

# THE NIGHT BEFORE EL CANEY

An Incident of War in Cuba.

By FRANCOIS KIMBALL.

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When the colonel of the 11th cavalry summoned Captain Burden to regimental headquarters, some one at the officers' mess asked who he was, anyway, that the "old man" had picked him from among a dozen old campaigners for a consultation.

"Nephew or something to a senator," growled a grizzled lieutenant, who had seen 20 years of service and was jealous of the 11th's reputation. "Fresh from a desk in the war department, but all fired anxious to smell dog powder."

"Ought to have joined the rough riders," added another. "They'll be in the fight tomorrow; the 11th's too full already, and here's the old man asking him to supper before he's seen a week of service."

"But" interposed the regimental surgeon. "Burden's not a greenhorn, and the colonel knows it. Reckon you don't know what sent him out of Washington into this fever stricken climate. Do you think a doughboy'd join the fighting—eh?"

"Come," said the adjutant, looking at the surgeon, for he saw the latter had something on his mind, and he too, was curious about Captain Burden. "Let's go outside and leave the fellows to their growlings; then, when they had passed beyond the confines of the mess tent—"What was it, Johnson? The chap's no coward, and he interests me."

"Well," said the surgeon soberly. "It isn't my business, but I don't mind telling you: I've a cousin in the war department, a chum of Burden's, and he wrote me to keep an eye on him. It was hard luck drove him out of Washington."

"Humph!" growled the adjutant sarcastically. "Small pay and"—  
"No," broke in the surgeon. "Burden has an income and"—  
"Then what's the dope? Why didn't he stay in Washington and leave us poor devils to do the fighting?"

"If you'd been in Washington it wouldn't take much guessing," replied the surgeon. "For if you'd been there you'd have known Miss R. and how she played Burden, to throw him over for a doughboy, so all Washington was on it and felt sorry for the captain and didn't wonder when he threw up a fat position in the department and petitioned the secretary for active service."

"And the doughboy?" grunted the adjutant, enlisted for all time in the new captain's behalf. "Staid in Washington with the reserves and"—  
"Not much. And that's what puzzles the war heads up there. He enlisted in the regulars and lit out for Santiago along with Burden, though I reckon they didn't come together."

"What's his name?" asked the adjutant.  
"The surgeon fumbled for the letter, glancing over it by the light of a neighboring lantern. "Hardy," said he shortly. "And, by thunder, he's in the 11th. What if he and Burden come to gether?"

In the meantime Captain Burden, unconscious of the effect the summons from the colonel had upon his brother officers, stood before the commander of the regiment at headquarters.  
"Captain Burden," said the latter, noting with a practiced eye the slender figure of the young officer, "you come to the 11th highly recommended for coolness and courage. Tomorrow we attack El Caney. I have been ordered to call for volunteers to do a little scouting. Will you lead the party?"

"Thank you," said Burden simply. "It will be an honor, I"—  
"The colonel remarked his eyes glances," the colonel said he seriously. "The bush is full of Spaniards. You may be killed or seriously wounded. Every caution will be required."

"I will do my best, sir," replied Captain Burden. "Is the start to be made at once?"  
"The colonel wheeled about on his camp stool. "Orderly," said he sharply, "tell Captain Clark that I wish a volunteer of two good men from his company to undertake a dangerous errand near the enemy's line. They are to report to me at once."

"Your duty will be," he continued, turning to Captain Burden, "to reconnoiter as near as possible to the enemy's lines. You will skirt the base of El Caney, making a detour to the north. It is unnecessary to say the volunteers will be under orders from you and are to be governed by your judgment."

Five minutes later the tramp of approaching men was heard, and two cavalrymen entered the commander's presence. Captain Burden, noting them critically, started. The sharp tones of the colonel rang in his ears.  
"Corporal Joyce and Private Hardy, you are under orders to proceed according to Captain Burden's direction on a reconnaissance into the enemy's lines. That will do."

Burden returned the men's salutes mechanically. The presence of John Hardy filled him with conflicting emotions. He had fled from Washington hoping to drown in the excitement of an aggressive campaign the sorrow which this man had brought upon him. Had it not been for Hardy—his chum, his friend, his comrade—he almost feel Hardy's breath upon his face and hear the voice whispering in his ear: "To the left, to the left! He will reach the Spaniards sooner than I."

Far up the height a dozen tiny lights shimmered in the darkness—the Spaniards torches about the blockhouse of El Caney. To the left the faint ring of

steel told the three Americans that the enemy's sentries were wide awake, ready to fly blindly in the darkness. Captain Burden passed.

"Private Hardy," said he, so huskily he scarcely recognized his own voice, "move cautiously to the left, keeping well in the shadow of the brush. The corporal and I will detour to the right, approaching the slope farther on."

Hardy's hand came to a quick salute. "Very good, sir," replied he steadily, though he must have known he would run against the very muzzles of Spanish rifles. Then, wheeling about, he disappeared in the tangled thicket.

Captain Burden paused irresolutely, white to the very lips. "Come!" said he sharply. "To the right, corporal!"

A myriad of insects buzzed about their faces. The corporal cursed and scratched them off, but his companion scarcely noticed them. His ears were strained to catch the shots from the slope of El Caney, the fusillade which would send him back to Washington.

A minute passed—five—ten. It seemed as many hours. The heat and blackness of the brush stifled the Americans; the sharp thorns tore their clothes and lacerated their bodies. Corporal Joyce swore and cursed the fate which had sent him to Cuba. Captain Burden moved forward as one bereft of feeling. He had become a machine, a thing devoid of sense and feeling, a human sounding board, waiting to catch a rifle crack from El Caney.

Suddenly the buzz of insects, the crunching of the dry leaves and twigs under the feet of the moving men, the noise made by the passage of their bodies through the brush, were drowned by the echoing report of a Mauser rifle, then another, a third and fourth and fifth. Corporal Joyce inconspicuously clutched his officer's arm. "God!" he whispered. "They're ridin' him, and a braver fellow never wore a saler!"

Captain Burden staggered as though the bullets from the Mausers had pierced his body. A cry sounded in the stillness following the echo of the shots—an appeal for help, and the voice was Hardy's.

For an instant Burden wavered. Then, before the corporal could restrain him, he dashed through the tangled thicket.

"To the rear, sir!" shouted Captain Burden, clapping to the slope of El Caney, upon whose summit danced a hundred Spanish torches, awakened into life by the fire of the sentries.

With Joyce panting at his heels, he pushed forward, drawing his revolver as he ran and shouting aloud to Hardy to answer him, that he might gain the private's side in the darkness.

Breaking through the brush, he came upon an open space unsheltered from the Spanish guns above, to stumble over Hardy, who, resting on one of his knees, was keeping off five white clothed figures with his revolver.

Perhaps the Spaniards feared an attack from the entire American army. At sight of Burden and the corporal they wavered, forgetting the Mausers in their hands, that they were five to three with one of the latter sorely crippled.

"Corporal," said Burden sharply, noting with quick perception the confusion of the Spaniards, "to the rear with Private Hardy. I will cover you."

A flash of admiration filled the corporal's eyes. "God, sir!" he muttered. "They'll shoot you like a dog, I"—  
"To the rear, sir!" shouted Captain Burden. "He's light and"—  
Then, as the bulky corporal lifted the wounded cavalryman, slinging him across his shoulder like a bag of meal, Burden faced the astonished Spaniards.

"No!" cried Hardy, struggling in the arms which would bear him into safety. "Stop for God's sake, corporal!" Then in an apogee of agony: "Save yourself, Burden. She will not marry me, it's too soon!"

The sharp crack of the captain's revolver cut short the sentence. "Run!" he shouted. "I'll hold them off!"

Four times the revolver cracked on the Spaniards, realising 'twas but one man who confronted them, raised their rifles.

Rejected the whole carload of lumber because there was one kind of it in the lot! I just wish I could write a letter—one that would sound the very hair off his head, the scoundrel!

"I can write that in my business," said Read, stopping up.

"No!" said the lumberman. "You sit right down and write a regular business letter. And he explained more fully the circumstances of the case.

Read, although he knew nothing of the man to whom he was writing, "kipped his pen in gait" and wrote.

Then he read the letter, which was indeed about as caustic as one as could have been written.

The lumberman was delighted. "That's splendid!" he exclaimed. "How much do you want?"

"I'll leave that with you," said Read. The lumberman handed the author a \$50 bill, and Read was tided over his financial difficulties.

Why We Sit on Tables.  
About 100,000,000 women are expected every day by men sitting on tables. So far as I am aware, women do not pay for the furniture, and it is none of their business how it is used.

When Elephants Die.  
The opinion is widely held in India that elephants, when they feel that death is near, retire to secret places in the jungle, where they die far from the sight of man. This is explained the fact, so often cited, that the skeletons of elephants are almost never met with except those killed by hunters.

Work in the Casino.  
It is the strain within the bowels of the working class, unshared generally, while there, the change of coming into the outer air, that the sand log the workman dreads. Under an air pressure the blood is forced away from the extremities. It is driven from the exterior into the central organs, especially toward the brain and the spinal cord.

Where the Leak Was.  
Once, years ago, when Daniel Webster was secretary of state, there was an important foreign matter up for discussion before the cabinet, and the utmost secrecy was of course maintained.

He Knew Better.  
"Oh, John," she cried, "baby's cut a tooth!"

He Knew Better.  
"Aw, go 'way" broke in little Willie, who was playing on the floor.

He Knew Better.  
The trouble with H. K. Hawk, who was equally notable as preacher, journalist, lecturer and musician, suffered from a dangerous hip disease when a boy of 15.

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The late Rev. H. K. Hawk, who was equally notable as preacher, journalist, lecturer and musician, suffered from a dangerous hip disease when a boy of 15.

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# HE CURSED THE TOWN

END OF THE FIRST CAPITAL OF ILLINOIS PROPHESIED BY AN INDIAN.

The Destruction of the Town of Kaskaskia Was in Accordance With the Last Words of the Chief Who Died For a Woman's Love.

Since the waters of the Mississippi river washed away the last vestige of Kaskaskia, the first capital of Illinois, an old legend that contained the prophecy of the total destruction of the once flourishing little city has been recalled.

Kaskaskia was situated on a peninsula at the junction of the Kaskaskia and the Mississippi rivers, and in 1822 the Mississippi river cut its way through the peninsula, leaving the remnant of the town on an island. The water continued to wash away the rich alluvial deposits on which Kaskaskia was built until, late in 1883, the last foot of the land where the town once stood disappeared.

This singular ending of Kaskaskia's once splendid ambitions has recalled to the superstitious the story that the town was cursed in the eighteenth century by an Indian who had been wronged by one of the leading citizens.

Jean Beaudet came to this country from France in 1783, bringing with him his wife and his 19-year-old daughter Marie. The family settled in Kaskaskia, where Beaudet established a merchandising business. The Frenchman soon became one of the most prosperous and most influential men of the town.

Marie, his daughter, grew to be a beautiful woman, much courted by the most eligible young men of the country. She was in no hurry to accept any of them, and her fame as a belle spread from Lake Michigan to the Gulf of Mexico.

A young chief of the Kaskaskia tribe of Indians, having become converted to Christianity after several years of study under the tutelage of the Jesuits, built himself a house in Kaskaskia and was taken into partnership in one of the trading houses there. He was prosperous, handsome and well educated and was soon received into the homes of the white settlers.

The girl was at once fascinated by the tall, blue looking Indian, who fell in love with her at first sight and made no secret of his admiration. But Beaudet soon noticed the attachment and forbade his daughter from communicating with the young Indian. To make sure that there would be no more meetings Beaudet used his influence to prevent the chief from attending any of the social entertainments given in Kaskaskia.

But love always finds a way, and the young couple managed to see each other despite all the precautions of the girl's father. But Beaudet became aware of these meetings and again took means to prevent them. He was a man of wealth and influence, and he had the Indian forced out of his partnership in the trading company.

The Indian left Kaskaskia. For almost a year nothing was heard of him, and Beaudet thought that his daughter had forgotten her lover, for she appeared again and again, and she accepted with apparent pleasure the attentions of a young Frenchman. One night when a large ball at Kaskaskia was at its height Marie Beaudet disappeared.

Those who searched for Marie discovered that the young chief of the Kaskaskians had been seen that evening in the town, and the conclusion was at once reached that the girl had eloped with him. Beaudet at once organized a party to go in pursuit of the fugitives.

As there was a heavy snow on the ground, their trail was easily discovered and followed. The Indian and Marie had crept away, armed with fast bow and arrow, and had been captured after a day's chase about 40 miles from Kaskaskia. Their destination had been the French settlement at St. Louis, where the Indian had provided a home for his wife.

The Indian surrendered without resistance, and the posse started on the journey back to Kaskaskia, taking the two captives. Most of the men who composed Beaudet's party wanted to kill the Indian instantly, but Beaudet would not allow it, for he said that they should leave him to deal with his daughter's lover.

When the party reached Kaskaskia, the girl was placed in the convent there. Then Beaudet took the Indian to the bank of the Mississippi and, bidding him good night, turned him away to his cabin. As the helpless Indian floated away to his death he raised his eyes to heaven and cursed Beaudet, who, he declared, would die a violent death. The Indian's last words were a prophecy that within 20 years the waters which were then bearing him away would sweep from the earth every vestige of the town, so that only the name would be left.

The unhappy girl died in the convent. Beaudet was killed in 1712 in a duel. The last trace of Kaskaskia has been obliterated, and the superstitious declare that the Indian's curse has had something to do with the passing of the once flourishing town. On dark and stormy nights the ghost of the Indian, strong arms bound and face upturned, floats silently by on the river where the stream sweeps by the site of the vanished city in which Marie Beaudet once lived and in which she died mourning the red man that she loved.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

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# INDIAN SIGNALS.

The Long Distance Code by Which the Red Men Converged.

The traveler on the plains in the early days soon learned the significance of the signs of smoke that he sometimes saw rising from a distant ridge or hill and that in turn he might see answered from a different direction. It was the signal talk of the Indians across miles of intervening ground, a signal used in rallying the warriors for an attack or warning them for a retreat when that seemed advisable.

The Indian had a way of sending up the smoke in rings or puffs, knowing that such a smoke column would at once be noticed and understood as a signal and not taken for the smoke of some campfire. He made the rings by covering the little fire with his blanket for a moment and then suddenly removing the blanket and allowing the smoke to ascend, when he instantly covered the fire again. The column of ascending smoke rings said to every Indian within 30 miles. "Look out. There is an enemy near." Three smoke puffs meant "Beware." Three arrows said imperatively, "This danger is great."

Several arrows said, "The enemy are too many for us." Two arrows shot up into the air at once meant "We shall attack" three at once said, "We attack now." An arrow shot off in a diagonal direction said as plainly as pointing a finger, "That way." Thus the untrained savage could telephone fairly well at night as well as in day time.

Puzzled the Jeweler.  
He Wanted a Second Hand Watch and Finally Got It.

He was evidently a foreigner, and he walked into one of the big jewelry houses on F street and asked for a watch. He would be pleased to examine some "second hand watches," he said to the clerk who advanced to meet him.

"This isn't a pawnshop," observed the young clerk haughtily.

"No," observed the man inquiringly. "But you have watches?" and he pointed to the great showcase full of hand some watches.

"Certainly," replied the clerk. "Five or six of watches in the city. How much do you want to pay for a watch?"

"How much?" asked the stranger. "Much as he is worth, so that he suits me. I have said that I desire a second hand watch—a good one that shall keep the time."

"See here, sir, you are off your base. We don't keep second hand goods. You will have to hunt elsewhere for second hand watches."

The stranger's eyes opened wide. "But you have them there, and there and there," he said as he began to gesture. "I have said so—second hand watches." "Spelling it out to make it plainer, and they are here, every where, yet you say you have them not. I do not comprehend you."

"Well, I do you," replied the clerk sheepishly as he quickly got behind the counter. "Just a little mix up. No harm done, I hope. Certainly we have watches with second hands. All our watches have second hands. We handle no others." And the stranger got his second hand watch, for which he laid down a \$50 bill.—Washington Star.

Breaking Up the Mess.  
Lasting friendships are formed in the officers' mess aboard ship in our navy, but no effort is made to keep track of a mate when he is transferred. This strikes the landsman as a queer freak of nature, but the sailors accept it as a matter of course never to be questioned. Men get into pretty close communion with each other when they breakfast, dine and sup together for three years. As a rule, they learn each other's history to the minutest detail, unless a man chooses to be disagreeable and distant. Close attachments grow up, yet when the inexorable order arrives from Washington, sending the mess to the four winds of heaven, breaking up, as it were, the family, a warm hand shake ends it all. Each officer goes into a new mess, and the old is forgotten.

It was my good fortune to be introduced to a fine mess as ever broke bread together on a man-of-war. The devotion of the officers to one another was an inspiration. Finally the separation came. One went to some navy yard, another to the Philippines, another to China, another to Washington, etc. They were scattered all over the world. One day, meeting the lieutenant commander, who had gone up for promotion, I inquired when he had heard from Lieutenant So-and-so.

"Why, not in several months," he replied. "In fact, not since he was ordered to his new station. You know we fellows don't follow each other's movements after a mess is broken up. We form new associations, new friends, and the old drop out of sight. We never think of writing to each other. It is more than likely we shall never see each other again as long as we live, and we haven't the time or inclination to worry over each other's fate."—New York Press.

By Way of Suggestion.  
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Think It Seriously.  
The late Professor Hinsdale was singularly devoid of all sense of humor, and as far as I know, he knew far more about the doleful of dead languages than he did concerning these fancy innovations on his native tongue.

There was a certain piece of legislation which was of considerable interest to the local school officials. It had been introduced into the legislature and was there hanging fire.

One day Professor Hinsdale, then school superintendent, said to Mr. Tom Whitehead, secretary of the board of education: "Mr. Secretary, what is the outlook for that special school bill now in the hands of the state legislators? Do you believe it will be adopted soon?"

The secretary shook his head in a manner that was meant to be thoroughly discouraging and said, with a strong emphasis: "It will be a cold day when that bill is passed."

The superintendent nodded and passed on. A day or two later somebody came into his office and asked him about the prospects of the same bill.

"Well," he replied in his heavy way, "I have no personal means of knowing the status of the measure, but I have been assured emphatically by Secretary Whitehead, who may be considered an expert in securing knowledge of this character, that the bill will not pass until next winter."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Public Gallows a Century Ago.  
Even if the bicycle had been invented a hundred years ago touring could hardly have become very popular—at all events, for solitary cyclists. The old guidebooks were by no means cheerful reading. A run from London to East Grinstead, a distance of five or six and twenty miles, would have taken the whistler just three gibbets, and it was just as likely as not that from one or the other of them a body would be swinging in the wind.

Up till the beginning of the nineteenth century the gallows was almost as frequent a landmark as finger posts or public houses have become now. The traveler approaching York is directed by the guidebooks to "turn round by the gallows and three wind mills," and the road out of Durham is "between the gallows and Crockhill." Going out of Wells you "cross the brook and pass by the gallows."

Any number of such directions can be gleaned from the old books for the guidance of travelers a hundred years ago, and as these interesting objects were put up and the dead bodies of unfortunates left upon them for the special edification of footpads and highwaymen there was a suggestiveness about them that must have given a special poplarity to cycle touring if it had been in vogue at that time.—London News.

Question of Ethics.  
"Be truthful," said the teacher. "Always," asked the boy. "Always," answered the teacher. "Never tell a lie?" "Never."

"Oh, I do love sleep!" exclaimed one of the girls. "They are so dear! Don't you think so, Mr. L.?"

Mr. L. looked thoughtful for a moment; then he said: "My father, who was a farmer, kept sheep for 20 years. He was an old man when he decided to give up the practice of an old man, but as he had ever been, I shall never forget the day when the purchaser of the flock came to take them away. My father stood in the barnyard and watched till the last sheep had passed through the great gate into the road, waited till the last faint bleating of the flock had died away in the distance; then he turned to me with a face full of emotion. There were tears in the eyes of the 'chuck,' and their girlish hearts were touched by the pathetic word picture. Somebody said 'Ah!' in a long drawn fashion. 'He turned to me, my poor old father,' the artist continued, 'and said in a low, earnest voice, 'William, I'd go five miles any day to kick a sheep!'—Lush's Weekly.

His Goal the Letter 'V'.  
When the late Horace Maynard, LL. D., entered Amherst college, he exposed himself to ridicule and jibing questions of his fellow students by placing over the door of his room a large square of white cardboard on which was inscribed in bold outlines the single letter V. Disregarding comment and question, the young man applied himself to his work, every keeping in mind the height to which he wished to climb, the first step toward which was signified by the mysterious V.

Four years later, after receiving the compliments of professors and students on the way he had acquitted himself as valedictorian of his class, young Maynard called the attention of his fellow graduates to the letter over his door. Then a light broke in upon them, and they cried out: "Is it possible that you had the valedictory in mind when you put that V over your door?" "Assuredly I had," was the emphatic reply.

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Discontinued in 1905—accent on last syllable

A Sentimental Farmer.  
"These sheep pictures of Maurice are beautiful," said Mr. L., the art instructor of the summer art school, to his class as he turned over a lot of reproductions from the great artist's paintings. "They are so gentle, so tender, so suggestive of pastoral peace and quietude."

"Oh, I do love sleep!" exclaimed one of the girls. "They are so dear! Don't you think so, Mr. L.?"

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On he climbed, from height to height, becoming successively professor of mathematics in the University of Tennessee, lawyer, member of congress, attorney general of Tennessee, United States minister to Constantinople and finally postmaster general.—Success.

The Two Pianicels.  
The performance reaches the highest pinnacle of dramatic wit," wrote the press agent.

"Isn't that rather a strong statement?" asked the dramatic editor. "Oh, no! We are getting \$5 for general admission."

Alas, it is sometimes true that we mistake the pinnacle of price for the pinnacle of art!—Baltimore American.