it requires considerable acumen to penetrate beneath the mask he wears.

The mysterious connection he has with the remarkable senorita under whose roof they have found shelter arouses Jack's deepest curiosity, and he hopes the time will soon come when Job Smithers will take him into his confidence.

Then, again, it seems so singular that Lola Montez should turn out to be the same girl whom he was enabled to serve long ago in quaint old Santa Fe, and thus severed the cordial relations then existing between Spencer and himself.

Really, it would appear as though there might be an unrolling of the scroll of destiny in all this, and Jack can only wish the spinning sisters of



He is very much in love with his own wife.

Fate would display a little more of the future to his eager eyes.

Will he win her here in old Havana town?

Heaven grant it!

All other things—all aims in life sink into utter insignificance when compared with this. He is by degrees building all his castles in Spain on the foundation of a response to his wooing; nor will he deny the hope that daily and hourly grows stronger in his heart—the belief that in good time his probation will come to an end—the reward of Jacob be his portion.

Slowly the afternoon passes away. Jack has not retired to his room; the court, with its rippling fountain, is better; for the light breeze passing through makes a cooling current of air. Indeed, drowsiness overcame him while he sat there smoking, and hence he has yielded to the soporiferous god without conditions.

The sound of music greets his ears as his senses return. The day is fading. Already shadows begin to crawl along the stone walls enclosing the court, and through the arch he can see them gathering in the garden, where the myriad of flowers send out their intoxicating perfume, and the larger fountain splashes its scented water unceasingly.

Jack is wide awake now.

He listens, and hears a voice—hears a Spanish melody that once before greeted his ears. The voice is no strange one; he remembers its deep, rich contralto cadence.

And as he sits there and hears the song from beginning to end, there comes into his mind a picture that seems in startling contrast to the peaceful one upon which his eyes are resting at the present moment.

(To be continued.)

DREAM OF BROTHER DICKEY.

Colored Gentleman's Time of Slumber By No Means Wasted.

"Hit's strange," said Brother Dickey, "dat I dreamed er you all night las' night, en you de first man I meet dis mawnin, kunnel!"

"Well, what did you dream?"

"I gwine ter tell you; I dreamed dat I met you right whar you standin now, en lookin' des as well en happy ez what you lookin' now, en what you reckon you said ter me?"

"Go ahead and tell it."

"You put yo' han' in yo' pocket—lak dis; you turned yo' head sideways—lak dis; en you spoke out in meetin'—lak dis; 'You looks lak yo' house rent is due. Heah's de money fer it! I well knows dat you ain't got no fire wood. Heah's de money fer it! You got a hungry look in yo' eyes. Heah's \$2 fer de grocery sto!' Dem close you wearin' is highly raggedy. Heah's a warm overcoat fer you! En take dis dollar en buy you a good dram!"

Here Brother Dickey paused for breath, and then said:

"Dem's de very words you said ter me in my dream, kunnel—sho' ez you standin' whar you is!"

"But," said the colonel, "suppose I should do all that for you—where would I be?"

"Whar would you be? Why, you'd be sensibler en soberer dan ever you wuz since de day you raise en bo'n inter de worl'!"—Atlanta Constitution.

The Consequence.

"My uncle thought he owned me, body and soul, but I wouldn't have it."

"And then?"

"Why, he disowned me."

LEGISLATURE of NEBRASKA

A Synopsis of Proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth General Session.

SENATE—The senate on the 7th spent the entire morning in passing these bills: S. F. 96—Allowing complaints against opening of roads to be filed in district court and giving that court original jurisdiction. S. F. 97—Fixing the term when mill sites shall revert to original owner. S. F. 22—Allowing the laying of sidewalks in villages without regard to grades. S. F. 70—Allowing cities of the second class to own and operate electric light plants. S. F.—Legalizing osteopathy and prescribing examination of those who intend to practice such a profession. S. F. 180—To make state historical society custodian of public records of a historical nature. S. F. 108—Providing for the selection of grand and petit jurors. S. F. 165—To establish a state board of veterinary medicine. S. F. 137—Making it lawful to serve a summons on any agent of a foreign corporation doing business in the state, and making the summons binding on the corporation. H. R. 44—Any person who shall deposit refuse in any drainage ditch shall be liable for damages. H. R. 108—Making fire escape laws applicable to three-story buildings.

HOUSE—In the house on the 7th, H. R. 23, by Parker of Otoe, prohibiting a saloon within 400 feet of a public school, was recommended for passage. Lee of Douglas objected to the bill because it did not include all schools, saying the state was as vitally interested in the morals of private school children as those of public schools. Governor Mickey submitted a bill to the house to transfer \$800 from the clothing to the repair fund at the Geneva girls' school. The bill points out that repairs are greatly needed and while there is \$1,775.68 in the clothing fund, the repair fund is exhausted. The governor says the Board of Public Lands and Buildings agrees with him in this matter. The house passed S. F. 69, by Jones of Otoe to provide for annual correction by county boards of evident and gross errors in the valuation of real property. The present law makes this once in four years. H. R. 154, by Ernest of Johnson, limiting the number of saloons in towns of 1,000 or less to three, and more than 1,000 to four, was indefinitely postponed on recommendation of the committee. H. R. 9, by Warner of Lancaster, occupied much time. It provided originally an appropriation of \$100,000 for a sub-experimental station at North Platte and the purchase of land for the university. As the bill did not state what portion of this sum might go to each purpose the bill was amended, appropriating \$18,000 for the purchase of land adjacent to the University campus, \$20,000 for the substitution, \$15,000 for library purposes and \$7,500 for poultry culture, cutting the total to \$82,500. In this condition the measure was recommended for passage.

SENATE—The following bills were passed in the senate on the 8th: Senate file 226, a bill limiting the number of proxies of building and loan stock to the actual number of shares held by the member who wished to vote them. Senate file No. 196, creating a state railway commission. Senate file No. 157, a drainage bill. House roll No. 172, transferring \$20,000 from the Norfolk to the Hastings asylum. Senate file No. 33, by Senator Griffin, a bill to provide for a prosecuting attorney system in the state, was killed in the committee of the whole of the senate by a decisive majority. Senate file No. 160, a companion bill was also slaughtered. The state prison committee reported that the penitentiary was in excellent condition, the damage done by the fire having been repaired and the administration of Warden A. D. Boemer was most excellent. The warden was complimented on his manner of conducting the institution. Senate file No. 17, by Senator Gibson, was indefinitely postponed on the report of the standing committee. It provided for the care of dependent children.

HOUSE—In the house on the 8th the following bills were read for the third time and passed. House roll No. 188, by Douglas, eliminating the county clerk and county assessors as members of the county board of equalization. House roll No. 214, by Anderson, to protect labels and trademarks of union labor organizations. House roll No. 229, by Parker, to prohibit the granting by county boards of licenses to sell liquors within 400 feet of country school houses. The railroad committee reported to the general file, with a favorable recommendation, house roll No. 282, by Hill, requiring the running of at least one train daily on every line of railroad and fixing a minimum speed of twenty miles an hour for passenger trains, ten miles for freight trains and twelve miles for mixed trains. At 2 o'clock Dodge moved that the house go into committee of the whole to consider house roll No. 297 and other bills on the general file. House roll No. 297 provides for the submission of a constitutional amendment for the creation of an electric railway commission of three members, which commission shall have the power to establish, modify and enforce reasonable freight rates and prevent discriminations and abuses. Mr. Dodge spoke forcibly in support of his motion, calling attention

to the importance of the bill and the lateness of the session and arguing that unless the bill be considered at once it would have but little chance of passage. Porter objected to the advancement of the bill over the rate bill, and Peabody of Nemaha moved that the bill be not considered at this time, which motion prevailed by a rising vote of 34 to 16.

SENATE—Upon the personal request of Governor Mickey the senate on the 9th allowed the introduction of the county engineer bill, which the governor vetoed because of defects in the bill recently passed which invalidated it. The salary bill introduced by Good of Nemaha to make the pay of all deputy state officers \$1,800 a year was killed, the vote being 15 to 13, not a constitutional number having voted in the affirmative. S. F. 87, providing for the payment of costs in misdemeanor cases, was passed, S. F. 176 and S. F. 184 were recommended for passage. The former fixes the length of a school term according to the number of pupils, making the shortest term five months. S. F. 184 provides that when a district fails to levy a tax for school purposes the same may be done by the county clerk upon the recommendation of the county superintendent. The morning was spent by the senate in the committee of the whole, with Shreck in the chair, in a discussion of S. F. 112, which was finally recommended for passage. The bill reduces the salary of bank examiners from \$1,800 to \$1,500. An amendment by Gilligan was adopted to cause the discharge of examiners when a bank fails within six months after having been reported solvent by the examiner. These bills were recommended for passage: S. F. 174, allowing cities of the second class to make a levy for the purpose of improving the roads leading into the towns, upon the petition of a majority of the freeholders along the road, and to make the poll tax \$2 when paid in cash. S. F. 152, to compel railroads to carry stock at a rate of eighteen miles an hour on the main line and fifteen miles an hour on branch lines and to allow the roads to designate three days in the week as stock shipping days for the branch lines; the law not to apply on branch roads other than on these three days. This designation of shipping days was an amendment put on by Gould, the introducer of the measure.

HOUSE—On the 9th the committee on revenue and taxation reported for indefinite postponement house roll No. 10, cities and towns locally to assess, for municipal purposes only, railroad terminal property within their limits. McElhinney of Burt moved that the report of the committee indefinitely postponing the bill be adopted and McLeod seconded the motion. Clarke vigorously protested against any such summary action on a bill which means \$250,000 to \$300,000 more railroad taxes a year to the cities and towns of Nebraska. The vote for indefinite postponement resulted, yeas 65, nays 34. Wilson of Pawnee, chairman of the finance, ways and means committee, moved that the two big appropriation bills yet pending—house rolls Nos. 342 and 302—be made a special order for Friday, at 10:30 a. m., and continue such until completed. The motion prevailed. The following bills were read for the third time and passed: House roll No. 12, by Horton, to allow counties of less than 5,000 to assess property at 33-1/3 per cent for purposes of local taxation only. House roll No. 250, by Wilson of Pawnee, carrying the salary appropriations for all the state departments and institutions for the ensuing biennium; total, \$1,094,280. House roll No. 247, by Rouse, requiring liverymen to post price schedules in a conspicuous place and to punish by fine and imprisonment failures to pay livery bills. House roll No. 231, by Marks of Fillmore, establishing the pay of deputy county assessors at \$2 per day for time actually employed. House roll No. 215, by Dodge of Douglas, to transfer free high school funds now in county treasuries to school districts maintaining such free schools. House roll No. 233, by Hoare of Platte, invalidating salary loans unless made with the written consent of the employer, and requiring the assent of the wife, if the borrower be married. House roll No. 261, by Perry of Furnas, to out-law mortgages in ten years after maturity and in fifteen years when containing an indorsement. House roll No. 267, by Hill of Hitchcock, establishing a fee system for the compensation of the secretary of the state board of irrigation. House roll No. 189, by Atwood of Seward, fixes the salary of road overseers at \$2 per day for time actually employed, not to exceed \$50 a year. House roll No. 262, by Hofre, a curative insurance act to allow foreign mutual companies with assets of less than \$50,000 to do business in Nebraska. House roll No. 268, by Hill of Hitchcock, giving the state board of irrigation an official seal. House roll No. 271, by McAllister of Deuel, limiting the amount of warrants to be issued by irrigation districts.

SENATE—These bills were passed in the senate on the 10th: S. F. 184, by Gilligan—Which provides that when a school board at its annual

meeting makes no provision for a term of school the levy can be made by the county clerk after the county superintendent has estimated the cost. S. F. 50 and 52—Two of the Cady deficiency bills. S. F. 164, by Mockett—Making the statutes conform to the federal statutes in matters pertaining to the filing of transcript of judgment. S. F. 197, by Meserve—Fixing the boundary line of Dakota county to conform to the agreement between the Nebraska and South Dakota commissioners. S. F. 176, by Epperson—Prescribing the length of a term of school under which a district can secure a part of the state school apportionment. S. F. 174, by Gould—Providing that cities of the first class can make a levy to improve roads leading into the city and providing that the poll tax when paid in cash shall be \$2 instead of \$3. S. F. 206, by Dimery—Giving the State Board of Public Lands and Buildings power to rent buildings owned by the state. S. F. 113, by Good—Cutting down the salary of bank examiners to \$1,500 a year and making it a cause for dismissal should a bank fail within six months after it is reported solvent by the examiner. The vote was 17 to 10, just barely enough to carry. Six were absent. The senate went on record as absolutely opposed to any increase in salaries of state employes, but rather a reduction, and expressed its disapproval of the liberality of the house in the matter of allowing claims indiscriminately, by indefinitely postponing, with only one voice opposing, that of Mockett of Lancaster, the claim of Tom Kennard for \$10,000. It refused by a vote of 10 to 15 to reconsider its action in turning down the Good bill providing that all deputy state officers be paid \$1,800. A resolution of sympathy to Senator Giffin because of the death of his brother was adopted and the senate adjourned out of respect to the bereaved senator.

HOUSE—Committee reports were read on the 10th, showing their bills indefinitely postponed: S. F. 76, by Brace of Sheridan—A judicial re-portionment bill. H. R. 417, by Burgess of Lancaster—Providing for a weather signal service through the state superintendent to warn teachers and pupils of approaching storms. On motion of Lee of Douglas S. F. 44, by Gibson, the South Omaha sewer bill, was ordered for third reading. With Jackson of Antelope in the chair the house went into committee of the whole and took up H. R. 347 and H. R. 302, the deficiency and general appropriations bills, on special order. Clarke of Douglas made a fight for an amendment providing for a salaried deputy game warden at Omaha, but failed. McMullen of Gage submitted an amendment adding \$4,000 for allowances to the National Guard. It was adopted. McLeod's amendment to strike out the \$50,000 item was lost by a vote of 21 to 42. The appropriation for junior normals was raised from \$12,000 to \$15,000. The statutes appropriation goes to Cobley instead of Wheeler. The house cut out Wheeler and put in Cobley. The general appropriations, a total of \$1,800,000, approximately, was not vitally altered. The deficiency bill had an original total of \$40,166 and the committee brought this up to \$55,560, which the house did not change. Both bills were then recommended for passage, the house having concluded consideration of them at 4 p. m. H. R. 335, by Perry of Furnas, the biennial election bill, making the term of all county and state officers two years, was recommended for passage.

Easily Settled.

There was once in New York a poor tailor whose eccentricities threatened to bring trouble to him, but whose wit always saved him. One morning a Mrs. Murphy came into his shop and found him working laboriously with a pencil and a piece of paper. She asked him what he was doing, and he replied that he was making out a list of the men on the block whom he could whip. "Is Murphy's name there?" inquired that man's wife. The tailor confessed that like Abou Ben Adhem's, Murphy's name headed the list. Where Murphy heard of this he came to the shop with belligerence in his eyes. He inquired if the report was true. "Sure 'n' it's true. Phwat of it?" returned the tailor. "You little grasshopper," said Murphy, "I could commit suicide on yez wid me little finger. I could wipe up de sure wid yez wid me hands tied!" "Are ye sure about that?" asked the tailor. "Sure I'm sure about it." "Well, then," sighed the knight of the shears, regretfully, "I'll scratch ye off the list."

The door stood open as I passed and therein I beheld silent groups of women sitting around tables, their hands before their faces, their eyes riveted upon a sheaf of cards which they seemed about to devour. "What is this?" I asked. "Why this appalling silence and intense demeanor?" "Oh, that is a bridge whist club," was the response. "It's a matter of life or death with all the players."—Exchange.

A tiny fellow was receiving his first lesson in physiology. The subject was bones. Touching the little neck so satin-soft in texture that it required a great deal of faith to believe there were any bones in it, his auntie said: "This Mim, is your collar bone." "Is it?" he cried eagerly. "Well, where is my necktie bone?"

Southwark Eel Market.

London possesses a curiosity in the Southwark Eel Market, which is said to have been held regularly for over 300 years. It is little known except in the neighborhood where it is held.