



THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

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SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the library of an old worn-out southern plantation, known as the Barony. The place is to be sold and its history and that of the owners, the Quintards, is the subject of discussion by Jonathan Crosshaw, a business man, a stranger known as Bladen, and Bob Yancy, a farmer, when Hannibal Wayne Hazard, a mysterious character, a southerner, makes his appearance. Yancy tells how he adopted the boy, Nathaniel Ferris, known as the Barony, but the Quintards deny any knowledge of the boy. Yancy to keep Hannibal, Captain Murrell, a friend of the Quintards, appears and asks questions about the Barony. Trouble at Scratch Hill, when Hannibal is kidnapped by Dave Blount, Captain Murrell's agent. Yancy overtakes Blount, gives him a thrashing and secures the boy. Yancy appears before Squire Balsam, and is discharged with costs for the plaintiff. Betty Malroy, a friend of the Ferrises, has an encounter with Captain Murrell, who forces his attentions on her, and is rescued by Bruce Carrington. Betty sets out for her Tennessee home. Carrington takes the same stage. Yancy and Hannibal disappear, with Murrell on their trail. Hannibal arrives at the home of Judge Slocum Price. The Judge recognizes in the boy, the grandson of an old time friend. Murrell arrives at Judge's home. Cavendish family on raft rescue Yancy, who is apparently dead. Price breaks jail. Betty and Carrington arrive at Belle Plain. Hannibal's rifle discloses some startling things to the Judge. Hannibal and Betty meet again. Murrell arrives in Belle Plain, is playing for big stakes. Yancy awakes from long dreamless sleep on board the raft. Judge Price makes startling discoveries in his upland titles. Charley Norton, a young planter, who assists the Judge, is mysteriously assaulted. Norton informs Carrington that Betty has promised to marry him. Norton is mysteriously shot. More light on Murrell's plot. He plans uprising of negroes. Judge Price, with Hannibal, visits Betty, and she keeps the boy as a companion. In a stroll Betty takes with Hannibal, she meets Boss Hicks, daughter of the overseer, who warns Betty of danger and counsels her to leave Belle Plain at once. Betty, terrified, acts on Boss' advice, and on their way their carriage is stopped by Slosson, the tavern keeper, and a confederate, and Betty and Hannibal are made prisoners. The pair are taken to Hicks' cabin, in an almost inaccessible spot, and there Murrell visits Betty and reveals his part in the plot and his object. Betty spurs his proffered love and the interview is ended by the arrival of Ware, terrified at possible outcome of the crime. Judge Price, hearing of the abduction, plans action. The Judge takes charge of the situation, and search for the missing ones is instituted. Carrington visits the Judge and allies are discovered. Judge Price visits Colonel Ferris, where he meets Yancy and Cavendish. Becoming aroused, Price dashes a glass of whiskey into the colonel's face and a duel is arranged. Murrell is arrested for negro stealing and his bubble bursts. The Judge and Malroy discuss the coming duel.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(Continued.)

He waited long for the night to come, and to him the sun seemed fixed in the heavens. At Belle Plain Tom Ware was watching it with a shuddering sense of the swiftness of its flight. But at last the tops of the tall trees obscured it; it sank quickly then and blazed a ball of fire beyond the Arkansas coast, while its dying glory spread aslant the heavens, turning the flanks of the gray clouds to violet and purple and gold.

With the first approach of darkness Carrington made his way to the shed. Hidden in the shadow he paused to listen, and fancied he heard difficult breathing from within. The door creaked hideously on its wooden hinges when he pushed it open, but as it swung back the last remnant of the day's light showed him some dark object lying prone on the dirt floor. He reached down and his hand rested on a man's booted foot.

"George!" Carrington spoke softly, but the man on the floor gave no sign that he heard, and Carrington's questioning touch stealing higher he found that George—if it were George—was lying on his side with his arms and legs securely bound. Thinking he slept, the Kentuckian shook him gently to arouse him.

"George!" he repeated, still bending above him. This time an inarticulate murmur answered him. At the same instant the woolly head of the negro came under his fingers and he discovered the reason of his silence. He was as securely gagged as he was bound.

"Listen, George—it's Carrington—I am going to take off this gag, but don't speak above a whisper—they may hear us!" And he cut the cords that held the gag in place.

"How yo' get here, Mas'r Carrington?" asked the negro guardedly, as the gag fell away.

"Around the head of the bayou."

"Lawd!" exclaimed George, in a tone of wonder.

"Where's Miss Betty?"

"She's in the cabin yonder—fo' the love of God, cut these here other ropes with yo' knife, Mas'r Carrington—I'm perlish with 'em!" Carrington did as he asked, and groaning, George sat erect. "I'm like I was gone to sleep all over," he said.

"You'll feel better in a moment. Tell me about Miss Malroy?"

"They done fetched us here last night. I was drivin' Missy into Raleigh—her and young Mas'r Hazard—when fo' men stop us in the road."

"Who were they, do you know?" asked Carrington.

"Lawd—what's that?"

Carrington, knife in hand, swung about on his heel. A lantern's light flashed suddenly in his face and Boss Hicks, with a low startled cry breaking from her lips, paused in the doorway. Springing forward, Carrington seized her by the wrist.



He Was as Securely Gagged as He Was Bound.

"Hush!" he grimly warned.

"What are you doin' here?" demanded the girl, as she endeavored to shake off his hand, but Carrington drew her into the shed, and closing the door, set his back against it. There was a brief silence during which Boss regarded the Kentuckian with a kind of stolid fearlessness. She was the first to speak. "I reckon you-all have come after Miss Malroy," she observed quietly.

"Then you reckon right," answered Carrington. The girl studied him from her level brows.

"And you-all think you can take her away from here," she speculated.

"I ain't afraid of yo' knife—you-all might use it fast enough on a man, but not on me. I'll help you," she added. Carrington gave her an incredulous glance. "You don't believe me? That would fetch our men up from the keel boat. No—yo-all's knife wouldn't stop me!"

"Don't be too sure of that," said Carrington sternly. The girl met the menace of his words with soft, full-throated laughter.

"Why, yo' hand's shakin' now, Mr. Carrington!"

"You know me?"

"Yes, I seen you once at Boggs'." She made an impatient movement.

"You can't do nothing against them fo' men unless I help you. Miss Malroy's to go down river tonight; they're only waiting fo' a pilot—you-all's got to act quick!"

Carrington hesitated.

"Why do you want Miss Malroy to escape?" he said.

The girl's mood changed abruptly.

"I reckon that's a private matter. Ain't it enough fo' you-all to know that I do? I'm showing how it can be done. Them four men on the keel boat are strangers in these parts, they're waiting fo' a pilot, but they don't know who he'll be. I've heard you-all was a river-man; what's to hinder yo' taking the pilot's place? Looks like yo' was willing to risk yo' life fo' Miss Malroy or you wouldn't be here."

"I'm ready," said Carrington, his hand on the door.

"No, you ain't—jest yet," interposed the girl hastily. "Listen to me first. They's a dugout tied up 'bout a hundred yards above the keel boat; you must get that to cross in to the other side of the bayou, then when yo're ready to come back yo're to whistle three times—it's the signal we're expecting—and I'll row across fo' you in one of the skiffs."

"Can you see Miss Malroy in the meantime?"

"If I want to, they's nothin' to hinder me," responded Boss sullenly.

"Tell her then—" began Carrington, but Boss interrupted him.

"I know what yo' want. She ain't to cry out or nothin' when she sees you-all. I got sense enough fo' that." Carrington looked at her curiously.

"This may be a serious business for your people," he said significantly, and watched her narrowly.

"And you-all may get killed. I reckon if yo' want to do anything bad

enough you don't mind what comes after," she answered with a hard little laugh, as she went from the shed.

"Come!" said Carrington to the negro, when he had seen the cabin door close on Boss and her lantern; and they stole across the clearing. Reaching the bayou side they began a noiseless search for the dugout, which they quickly found, and Carrington turned to George. "Can you swim?" he asked.

"Yes, Mas'r."

"Then go down into the water and drag the canoe farther along the shore—and fo' God's sake, no sound!" he cautioned.

They placed a second hundred yards between themselves and the keel boat in this manner, then he had George bring the dug-out to the bank, and they embarked. Keeping within the shadow of the trees that fringed the shore, Carrington paddled silently about the head of the bayou.

"George," he at length said, bending toward the negro; "my horse is tied in the woods on the right-hand side of the road just where you were taken from the carriage last night—you can be at Belle Plain inside of an hour."

"Look here, Mas'r Carrington, those folks yonder is kin to Boss Hicks. If he gets his hand on me first don't you reckon he'll stop my mouth? I been here heaps of times fetchin' letters fo' Mas'r Tom," added George.

"Who were the letters fo'?" asked the Kentuckian, greatly surprised.

"They was fo' that Captain Murrell; seems like him and Mas'r Tom was mixed up in a sight of business."

"When was this—recently?" inquired Carrington. He was turning over this astonishing statement of the slave over in his mind.

"Well, no, Mas'r; seems like they don't no thiek here recently."

"I reckon you'd better keep away from the big house yet a while," said Carrington. "Instead of going there, stop at the Belle Plain landing. You'll find a raft tied up to the shore; it belongs to a man named Cavendish. Tell him what you know—that I've found Miss Malroy and the boy; tell him to cast off and drift down here. I'll run the keel boat around the first chance I get, so tell him to keep a sharp lookout."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Keel Boat.

A few minutes later they had separated, George to hurry away in search of the horse, and Carrington to pass back along the shore until he gained a point opposite the clearing. He whistled shrilly three times, and after an interval of waiting heard the splash of oars and presently saw a skiff steal out of the gloom.

"Who's there?" It was Boss who asked the question.

"Carrington," he answered.

"Lucky you ain't met the other man!" she said as she swept her skiff alongside the bank.

"Lucky for him, you mean. I'll take

the oars," added Carrington, as he entered the skiff.

Slowly the clearing lifted out of the darkness, then the keel boat became distinguishable; and Carrington checked the skiff by a backward stroke of the oars.

"Hello!" he called.

There was no immediate answer to his hail, and he called again as he sent the skiff forward.

"What do you want?" asked a surly voice.

"You want Slosson?" quickly prompted the girl in a whisper.

"I want to see Slosson!" said Carrington glibly and with confidence.

"Who be you?"

"Murrell sent you," prompted the girl again, in a hurried whisper.

"Murrell—?" And in his astonishment Carrington spoke aloud.

"Murrell?" cried the voice sharply.

"—sent me!" said Carrington quickly, as though completing an unfinished sentence. The girl laughed nervously under her breath.

"Row closer!" came the sullen command, and the Kentuckian did as he was bidden. Four men stood in the bow of the keel boat, a lantern was raised aloft and by its light they looked him over. There was a moment's silence broken by Carrington, who asked:

"Which one of you is Slosson?"

"I'm Slosson," answered the man with the lantern. The previous night Mr. Slosson had been somewhat under the enlivening and elevating influence of corn whiskey, but now he was his own cheerful self, and rather jaded by the passing of the hours which he had sacrificed to an irksome responsibility. "What word do you fetch from the captain, brother?" he demanded.

"Miss Malroy is to be taken down river," responded Carrington.

Slosson swore with surpassing fluency.

"Say, we're five able-bodied men risking our necks to oblige him! You can get married a damn sight easier than this if you go about it right—I've done it lots of times." Not understanding the significance of Slosson's allusion to his own matrimonial career, Carrington held his peace. The tavern-keeper swore again with unimpaired vigor. "You'll find mighty few men with more experience than me," he asserted, shaking his head.

"But if you say the word—"

"I'm all for getting shut of this!" answered Carrington promptly, with a sweep of his arm. "I call these pretty close quarters!"

Still shaking his head and muttering, the tavern-keeper sprang ashore and mounted the bank, where his slouching figure quickly lost itself in the night.

Carrington took up his station on the flat roof of the cabin which filled the stern of the boat. He was remembering that day in the sandy Barony road—and during all the weeks and months that had intervened, Murrell, working in secret, had moved steadily toward the fulfillment of his desires! Unquestionably he had been spared the attack on Norton, had inspired his subsequent murder, and the man's sinister and mysterious power had never been suspected. Carrington knew that the horse-thieves and slave stealers were supposed to maintain a loosely knit association; he wondered if Murrell were not the moving spirit in some such organization.

"If I'd only pushed my quarrel with him!" he thought bitterly.

He heard Slosson's shuffling step in the distance, a word or two when he spoke gruffly to some one, and a moment later he saw Betty and the boy, their forms darkly silhouetted against the lighter sky as they moved along the top of the bank. Slosson, without any superfluous gallantry, helped his captives down the slope and aboard the keel boat, where he locked them in the cabin, the door of which fastened with a hasp and wooden peg.

"You're boss now, pardner!" he said, joining Carrington at the steering oar.

"We'll cast off then," answered Carrington.

Thus far nothing had occurred to mar his plans. If they could but quit the bayou before the arrival of the man whose place he had taken the rest would be, if not easy of accomplishment, at least within the realm of the possible.

"I reckon you're a river-man" observed Slosson.

"All my life."

The line had been cast off, and the crew with their setting poles were forcing the boat away from the bank. All was quietly done; except for an occasional order from Carrington no word was spoken, and soon the unwieldy craft glided into the sluggish current and gathered way. Mr. Slosson, who clearly regarded his relation to the adventure as being of an official character, continued to stand at Carrington's elbow.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR SEPT. 8

THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE.

LESSON TEXT—Matt. 9:35 to 10:15 and 10:40 to 11:1.

GOLDEN TEXT—"He that receiveth me receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."—Matt. 10:40.

The first verse of our lesson is a vivid picture of the life of our Lord. Going about from village to village, he taught, healed and preached the good tidings of his new kingdom. Why? Not only because of his compassionate heart as revealed in the second verse of the lesson, but also as a proof of his claims and, "that believing ye might have life through his name," John 20:30, 31. This does not, however, lessen the force of this second verse, for Jesus as the true Shepherd was indeed "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." Seeing the multitude thus without a shepherd, so faint and weary as to lay down and knowing that his great work was to be carried on by others after he had "finished" it upon Calvary, he makes special provision by choosing the twelve and telling them definitely how to carry on his ministry.

Jesus realized that no one man can minister to all others except as he multiplies his personality in the lives of others. So it is that he gives the church of today a powerful example of how to answer the prayer of verse 38 by his practical method suggested in verse 1 of chapter 10. His vision of verse 36 is the passion of his life and he intends it to be the passion of our lives.

Disciples Restricted.

Following this introduction we find a list of the peculiarly chosen ones who are to be his vice-gerents after his passing, and from verse 5 on we find the charge he delivers to them. There is in this charge, first, the note of limitation, verses 5 to 15; secondly, the note of warning, verses 16 to 23, and thirdly the note of comparison, verse 24 to the end of this chapter and including 10:1. True, in this lesson we have only the first section, the limitation together with the final words of the charge which in reality amounts to a complete identification of his apostles with himself and his life of ministry.

Notice the grouping of the names of these disciples. First the three who formed that inner circle, Peter, James and John, and with them Andrew, who first brought Peter to Jesus (John 1:41). After these the names are in groups of two, and it was as such they were afterwards sent out, Mark 6:7. So we today are not alone, Matt. 28:20, Acts 1:8.

Let us observe the restriction placed upon these disciples. They are to minister not to the Gentiles nor even the Samaritans, though Jesus did both during his life, John 4:4 and Matt. 15:22, but not so those whom he now is sending, at least not till his work is complete and Israel has had its day of opportunity. After Calvary this restriction is removed, as we can see from the book of Acts.

Another restriction is in the message and the method. The message is to be the good news of the kingdom. They are to "herald forth" that it is at hand. That the Messiah has come. We are told that they are not to force the acceptance of their message. That in its proclamation they shall receive all sorts of opposition. That they must look well to their own character, they are to be as sheep amidst wolves, they shall be hated before courts and potentates, but such persecution shall be a witness against their persecutors for "his sake."

Bearing of Disciples.

What is to be their method? First, it is to be that of absolute dependence upon the Father. It is true that Paul labored with his own hands, but at the same time he accepted the bounty of the churches and urged that such fruit might abound, Phil. 4:10, 15, 17. Jesus is here teaching us the other lesson that the "laborer is worthy of his hire." The disciple is to heal. The ministry of hospital, nursing and godly physicians is a marvelous fulfillment of this command. Observe well the ministry of medical missions. There is no greater inspiration to the Christian church. What is to be the bearing of these disciples? It is to be that of dignity and self-respect, see Luke 10:5.

While it is true the disciple is to offer and not to force his message upon the people, yet for Israel to reject was indeed a worse state than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. The overthrow and scattering of the Jewish nation is a byword in history.

As to the note of compassion, we should read all of this chapter.

Remember the dignity of our work. Remember that we go in the name of One who came to "show forth the Father." Remember that as we thus "forth-tell" and show forth our Father and that as we receive others and others receive us we honor the Father. Social service is good, but let it be done in the name of a disciple and to the glory of God the Father. Such, indeed, is the practical life of the called ones who follow in the steps of him who came to minister and not to be ministered unto.

BACKACHE AND ACHING JOINTS

Together Tell of Bad Kidneys.

Much pain that masks as rheumatism is due to weak kidneys—to their failure to drive off uric acid thoroughly.

When you suffer achy, bad joints, backache, too; with some kidney disorders, get Doan's Kidney Pills, which have cured thousands.



An Illinois Case

Edward Porsche, 1831 Cleveland Ave., Chicago, Ill., says: "I suffered terribly from kidney trouble which resulted in dropsy. For three months I was laid up with the terrible pain in my back. Doan's Kidney Pills came to my rescue after doctors failed and I cannot endorse them too highly."

Get Doan's at any Drug Store, 50c. a Box

Doan's Kidney Pills

ALL ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHER

Short Essay Evidently Written by One Familiar With This Species of Animal.

A philosopher is a man, and rarely a woman, who, having nothing to do and being glad of it, puts in his time explaining the reason that other people should have for doing things.

Philosophers are not popular because, in the first place, most men are too busy to listen to them, and, in the second place, they are satisfied with their own reason for doing things.

Nevertheless, philosophers are wont to gravitate toward comfortable stoves in corner groceries, where men of varying leisure straggle in and towards comfortable chairs in universities where helpless youth are compelled to listen as a part of an awful punishment called a curriculum.

Whenever a philosopher becomes famous, it always turns out that he is not a philosopher at all, but a scientist. Simon pure philosophers never give information, because nothing less than explaining the unknowable will satisfy them. One philosopher will never agree with another philosopher if he can possibly help it.—Life.

True Worth.

Visitor: "I came all the way from the city to consult your lawyer Jones here. He's a good man, isn't he?"

Uncle Eben: "None; we don't consider him one, two, three with Smith. Why Smith's been intrusted with the local agency of the Knott Knitting Needle, the dispensing of Daggett's Drugless dope, and the demonstrating of Fasset's Fireless Cooker. That not only shows that he's got the confidence of such big fellows as them, but he don't have to depend on his law hardly at all to make a living."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Saving Trouble.

"Have you read the platforms of the different political parties?"

"What's the use wastin' time doin' that?"

"I should think you would want to find out how to vote intelligently."

"How to vote intelligently? My grandfathe found that out years ago, so what's the use of my botherin' about it?"

No Chance.

Office—What's the trouble here?

Mrs. Rooney—There's no trouble! Me ould man started in to try and make some, but he found the could not do it!

The Main Impression.

"What did the minister talk about in his sermon this morning?"

"About an hour."

THIRTEEN YEARS

Unlucky Number for Dakota Woman.

The question whether the number "13" is really more unlucky than any other number has never been entirely settled.

A So. Dak. woman, after thirteen years of misery from drinking coffee, found a way to break the "unlucky spell." Tea is just as injurious as coffee because it contains caffeine, the drug in coffee. She writes:

"For thirteen years I have been a nervous wreck from drinking coffee. My liver, stomach, heart—in fact, my whole system being actually poisoned by it.

"Last year I was confined to my bed for six months. Finally it dawned on me that coffee caused the trouble. Then I began using Postum instead of coffee, but with little faith, as my mind was in such a condition that I hardly knew what to do next.

"I have fooled more than one person with a delicious cup of Postum. Mrs. E. wanted to know where I bought my fine coffee. I told her my grocer had it and when she found out it was Postum she has used it ever since, and her nerves are building up fine.

"My brain is strong, my nerves steady, my appetite good, and best of all, I enjoy such sound, pleasant sleep." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Get the little book in pkgs., "The Road to Wellville."

"There's a reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.