

# SQUIRE JOHN

## A TALE OF THE CUBAN WAR

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

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### CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

Just at this time a messenger brings a note for him. What luck! In another moment he must have missed it, and upon such little matters great events hinge.

"Meet me at the Tron steeple in the Trongate, without delay. I have astonishing news."

There is no name. He does not recognize the writing. Certainly it is not the same chirography as that of the note that came to him in London, and to which Juanita confessed.

Still, he sees no reason to doubt the identity of the writer, and believes it is Smithers who sends this startling request.

A few words to Ah Sin sends the Chinaman direct to the steamer with directions to wait for him at the gang plank. Meanwhile, Jack hastens to the Trongate.

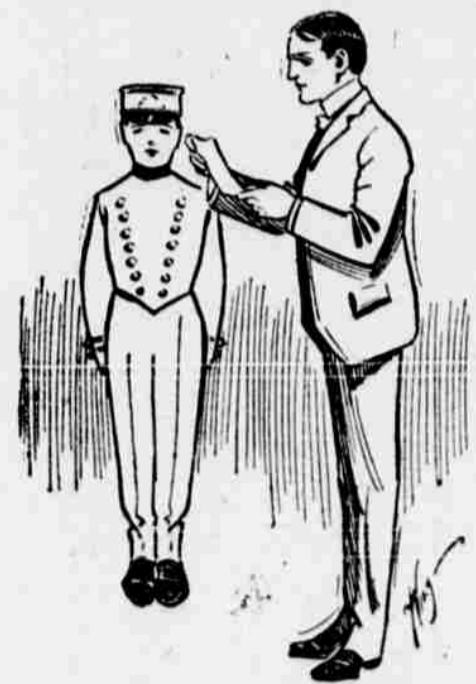
The Trongate has figured in both history and romance. It derives its name from the public weigh-house having once been situated there. At the corner of High street formerly stood the Old Tolbooth, or ancient jail, in front of which criminals were publicly executed. Sir Walter Scott mentions the meeting of his famous Highland chieftain, Rob Roy, and some of the others characters in his novel before this Scottish bastle.

Reaching the place, Travers looks sharply about for his agent. On the way he has seen groups of rough-looking men talking at the corners, and although they are doubtless law-abiding citizens, something in their appearance strikes him as odd.

Tram cars pass, and people are moving. It would hardly appear to be the place one who had evil designs would select in order to carry them into practice.

Jack grows uneasy. Minutes are passing, and a suspicion is being shaped in his mind that perhaps this is but a trick of the senior to beguile him until the hour for the sailing of the steamer has passed.

He has about come to the conclusion his best plan is to stop the next empty cab that comes along and make for the landing stage regardless of the startling information which the writer of the note had promised, when his attention is attracted toward a man advancing along the street, who appears



"Meet me at the Tron steeple."

to be looking to the right and left as if in search of some one.

"Ah!" mutters Jack; "doubtless my man; but if Smithers, then he is sailing under other colors. Jove! he has cut off a foot from his stature. At any rate, I'll wait for him, and prepare to receive boarders."

The short man notices him standing there.

"Are ye Mr. Travers?" he asks.

Jack replies that he usually answers to that name when at home.

"Have you a message for me?" he demands.

The fellow glances around cautiously. No one appears to be near—a fact Travers has noticed, and deems so significant that he keeps his eyes fastened keenly on the other, suspecting treachery.

"I have, sir. Come a bitty closer. The lady told me to be very, very careful," is the answer he receives only it is in broad Scotch.

Jack is thrown a trifle off his guard by the mention of a lady in the case. Then this message comes from Juanita, perhaps—oh, rapture!—from Jessie herself.

He does not suspect that this has been artfully brought into play for the especial purpose of disconcerting him.

The Glasgow man has taken something from his pocket, and Jack, keenly on the alert, bends forward to see what it may be. Thus he hears not a light footfall behind, because of the rumble made by a vanishing tram car.

A peculiar hissing sound causes him to turn his head, but ere he can fully accomplish this design, a heavy object descends, and it seems to Jack as though the heavens had fallen, since he sees a myriad of stars.

He falls to the ground, helpless. As in a dream, he realizes that two men support him and tell a passerby he is a boon companion unfortunate enough to have partaken too freely, yet all the while Jack's vocal organs, as well as his muscular powers, seem paralyzed. Then he feels them lifting him up and placing him in a vehicle; he hears the driver shout to his horse, and with the motion of the cab, all consciousness leaves him, for some one has kindly placed a handkerchief saturated with chloroform over his breathing apparatus.

When Travers opens his eyes he is in a dense fog with regard to his whereabouts.

Jove! he must be out on the plains again, and all these strange incidents but the fancies of a disordered mind. The night air is cold, and Jack, with a shiver, involuntarily reaches out for his blanket. Then he discovers he has none. What are those sounds? Surely such as never greet the ear upon the borders of the lonely Staked Plains—the ringing of bells, and the shrill screech of motors switching the freight vans.

Amazed, Jack lifts his head. Then he gives a grunt, for the movement causes him pain.

His surprise grows; many lights flash before his eyes—why, it is as though he gazes from a height upon some great slumbering city, and the odor of smoke in the air is very familiar, too.

If he was astonished before, it is as nothing to his sensation when he discovers his surroundings as the moon creeps forth.

Gleaming white stones are on the right and left, tall monuments rear themselves above, while close by he can see all manner of singular vaults in the terraces, some of them guarded by iron railings in front.

Really Jack can be excused for staggering to his feet with a low cry bubbling from his lips. The bravest of men might feel a commingling of awe and alarm under similar circumstances.

It is not a very pleasant sensation for one to open his eyes and suddenly discover himself lying in the city of the dead.

Fortunately Jack's nerve is equal to even this, and he pulls himself together as he endeavors to figure how he comes to be in the Necropolis of Glasgow before his time.

Jack forgets all about his headache,

though he will have a tender recollection of that blow for days to come.

To leave this Necropolis is his first thought, and when he attempts this the greater is his marvel how, without the complicity of the gate keeper at the Bridge of Sighs, they ever carried his senseless form over the walls.

When a man of dash and energy undertakes to accomplish a certain feat he can usually get there, and such an agile fellow as Travers could not long be daunted by a wall even twice as high as that which confronts him.

So he is soon over and making his way down the steep street that leads from the crown of the hill.

It is deserted at this hour, of course.

Anxious about the passage of time, Jack endeavors to find his watch, but does not seem greatly surprised to dis-



"A heavy object descends."

cover it missing; nor is there a shilling in any of his pockets. He smiles grimly as he remembers how, like a wise traveler, he had the forethought to sew certain Bank of England notes in the lining of his coat; so that he is all right financially.

The position of the moon causes him some uneasiness. He fears that he must already be too late to sail on the Anchoria, and that the Spaniard has won the trick.

It is only when he reaches Argyle street, after a long walk, that he runs across a night-hawk cabby, whom he engages at once to carry him with all speed to the landing stage.

They reach the landing stage. One glance tells Travers the steamer is no longer where he saw her. The hour for sailing has passed, and while he lay unconscious in the beautiful Necropolis of the western capital the Anchoria was steaming down the Clyde to the ocean, doubtless bearing those with whom he feels his destiny is interwoven.

Who is this standing like a statue at the end of the no longer used gang plank. Ah Sin, to be sure—faithful Ah Sin!

A few questions draw out all the Celestial knows.

Those they seek have really gone on the Anchoria.

There has been no news from Smithers.

Jack and his henchman return again to the hotel to discover what can be done. Here they find a note from Smithers which came too late—a note that tells Jack to meet him at the landing stage by eleven, as he is sure the parties intend to sail.

What then? Where is Smithers? Failing to find his employer at the rendezvous, has the watchdog from Scotland Yard given up the whole business, or, with shrewd foresight, taken passage on the steamer? Jack told him to spare no expense, and he has hopes.

Now as to his own course.

The clerk is deeply interested in his case, and explains how by taking a train he could reach Wemyss bay, some distance down the Clyde, before the steamer, and board her there. Unfortunately, there is no train until morning, and then it will be too late. A special? Well, that could be done

at heavy expense, providing the road was clear.

On his part, he advised that they take the first morning train to Liverpool, and arrive in time to go on board the fast Teutonic of the White Star line, which had been delayed by some accident, and was billed to sail on the following day at three.

Jack jumps at the chance, and has strong hopes of being in New York to see Senor Roblado and his party disembark. So in the morning they head south, and dash over Scottish moors, with Liverpool as their objective point.

### CHAPTER IX.

#### The Race Across the Ocean.

There is delay on the road, and when the train draws near Liverpool the hour set for the sailing of the Teutonic is past; but Jack smiles grimly—Jack who knows that a late mail from London will reach Holyhead, across the Irish sea to Dublin, and arrive at Queenstown in time to connect with the ocean grey hound the following morning, and it is his intention to be in the same Irish cannon-ball train.

Having several hours to spare in Liverpool, Travers dines, purchases a watch to take the place of the fine chronometer which fell into the hands of the Trongate ruffians, and purchases a neat little article in the way of a firearm, which, judging from appearances, ought to render a decent account of itself in time of need.

Once more, in a hurry, Jack and his factotum arrive at the Welsh terminus of the railroad, board the steamer, and pass over to the Irish capital, where in the night another train must be taken for Queenstown.

When they arrive it is broad daylight.

The Teutonic is anchored in the harbor, waiting for the mail and late passengers. As they go out on a small tender to join her Jack believes he has never looked upon a more lovely picture than is spread like a green panorama around him.

Off at last!

It is noon when Queenstown is left behind and Daunt's Rock sighted.

Will they overcome the lead of the Anchor line steamer sailing from Glasgow?

On the fourth day out smoke is seen to the northeast, and they gradually draw abreast of it. The steamer cannot be plainly seen, even with the glass, but Jack learns that the first officer inclines to the opinion that it is an Anchor line boat.

(To be continued.)

### TRADE CHANCES IN CHINA.

#### Enormous Opportunities Which of Late Have Attracted Attention.

The vast opportunities offered for the extension of foreign trade in the great empire of China are already having their effect on the imagination of those interested. Estimates of the value of orders that China is now in a position to give put it at fabulous sums, but as a matter of fact one part of China, the southeast, with an area of 4,000,000 square miles, would demand a railroad network of 186,410 miles, of which Germany, England, France, Belgium and the United States would construct 37,282 miles each, work worth \$1,428,000,000 would fall to each of these countries.

There would be a demand for at least 50,000,000 tons of steel and iron, an order large enough, when properly divided, to aid in keeping the world's iron and steel industries profitably employed for fifty years. It is hardly necessary to take the trouble to prove estimates of this kind. For even if one makes allowances for overestimates there is still enough to warrant hopes expressed. Railroads are not the only works that give promise.

There are other great transportation systems, such as telegraph wires and poles, to be erected, bridges to be built, rivers to be regulated, bars in rivers and harbors to be removed and hundreds of public works that will need foreign materials, many of which can never be carried out unless by the aid of foreign machinery.