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M. QUAD'S COMPANY

CONTINUOUS PERFORMERS

CAPTAIN CHRISTO

By M. QUAD.

About eighteen months before the United States declared war on Spain in behalf of Cuba the Spanish Captain, Christo, arrived in Havana. He was a man with very much of a past. He had fought three duels; he had been the warden of a prison and had flogged several convicts to death he had been chief of police at Madrid and was known as cruel and relentless. He was big and burly and bullyish, but he was said to be the bravest man in Spain.

General Weyler wanted a man after his own heart. He wanted a man who would lead a small command against the Cubans in rebellion and kill every man as fast as come to. He so arranged matters that Christo came out as a captain and was given a hundred men. They were known as Christo's Devils. Any Cubans who took up arms and fought from the canebreaks will tell you that these devils were more dreaded than five times their number of regular troops. Now and then when the regulars captured a bunch of prisoners they spared a few lives, That is, they sent a few rebels to prison to die of fevers. When the Devils made a capture be it two men or twenty, they were shot or cut down without mercy.

On one occasion, after twelve Cubans had held a sugar house against ninety Devils for two days, and were still having the best of it, Captain Christo came forward under a flag of truce and asked for their surrender. He didn't demand it, but asked for it on the ground that it was necessary to prevent prestige. It would never do for it to go out that he had been held at bay by such a small force.. They might march out with their guns and their flag, aad on the sacred honor of a Spanish soldier

"HIS HORSE WAS SHOT FROM UNDER HIM."

and a gentleman they should not be fired on. The Cubans distrusted him, but they had ammunition for only one more day, and it was finally determined to accept the terms. Christo had posted his men in ambush, and when the Cubans appeared all but one were shot down.

At another time he surrounded sixteen Cubans in a thicket. They had sent out a scout, and this scout had falleb into Christo's hands. He refused to give any information until his feet were toasted in a campfire and he was otherwise tortured for an hour. Acting on his information the thicket was surrounded. It was a capital place for defense. Christo had only forty-five men with him at the time, and the Cubans could have stood him off for a week. When the rebels had kilcd five of his men and suffered no less themselves Christo resorted to a flag of trucr. He promised that if surrender was made to parole the Cubans and give each one a present of twenty dollars in cash. All were in rags and half starved, and some had not seen their homes for a year. The promise strongly appealed to them. They surrendered and were marched a distance of two miles and then, meeting a Spanish force, they were done to death. They were shot in succession. Every man was made to see the others shot until the last was finally reached. For this deed a Spanish Club in Havana presented Captain Christo with a gold watch and General Weyler mentioned him with praise in his reports.

Three or four leaders like Christo working into the jungle with small forces at their backs, might have finally wrecked the Cuban cause, but there were no others to follow in his bloody footsteps. The rebels dreaded him and thirsted for revenge. Afman, who was about thirty years old been laid and failed an American soldier of fortune serving with the Cubans as sergeant came forward. This was known only as Hines. He gave no information about himself, and as he was a fighter no questions were asked. He asked for four tried men to go with him, and he took men whose courage he had seen tested. During an afternoon they marched nine miles to the house of a peon friendly to the cause. He informed them that Christo's Devils were only a mile away on an abandoned sugar plantation. He had visited them that morning to carry in provisions. In marching through the jungles two or three days before most of the men had been poisoned by a vine like our ivy. The peon said that fully thirty men were blind with the poison, and of the other sixty many could not handle their muskets for their swollen hands.

The native had understood that Captain Christo was to ride back to the Spanish lines next day, but this might or might not be so. He had seen the captain and had been questioned by him, and he reported the officer in sullen spirits. The rebels passed the plantation that night and went into ambush on the road beyond. It was taking a chance. If Spanish troops came up they would be cut off; if Captain Christo rode for the lines they hoped to capture him. They were in luck. At 9 o'clock next morning the Captain, attended only by an orderly, made his appearance. His horse was shot from under him and his orderly killed, and the next minute the leader of the Devils was a prisoner.

Hines had sketched out a plan to be followed in case of capture, and now it was put into effect. Not one of the five spoke to the Captain. He first tried bluffs and threats. He would, he declared, be recaptured within the hour, and he promised that every one of the five should roast before a slow fire. With his arms tied behind his back and a guard on each side of him he was hustled into the jungle and not a word uttered in reply. After half an hour had passed the Captain resorted to promises. If they would let him go they would pay each one a hundred dollars. He finally raised his offer to a thousand dollars apiece. On top of that he would agree to resign his commission and go home to Spain. Still no reply. Coming to the cabin of a man who could be trusted, he was sent to the Cuban camp after a reinforcement of thirty men. While waiting for the arrival of this force the Captain was tied and gagged and thrust down cellar. When the thirty men had come up Hines led the way to the sugar plantation and fell upon the Devils and almost made a wipeout. Only ten escaped.

When Captain Christo had been safely landed in the Cuban camp he was informed of the slaughter. He could not doubt it, for the men around him were laden with the spoils of the Spanish camp. He was also told that he must die within an hour. They would not torture him, but he should die by the rope. The man grew white as death and trembledlike one with a chill. He tried to bluster, but it was a lamentable failure. He had seen dozens of captured Cubans stand boldly up to be shot to death by his order, but the presence of the grim specter unnerved him. He cried like a child. He stated that he had $30,000 in bank at Havana, and every cent should go to the Cuban cause if his life was spared.. He offered to lead a Spanish force into a trap. He even offered to turn rebel and fight for the cause.

When the rope was prepared he screamed and fought and groveled and licked the feet of the men in charge of the execution. His cowardice was so disgusting that many turned away. Christo had been a bully and braggart and a leader all his life, and had made a false reputation. He was in terror of death and died whining like a dog.

COLONEL BUNKER.

HE TELLS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO IS NO GENTLEMAN.

"During my first term in the Senate of my native State, as I may have told you," said Colonel Bunker, after disposing of his cocktail, "I introduced a bill making it a penal offense for any person encouraging the bullfrog to bellow. I had studied the reptile and proved to my satisfaction that he was quiet and docile, unless encouraged to the contrary. I made personal experiments. Standing beside a bayou where there were thousands of bullfrogs, I saw that as long 7as I kept quiet the frogs kept quiet. If I began to sing they began to bellow. I found that the negro was the encourager of the bullfrog, and the bill was aimed at him.

"In the State school of Natural History was a professor named Chester. He at once took issue with me on the frog question. He claimed that a frog had got to follow about so often to get rid of his surplus wind, just as a whale must rise at intervals to fill his lungs with air. He cited instances where frogs had had their mouths tied up so that they couldn't bellow, and in every case they had exploded within twelve hours.

"There was a direct issue between us, suh—a direct issue. I answered the Professor through the public prints, and it was said that my remarks were pungent. The Professor had several things to say, and it was also remarked that his observations were pungent. I spoke of him as the Bullfrog Docter, and he got back by referring to Bunker's Bullfrogs. He finally characterized me as the last of the Dodos, and I promptly retorted by sending him a challenge. He accepted right off the reel, but when I appeared the next morning he was not to be seen. After a wait of an hour he sent word that the duel would have to be put off for a couple of days. Think of the absurdity, suh! Colonel Bunker obliged to wait until it could be determined whether a grasshopper required lime in his system to enable him to digest his food with the best results. I stood on my dignity and made up my mind to have nothing further to do with the man, but a

"OUR SECONDS TOLD HIM THAT NO DUEL COULD TAKE PLACE WITH SUCH WEAPONS."

week later I met him on the street and he held out his hand to me and said:

"'Excuse me, but I believe this is Colonel and Senator Bunker?'

"'The same, suh, and at your service.'

"'You are the bullfrog man?'

"'I am, suh.'

"'And come to think of it, we were to fight a duel. I was too busy at the date named, but I will meet you at sunrise to-morrow mawning. I never fought a duel, and I think I should like to try one for a novelty. Have you receded from your position on the bullfrog question yet?'

"'Suh, Colonel Bunker never recedes.'

"'Well, let the duel go on. Good-by, Colonel.'

"I made up my mind," said the Colonel, "that he was a queer man, but how queer I didn't reckon until we met the next morning. The choice of weapons rested with him, and may I be blessed, suh, if he didn't appear an the ground with a pitchfork in his hands and seemed to be highly interested.

"Our seconds told him that no duel could take place with such weapons. That Colonel Bunker was a gentleman and expected to meet a gentleman armed with a gentleman's weapon. The Professor said that as he was a very busy man it must be pitchforks or nothing that day, and so the duel was again put off, or, rather, left to his convenience. People were already laughing over the matter, and I did not wish to be made ridiculous.

"What did the fellow do a few days later? Egad, suh, but you won't credit it. He came to my hotel at 2 o'clock in the mawning and insisted that I be awakened in order for him to say:

"'Colonel Bunker, you must really excuse me, suh, but I have been experimenting with hens' toes and our duel slipped my mind. I have found that for all useful purposes a three-toed hen is just as good as a five-toed. Breeders should work to reduce the extra number. If cou can make it convenient to meet me at sunrise I will be on hand.'

"I was distrustful of the man, but I thought I would take another chance. It would have been better to have turned my back on him. He was on the ground before I was, and what do you think he was armed with this time? Upon my word, suh, it was a common ax, such as woodchoppers use, and he gleefully boasted that he would decapitate me at the first swing. The seconds wrestled with him, and after a long argument he shouldered his weapon and walked off, and then and there I determined to have no more to do with him. He held a chair in the college, suh, but he was no gentleman.

"Interest in my bill began to wane, and in order to revive it I had a committee appointed and went with them to the nearest frog pond. I then satisfied them that the frog was a quiet and respectable member of the community unless driven to the wall. He would meditate in silence for hours until hearing a darkey whistling or a mule braying. Then he would break forth in bellows of protest. The investigations of the committee were made known in the public prints, and then Professor Chester broke out again. I paid no attention to him until he called me the boss bullfrog charlatan. Then I had to do something, and I did it. I pulle his nose for him on the street, and it would have done your heart good to hear the promptness with which he challenged me. He seemed so fiercely in earnest this time that I accepted and named pistols as the weapons.

"'Again we met on the field of honah.. The professor was pale but determined, and he went so far as to take a weapon in hand. Then he demanded that we be stationed fifty rods apart at first. He had never fired a shot in his life and wanted time to get used to firearms. We were to fire and then advance 12 inches, and he hoped to be able to put a bullet into me by the time we were 50 feet apart. Nothing of the sort could be allowed, of course. I stepped over and pulled the professor's nose, hoping to bring him to the mark. He instantly challenged me again, and claimed that the last challenge took precedence of the first, same as an amendment to a motion. When we had wrangled over that for ten minutes he suddenly discovered a new kind of grub in the grass and captured it and started for home.

"My position was ridiculous, suh! If it had been anybody but Colonel Bunker, who led his regiment at Gettysburg and lost two hundred men out of seven hundred, and who had fought twenty-six duels, he would have been driven out of the Senate by the jokes and jibes. I stood on my dignity and held my position, suh. To do so, it became necessary to challenge and meet and wound two other parties.

"The joking ceased after that, and things were going along all right when the professor bobbed up again. He suddenly remembered that we had two duels to fight, and he sent a friend to say that I would be expected to show up on the field of honah next mawning. I waited until I heard that the professor was there and then sauntered forth. He was there, suh, but he was armed with a butcher knife—the same weapon he had used half an hour before to disembowel a coon to find how his liver compared with that of the woodchuck! He wanted a butcher-knife duel or none at all, and he wanted it in the rules that both of us could kick and bite as well as thrust and slash.

"I turned my back and left him. He was no gentleman, suh—no gentleman. He simply resembled one in his dress. He called me a coward in the public prints, but by the advice of my friends I paid no heed to it. When Colonel Bunker meets up with a man who wants to fight a duel with pitchforks, axes or bludgeons he retires gracefully from the field. He will either be killed by a gentleman, with a gentleman's weapons, or live on to imbibe other cocktails."

MR. BOWSER'S VOICE

HE STARTS IN TO GET CULTIVATION.

Mr. Bowser had smoked his cigar and read the paper when he arose said t Mrs. Bowser:

"I shall be busy in the attic for the next hour and do not wished to be disturbed."

"You are not going to try and ride that old bike around again, are you?" she asked.

"If I am, what of it?"

"Why, nothing, of course, but when gets as heavy and logy as you are, he shouldn't think of fooling around with bikes."

"Oh, I'm heavy and logy, am I? I have reached that stage where I am to be looked upon as a haystack on wheels? Thank you for your flattery, Mrs. Bowser.

"You know I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I just meant that you were not as spry as you used to be. If you had tried roller skating twenty years ago you would have made a success of it, but now"——

"YOU CAN SEE WHAT A CROWD HAS GATHERED."

"Go ahead and say what you started out to."

"Well, when you tried it one evening a few weeks ago you came down with such a jar that you shook the whole house and was unconscious for ten minutes."

"During which time you took advantage of my helplessness to rob me of two dollars."

"I never robbed you!" indignantly exclaimed Mrs. Bowser.

"Perhaps it was the cat. I counted my money as soon as I came to and found a $2 bill missing. I am not going to the attic for athletic exercise, however, I am walking to and from the office these mornings, and that is enough."

"Then why not sit here and talk?"

Mr. Bowser walked up and down for five minutes before he replied. It was evident that he wanted to trust her, but he was also afraid of her. Finally he said:

"Professor Zangwilly was in the office this afternoon, and after we had talked for awhile he wanted to know why I didn't go in and cultivate my voice for public speaking and reading. He said I had no voice for song, but that as a reader, lecturer or speaker I would make a great success. I have often been asked to read in public, you know."

"And you are going up to the attic

"I am. For five dollars he gave me some instructions to follow, and to cultivate it."

I am going to follow them. The first thing, as we all know, is to get a proper enunciation.

"Why can't we have the Sylvesters over and play a few games of cards?" asked Mrs. Bowser, as a sigh escaped her.

"Are the Sylvesters and a few games of cards of more consequence than your husband's voice?"

That silenced her, and after Mr. Bowser had waited around for a spell without receiving any answer he passed upstairs and to the garret. The cook had gone to her room, but in the course of ten minutes she came down looking pale-faced and wild-eyed and asked of Mrs. Bowser:

"Has it come at last, ma'am?"

"What do you mean, Susan?"

"Has Mr. Bowser gone out of his head and become dangerous."

"Of course not."

"Then what's he doing up stairs going 'ha! ha! ha! ha! whoop! stoop! soup! and a hundred other words that there's no sense to?"

"He's cultivating his voice so as to make a reader and a speaker of himself."

"I never heard the likes, but if you say it's so I must believe you Hark to that, will you! The neighbors will think we are all being murdered."

Mr. Bowser's voice had improved so much in a quarter of an hour that it could be heard clear down stairs. Mrs.Bowser took a glance from a front window and saw that several people had stopped in front of the house. Then she climbed to the attic to give Mr. Bowser a word of caution. She found him with coat vest and collar off and the sweat standing out of his forehead, and he greeted her entrance with:

"Hip! hip! Hop-hip-hop-hip-hip! Ma-ry! Ma-ry! Ma-ry! Sam! Sam! Sam!"

"Do you know that people are stopping in front of the house?" she asked.

"What for? Hip! hop! Hip! Susan! Su-zan! Su-zan!"

"Your shoutings makes them wonder what is going on. Can't you lower your voice a little?"

"Not by the fourteen horns of the seven sacred bulls of India!" he shouted. "I am in my own house. I am cultivating my own voice. If the general public doesn't like it they can lump it."

"But you haven't got to shout at the top of your voice to cultivate it, have you?"

"I have got to do just as the Professor told me. I want a voice that can be heard all over a hall holding ten thousand people. Hi! Hi! Hi! Hi! Ho! Ho! Ho!-Ho!"

Mrs. Bowser went down stairs and left him at it, and she saw from the window that the number of people had increased to fifty. The sash was raised, and she heard one man say:

"I tell you it's Bowser. He's beem off his chump for two or three years past, and he's finally become buggy. He ought to be taken to an asylum to-night."

"HAS IT COME AT LAST, MA'AM?"

"Why don't one of these boys go for a policeman?" queried another. "If that noise keeps up no one one the block will get an hour's sleep to-night."

"Cosmo! Cosmo! Cosmo! Dick! Dick! Dick! Dan! Dan! Dan!" came the voice of Mr. Bowser just as the bell rang and Mrs. Bowser answered it to find a policeman on the steps.

"How long has he been acting this way?" whispered the officer as he dodged into the hall.

"Do you mean Mr. Bowser?"

"Yes, or whoever it is that is roaring out live a mad bull. Has the doctor seen him and ordered him to the asylum yet?"

"A-way! A-way! A-way! Heave ho! Heave ho! Heave ho!" ishouted the voice cultivator in the attic.

"It is Mr. Bowser, sir," said Mrs. Bowser with all the dignity she could call up, "and he is not crazy."

"Then, mum, could I ask without hurting your feelings how long he's been on the spree?"

"He is perfectly sober, sir."

"Then he must have rats after him. You can see what a crowd has gathered, and that noise must stop or I shall lose my job. The word came to the station house that five people were being murdered by a lunatic."

"Very well, you can go up."

The officer found his way to the attic. Mr. Bowser was waving his arms and bending his body was enunciating, but after the officer had seized him and given him two shakes he dropped voice culture and there was a contest of language lasting five minutes. At the end of that time the officer came down stairs and smiled at Mrs. Bowser as he opened the door to pass out and assure the people that there was no cause for alarm. The whooping had stopped for good, and they could go home and assure their familes that no deed of blood would occur. The crowd had melted away when Mr. Bowser descended. He walked straight up to Mrs. Bowser and hovered over for a long minute before he could speak. Then his enunciation was perfect as he said:

"Woman, this is your seventeenth attempt to assassinate me in the last five years."

"Yes?" she replied.

"You were bound and determined to have my voice remain like the sounds of an old file drawn across a coal scuttle and you gathered that mob and sent for the police."

"Well?"

"To-morrow we separate—separate. You consult your lawyer—I consult mine. The dead line had been reached. Good-night Mrs. Bowser. I go to the library to look over some papers."

"Mrs.Bowser went to bed and two hours later when he came upstairs she heard him growl to himself:

"Hang Professor Zangwilly! If he comes into the office to-morrow I'll punch his head."

THAT SKINNER BOY.

HE AND A PARROT HAVE ADVENTURES.

"Humpy," said Mrs. Skinner the other morning, as her only son got up to late breakfast.. "Mrs. Noble was here early this morning to see you.Her sister, who lives up on Jay street. lost her little boy about four weeks ago and is very lonely. Mrs. Noble is going to send up her parrot to be company for her. She said she would give you ten cents to take the bird up there."

"I'll da it," eagerly exclaimed Humpy.

"But you have never carried a parrot anywhere yet."

"What difference does that make? Can't I walk along with a parrot in a cage? Carrying a parrot hain't thing like driving a cow."

"If he should get out of the cage Mrs. Noble never could forgive you."

"How is he to get out of the cage with the door fastened?"

"He can't, of course, you don't want to do any fooling around. You musn't leave the cage in a grocery and go off to see a game of baseball or anything of that kind. When a boy of your age sets out to carry a parrot through the streets he is assuming a great responsibility."

Humpy was willing to assume all the responsibility, and after a hurried breakfast he appeared at Mrs. Noble's. He was cautioned again and again as to how careful he must be, and in order that he might carry the cage more conveniently he was permitted to place it upon his head. The bird looked wide but had nothing to say, and had been carried two blocks when Humpy met three boys of his acquaintance. Of course, they were instantly interested, and of course he stopped and lowered the cage to the ground to tell them that he was going to get ten cents for delivering Polly on Jay street.

"I'd be a proud boy," said one of the three if I was sent anywhere with a parrot. I was sent with a canary bird once, but he wasn't bigger'n a piece of chalk. If you keep on, Humpy Skinner, you are going to be a great man when you grow up."

"He'll be bigger'n Christopher Columbus," added the second boy, who was red-headed and had holes in his shoes.

"Christopher Columbus discovered America, you know," observed the third.

"But did he carry a parrot when he was a boy?" demanded Humpy as he looked around him in an important way. "I want you fellers to understand that it hain't every boy who is trusted with a parrot. He's got to be brave and loyal and trustworthy. 'Sposen I was the kind of boy that would get up a fight between him and a cat? 'Sposen I'd let a dog come along and jump at him? 'Sposen I'd let you fellers jab at his eyes with a piece of wire?"

"Cut it out!" screamed the parrot as he flopped his wings.

They were his first words, and the boys gave a jump away from the cage. Just then a woman, two men and two other boys came along an i stopped to see what was up. One of the men had been drinking and was ready to quarrel. As soon as he saw the bird he loudly demanded:

"Now, then, who does this 'ere rooster belong to, and what's he doing here?"

"Please, sir, but it's a parrot, and I'm carrying it up on Jay street," replied Humpy.

"Don't tell me it's a parrot, young man, I'm not so blind that I can't tell a rooster when I see one."

"Of course it's a parrot," aaswered the woman. "Before I lost my fortune I used to have fifty of them around the house. It's a fine bird, little boy."

"Then I'm cross-eyed, am I?" shouted the man as he pushed the woman aside. "I said it was a rooster, and a rooster it is, and do you know what I'm going to do with him? I'm going to wring his neck for crowing so early in the morning."

"Come on, Jim" said one of the men as he seized the drunkard by the arm and pulled at him. "It may be a rooster and it may be an owl, but whatdo we care?"

"I said I would wring his neck, and——"

But he didn't. A policeman came around the corner and walked up to the group, and after making a few inquiries he said to Humpy:

"You take your old bird and dust along before you get up a riot an i are landed in jail."

Three blocks further on boy and bird came across a gang of boys the middle of the street, but in a moment he was surrounded and the leader of the gang was shouting:

"Boys, all get round here and we'll have more fun than a bar'l of monkeys! Now, then, young feller, where did ye steel this parrot?"

"I didn't steal him," replied Humpy. "I'm carrying him to a woman on Jay street."

"Don't tell lies. Any one can see that you stole him."

"You're a liar!" shouted the parrot.

The boys welcomed the words with a whoop, and the leader pushed some of them back with his elbows and said:

"You all heard him call me a liar. He's got to take that back or fight. Nobody can call me a liar, and get away. He's got to come out of that cage and square off."

"Too much talk!" screamed the parrot.

"You boys hear him, don't you? He's sassin' me. Some one open the door of the cage and pull him out by the neck.

It was the fat grocer of a nearby store who saved the situation. He sauntered out to the crowd and said:

"If you hoodlums don't skip I'll whistle for the police."

"But that parrot called me a liar," protested the leader of the gang.

"That makes no difference. The boy has a right to carry a parrot along the street, and if you interfere with him I'll see that the police get hold of you. Clear off with you!"

The gang cleared and the fat gro-

"THE BIRD LOOKED WISE, BUT HAD NOTHING TO SAY."

cer helped Humpy to elevate the cage to his head and then said:

"Go right along and attend to your business. If you meet another gang turn back or dodge 'em."

"So long, old man," called the parrot as Humpy walked away and hoped that their troubles were over.

He was within three blocks of Jay street when a woman who was standing in her door beckoned to him. As he reached the steps she came down and said:

"What a strange thing. I was just going to a bird store to touch a parrot when here you come right to my door."

"I've got to hurry along ma'am," replied Humpy as he looked around to see if there were any boys in sight.

"Yes, I know you have, and I shan't detainyou but a minute. You see I have a wart on my hand. I have been told that if I touched a parrot it would go away. You will let me try it, won't you?"

"He may bite you."

"Don't you be afraid of that, bubby. A parrot knows who to bite and whom to let alone. You are a good boy, and when I have touched the bird I'll look through my purse and see if I can't find a cent. I'll just open the door very carefully and——"

"Hands off!" called the parrot, but the woman paid no attention to him. She opened the door and thrust in her hand to smooth his plumage, when he grabbed her thumb. She screamed and drew back and out came the bird. Before Humpy could seize him he let go of the thumb and flew into the nearest tree, and as the boy danced up and down and the woman held her thumb and cried over the bite Polly plumed her wings for a flight and cried out:

"Nobody works but father! I'm off the perch."

JAPAN'S ROYAL BOX.

It is proposed that an "Imperial Box," for the accommodation of the Mikado, shall be constructed in the permanent wrestling house which is to be built in Tokio.

FOOTBALL IN SWEDEN.

Fred Coles, a Grimsby football player, has been engaged to teach the game to a club composed of the sons of shipowners and merchants at Gothenburg, Sweden.