



# KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS

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When Wilderness Was King, Etc.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

The Search for the Missing.  
The note of unrestrained joy of relief in the woman's voice rang through the room, stilling all else, and causing those who heard to forget for an instant the sterner purpose of their gathering. Fairbairn bent over her, like a fat guardian angel, patting her shoulder, her eyes so blurred with tears as to be practically sightless, yet still turned questioningly upon Walte. The sheriff was first to recover speech, and a sense of duty.

"Then this lets Miss MacLaure out of the conspiracy charge," he said, gravely, "but it doesn't make it any brighter for Hawley so far as I can see—there's a robbery charge against him if nothing else. Any one here know where the fellow is?"

"No one present so far answered, although Keith took a step forward, reminded instantly of Hope's predicament. Before he could speak, however, Christie looked up, with swift gesture pushing back her loosened hair.

"He was to have met me at the theater to-night," she said, her voice trembling, "but was not there when I came out; he—he said he had important news for me."

"And failed to show up—did he send no message?"

"Doctor Fairbairn was waiting for me instead. He said that Mr. Hawley was called suddenly out of town."

The eyes of the sheriff turned to Fairbairn, whose face grew redder than usual, as he shifted his gaze toward Keith.

"That was a lie," he confessed, lamely. "I was told to say that."

"Just a moment, Sheriff," and Keith stood before them, his voice clear and convincing. "My name is Keith, and I have unavoidably been mixed up in this affair from the beginning. Just now I can relieve the doctor of his embarrassment. Miss Hope Walte and I have been associated together in an effort to solve this mystery. This evening, taking advantage of the remarkable resemblance existing between herself and Miss MacLaure, Miss Hope decided upon a mask."

"What's that," Walte broke in excitedly. "Is Hope here?"

"Yes, has been for a week; we had all the police force of Sheridan hunting you."

The old man stared at the speaker, open-mouthed, and muttered something about Fort Hays, but Keith, paying little attention to him, hurried on with his story.

"As I say, she decided upon impersonating Christie here, hoping in this way to learn more regarding Hawley's plans. We had discovered that the two were to meet after the evening performance at the stage door of the Trocadero. I escorted Hope there, dressed as near like Miss MacLaure as possible, and left her inside the vestibule waiting for 'Black Bart' to appear. At the head of the alley I ran into Fairbairn, told him something of the circumstances, and persuaded him to escort Miss Christie back to the hotel. He was not very hard to persuade. Well, Hawley came, and Hope met him; they went out of the alleyway together arm in arm, talking pleasantly, and turned this way toward the hotel. The doctor and I both saw and heard them. I was delayed not to exceed two minutes, speaking a final word to Fairbairn, and when I reached the street they had disappeared. I have hunted them everywhere without finding a trace—I have even been through the resorts. She has not returned to the hotel, and I burst in upon you here hoping that Miss MacLaure might have some information."

She shook her head, and Walte, glaring impatiently at the two of them, swore sharply.

"Good God, man! my girl! Hope, alone with that damn villain. Come on, Sheriff, we've got to find her. Wait, though!" and he strode almost menacingly across the room. "First, I want to know who the devil you are?"

Keith straightened up, looking directly into the fierce questioning eyes.

"I have told you my name—Jack Keith," he replied, quietly. "Doctor Fairbairn knows something of me, but for your further information I will add that when we met before I was Captain Keith, Third Virginia Cavalry, and bearing dispatches from Long street to Stonewall Jackson."

The gruff old soldier, half-crazed by the news of his daughter's peril, the gleam of his eyes still revealing uncontrolled temper, stared at the younger face fronting him; then slowly he held out his hand.

"Keith—Keith," he repeated, as though bringing back the name with an effort. "By God, that's so—old Jefferson Keith's boy—killed at Antietam. And you know Hope?"

"Yes, General."

He looked about as though dazed, and the sheriff broke in not unkindly.

"Well, Walte, if we are going to search for your daughter we better be at it. Come on all of you: Miss

MacLaure will be safe enough here alone."

He took hold of Keith's arm, questioning him briefly as they passed down the hall. On the stairs the latter took his turn, still confused by what he had just heard.

"Who is Miss MacLaure?" he asked. "Phyllis Gale."

"Of course, but who is Phyllis Gale? What has she to do with General Walte? His daughter has told me she never heard of any one by that name."

"Well, Keith, the old man has never told me very much; he's pretty close-mouthed, except for swearing, but I've read his papers, and picked up a point or two. I reckon the daughter, Miss Hope, maybe never heard a word about it, but the boy—the one that was shot—must have stumbled onto the story and repeated it to Hawley. That's what set that fellow going. It you know the rest—the girl was easy, because she was so ignorant of her parentage, and nothing prevented Hawley from winning except that Walte got mad and decided to fight. That knocked over the whole thing."

They were outside now, and the first touch of the cool night air, the first glance up and down the noisy street, brought Keith to himself, his mind ready to grapple with the problem of Hope's disappearance. It seemed to him he had already looked everywhere, yet there was nothing to do except to continue the search, only more systematically. The sheriff assumed control—clear headed, and accustomed to that sort of thing—calling in Hickock and his deputies to assist, and fairly combing the town from one end to the other. Not a rat could have slipped unobserved through the net he dragged down that long street, or its intersecting alleys—but it was without result; nowhere was there found a trace of either the gambler or his companion.

They dug into saloons, bagnios, dance-halls, searching back rooms and questioning inmates; they routed out every occupant of the hotel, invaded boarding houses, and explored streets and tents, indifferent to the protests of those disturbed—but without result. They found several who knew Hawley, others who had seen the two together passing by the lighted windows of the Trocadero, but beyond that—nothing. Convinced, at last, that the parties sought were not alive in Sheridan, and beginning to fear the worst, the searchers separated, and began spreading forth over the black surrounding prairie, and by the light of lanterns seeking any semblance of trail. There was no lack of volunteers for this work, but it was daylight before the slightest clue presented itself. Keith, with the sheriff and two or three others, had groped their way outward until, with the first flush of dawn, they found themselves at the opening of a small rocky ravine, near the foot of 'Boots Hill.' Peering down into its still shadowed depths, they discerned what appeared like a body lying there motionless. Keith sprang down beside it, and turned the rigid form over until the dead face was revealed in the wan light—it was that of the red mustached Scott. He staggered back at the recognition, barely able to ejaculate.

"Here, Sheriff! This is one of Hawley's men!"

The sheriff was bending instantly above the corpse, searching for the truth.

"You know the fellow?"

"Yes, his name was Scott."

"Well, he's been dead some hours, at least six I should say; shot just above the eye, and good Heavens! look here, Keith, at the size of this bullet wound; that's no man's gun in this country—no more than a '32' I'd say."

"Miss Walte had a small revolver. She must have shot the fellow. But why did they leave the body here to be discovered?"

The sheriff arose to his feet, prowling about in the brightening glow of the dawn.

"They were in a hurry to get away, and knew he wouldn't be found before morning. A six hours' start means a good deal. They did drag him back out of sight—look here. This was where the struggle took place, and here is where the man fell," tracing it out upon the ground. "The girl put up a stiff fight, too—see where they dragged her up the path. From the footprints there must have been half a dozen in the party. Get back out of the way, Sims, while I follow their trail."

It was plain enough, now they and daylight to assist them, and led around the edge of the hill. A hundred feet away they came to where horses had been standing, the trampled sod evidencing they must have been there to some considerable time. Keith and the sheriff circled out until they finally struck the trail of the party, which led forth southwest across the prairie.

"Seven horses, one being led light," said the former. "That was Scott's, probably."

"That's the whole story," replied the sheriff, starting off toward the

safe horizon, "and the cusses have at least six hours the start with fresh horses." He turned around. "Well, boys, that takes 'em out of my ball-wick, I reckon. Some of the rest of you will have to run that gang down."

They pushed on hour after hour, as long as daylight lasted or they could perceive the faintest trace to follow. Already half-convinced that he knew the ultimate destination of the fugitives, Keith yet dare not venture on pressing forward during the night, thus possibly losing the trail and being compelled to retrace their steps. It was better to proceed slow and sure. Besides, judging from the condition of their own horses, the pursued would be compelled to halt somewhere to rest their stock also. Their trail even revealed the fact that they were traveling far less rapidly than at first, although evidently making every effort to cover the greatest possible distance before stopping. Just as the dusk shut in close about them they rode down into the valley of Shawnee Fork, and discovered signs of a recent camp at the edge of the stream. Here, apparently, judging from the camp-fire ashes, and the trampled grass along the Fork, the party must have halted for several hours. By lighting matches Keith and Bristoe discerned where some among them had laid down to sleep, and, through various signs, decided they must have again departed some five or six hours previous, one of their horses limping as if lame. The three pursuers went into camp at the same spot, but without venturing to light any fire, merely snatching a cold bite, and dropping off to sleep with heads pillowed upon their saddles.

They were upon the trail again with the first dimness of the gray dawn, wading the waters of the Fork, and striking forth across the dull level of brown prairie and white alkali toward the Arkansas. They saw nothing all day moving in that wide vista about them, but rode steadily, scarcely exchanging a word, determined, grim, never averting a yard from the faint trail. The pursued were moving which puzzled him most was the man's object in attempting so desperate a venture. Did he know his prisoner was Hope Walte? or did he still suppose he was running off with Christie MacLaure? Could some rumor of Walte's appeal to the courts have reached the gambler, frightened him, and caused him to attempt this desperate effort at escape? and did he bear Miss MacLaure with him, hoping to keep her safely concealed until he was better prepared to come out in open fight? If this was the actual state of affairs then it would account for much otherwise hard to explain. The actress would probably not have been missed, or, at least, seriously sought after, until she failed to appear at the theater the following evening. This delay would give the fugitives a start of twenty hours, or even more, and practically assure their safety. Besides, in the light of Walte's application to the sheriff for assistance, it was comparatively easy to conceive of a valid reason why Hawley should vanish, and desire, likewise, to take Miss MacLaure with him. But there was no apparent occasion for his forcible abduction of Hope. Of course, he might have done so from a suddenly aroused fit of anger at some discovery the girl had made, yet everything pointed rather to a deliberate plan. Both horses and men were certainly waiting there under orders, Hawley's adherents in charge, and every arrangement perfected in advance. Clearly enough the gambler had planned it all out before he ever went to the Trocadero—no doubt the completion of these final arrangements was what delayed his appearance at the hotel. If this was all true, then it must have been Christie, and not Hope, he purposed bearing away with him, and the latter was merely a victim of her masquerade.

What would result when the man discovered his mistake? Such a discovery could not be delayed long, although the girl was quick-witted, and would surely realize that her personal safety depended upon keeping up the deception to the last possible moment. Yet the discovery must finally occur, and there was no guessing what form Hawley's rage would assume when he found himself baffled, and all his plans for a fortune overturned. Keith fully realized Hope's peril, and his own helplessness to serve her in this emergency was agony. As they hurried back to the town, he briefly reviewed these conclusions with Walte and Fairbairn, all alike agreeing there was nothing remaining for them to do except to take up the trail. The fugitives had already gained too great an advantage to be overhauled, but they might be traced to whatever point they were heading for. In spite of the start being so far to the west, Keith was firmly convinced that their destination would prove to be Carson City.

(To Be Continued.)

Mrs. H. D. Travis and daughter, Miss Helen, returned from Lincoln on the morning train today, where they visited friends for a short time.

William McCauley and wife and W. D. Messersmith and wife returned from Havelock this morning, where they attended the funeral of Joel Messersmith.

## THE PENALTY OF UNTHANKFULNESS

Gratitude For Mercies Enhance Their Value.

DIVINE BLESSINGS MANY.

Pastor Russell in His Thanksgiving Sermon Says Unthankfulness Breeds Discontent and Undermines Happiness—True Christians Accept Their Life's Experiences Cheerfully, Knowing the Lord's Measure to Be Just.



New Haven, Conn., Nov. 26.—Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn and London Tabernacles, addressed large and interested audiences here twice today. We report his discourse on Thanksgiving. He said:—Our experiences in life are to a considerable extent what we make them. Bible students should be philosophers—every one of them. Why? Because the wisdom from above is the noblest science and best instruction. As St. Paul declares, it tends to promote the spirit of a sound mind—and a sound mind is necessarily a philosophical one. Murmurers and complainers are not philosophers, but the reverse. A sound mind tells us to take things as they are, to make the best of them rather than to quarrel over them and find fault with Divine providence and make ourselves and everybody else in our environment miserable.

True Christian people in every land and under all conditions have found plenty of cause for thankfulness, even though they have had their share, or more, of life's difficulties. Nor was this thankfulness because they had mastered the Divine philosophy and understood the why and the wherefore of the present reign of sin and death. They accepted their portion of life's joys and sorrows by faith, believing that their portion was measured to them by the Lord and that full obedience and submission, with cheerfulness, was their duty.

Excuses For Unthankfulness.  
We are ready to concede that the world, awakening from the sleepy superstitions of the past, can readily find many excuses for declining to be thankful. If we mention some of these it will not be by way of endorsing them, rather to show the unthankful masses that we recognize their viewpoint but do not agree with it. We would point them to the better course of thankfulness and proportionate happiness. To their complaint that they have fewer and smaller blessings than their more wealthy neighbors, we remind them that the poor of this favored land habitually waste more than would make very thankful some of the poor of other lands.

We remind that under Divine blessing upon the soil and the Divine blessing upon human skill conveniences and comforts have multiplied about us so that the "common people" of our land have home comforts and conveniences and educational facilities and parks and libraries, well paved and lighted streets and cheap transportation such as were not dreamed of in our grandfathers' days, nor enjoyed even by the rich. Let us not greedily ask more along these lines until we have fully appreciated present privileges and blessings and returned thanks therefor.

"But," says one, "our forefathers were superstitiously thankful, and we must avoid that. They gave thanks to God for the sunshine and the rain. We have learned that these are provisions of nature and we thank nobody for them. Our forefathers thanked God for escape from feudal slavery, but we see that they should have rebelled against feudalism and bought their freedom with their own courage. Our forefathers thanked God, if they were sick, that they did not die and go to eternal torture. We are coming to the rationalistic idea that they should have thanked their physician for recovery from sickness and should not have believed in an everlasting future of torture, because so far as we can see that teaching is all humbug. Intelligent people of the world have no more knowledge than ourselves respecting a future. We agree with the college professors that our race is progressing by an evolutionary law of nature, and that God has nothing to do with it, and that there is no future life for us except in the sense that we, in the future, will be represented on a higher plane of living, by our evolved children. You will perceive, therefore, why we consider Thanksgiving Day a piece of medieval superstition."

Replies to the Unthankful.  
Our reply to this reasoning must be along two lines: first, philosophical; second, analytical.

(1) Are not these increasingly large numbers of pantheistic and atheistic evolutionists unphilosophical? They admit that they have blessings far beyond anything known to their forefathers, and they admit that their unhappiness has increased in proportion as these blessings and reasonings respecting them have been received. Would not a true philosophy tell them that if happiness is their aim and desire, their loss of happiness is not due to the increased blessings, but to the improper and unthankful manner in which they have received them? Would not philosophy alone, apart from the Bible or religion, have warned them that, even if their theories were true, it would be unwise to cultivate them in their own minds and in the minds of others?

(2) Let us now analyze the foregoing complaints. Who can prove to us that there is no living and true God—that there is merely a god of nature, a blind force? Who can explain to us the power which holds our earth in its orbit around the sun, and which has given us summer and winter, cold and heat; has given us mountains and valleys, hills and plains, in pleasing variety and loaded with minerals most useful to us and merely waiting our heaven-directed genius to bring them forth for the blessing of our race, and to make of earth the Paradise of God?

What philosophy can prove to us that these things have happened by chance and that we are wrong in accepting the Scriptural suggestion, "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge, and there is no place where their voice is not heard"—proclaiming an All-Wise and beneficent Creator? We know that the wisdom and beneficence of our Creator were hidden from our mental view by our superstitious and irrational creeds of the past, but now, as the electric light has superseded the tallow candle, so God's Word today is shining forth to those who have eyes to see its beauty.

Let us not boast ourselves as possessed of so much greater courage than had some in feudal times. Let us note, on the contrary, that the patriotism which demanded and got the "Magna Charta" of our liberties was as noble and courageous as any that we have today, or more so. Our freedom from some of the superstitions of the past is the result of the spread of education, and we must thank neither ourselves nor our forefathers for this widespread education; we must thank the Lord for it. It came upon the world in spite of the opposition of the rich and the indifference of the poor. It came because God's due time for it had arrived.

The Scriptures fully assure us that it is a special mark or evidence that the New Era of Divine blessing, prophesied in the Scriptures long ago, is now at hand. Compare St. Peter's words (Acts iii, 19-21) with the words of the Prophet Daniel. (Daniel xii, 1.) Rightly understood and appreciated the very arguments used to oppose God are grounds for sincere praise and gratitude and hope for the future.

A Word to Higher Critics and Evolutionists.  
The law of sin and death is referred to in Scripture. We grant, as all thinking people must, that the teachings of the creeds formulated in the Dark Ages, respecting the torture of the dead, are absurd; and more than this we hold that they are unscriptural; that they were conjured up under superstitious fears, and that certain symbolic pictures of the Bible were wrested to the support of those misconceptions of the Divine character and Plan.

But does the rejection of those absurd theories disprove an intelligent Creator and disprove the Bible's declaration that He is a God of Love, and that there is a rational explanation of the present reign of sin and death, and a rational basis for hope for the resurrection of the dead, under the glorious reign of Emmanuel, the Prince of Life, and the blessings which His Kingdom will surely bring to every member of our race?

That the human family is in a weak and depraved condition, mentally, morally and physically, is beyond dispute; and evolutionists have not proven the Bible in error in its explanation that present weakness, mental, moral and physical, is proof of degeneracy which came to our race because of sin. Consanguinity between the human and the ape has not been proven, but if it had been there would be just as much ground for reasoning that a monkey is a degenerate human as for claiming that humanity are evolved apes.

In opposition to this irrational theory we note that mankind in general, even those of humble birth, have organs of the mind which they rarely use, and which cannot, therefore, be said to be evolved by them; and those organs are not the lower but the higher ones, the nobler ones. These qualities of mind are present but dormant, merely waiting to be quickened into activity. This fact favors the Bible view that mankind are fallen and that few are living up to even the best of the impaired organism which they possess.

The evolutionary theory, that we should live and die simply for the advancement of future generations, may prove an incentive to some, but in our judgment these will be few. Of far greater interest is the Bible's teaching that the present is the night time, in which our friends and neighbors and ourselves, one by one, fall asleep in death; and that God's Infinite Wisdom and Power and Love have provided a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust—the just to glory, honor and everlasting life, the unjust to a glorious condition very different from the present reign of sin and death—under the reign of the Prince of Life, with glorious opportunities, for a thousand years, of uplifting blessedness. Then everlasting life will be the reward to the faithful and appreciative.

Discontent the Viper of Anarchy.  
We have noted that unthankfulness means discontent, and that discontent means unhappiness and misery. Who then can afford to be unthankful, or to take the road of unbelief, which surely leads thereto? St. Paul draws our attention to the fact that much of the degradation of the heathen should be directly traced to unthankfulness. He declares that the heathen of the Almighty over all creation, and His unlimited power, are clearly manifested in the things of nature.

He declares that the heathen "are without excuse, because they, when they knew God, glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became foolish, and idolaters. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves." (Romans i, 21.) Unthankfulness to God was not punished directly nor threatened with a future punishment. Acting automatically it separated the unthankful ones from their Creator, and their course became downward, degenerate.

The spirit of unthankfulness as a malady threatens our present civilization with death. Year by year the sentiment is growing, and discontent, when fully hatched out, will be the viper of anarchy, for whose virus there is no human remedy.

We thank God that although this awful anarchy foretold is near at hand, and is beyond human ability to cope with, yet Divine Love has promised to intervene to save the unthankful world by the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom in power and great glory, for the blessing of all the families of the earth; for the making straight of all the crooked paths; for the opening of the eyes of understanding, that all may see the Truth.

The Thanksgiving of Christians.  
St. Paul, addressing Christians, says: "What manner of persons ought we to be?" Similarly, we might say, How earnest should be the thanksgiving of Christians! But alas! Thanksgiving Day with us has lost much of the religious import known to our forefathers. Notwithstanding false doctrines inculcated by man-made creeds, our forefathers believed the Bible record of man's original perfection, his fall into sin and condemnation, the redemption accomplished through Jesus, and a restoration to Divine favor thus made possible. These truths constituted the foundation for a living faith in God and led them to give thanks for the harvest of the year, accounting that if every good and perfect gift comes directly or indirectly from the hand of God it should be received accordingly and acknowledged.

Today, however, we have the form of godliness without the power, because the precious faith has been well nigh destroyed by the Higher Critics and Evolutionists, who for the past fifty years have been laboring constantly to this end, and with wonderful success. Well does God ask, Who believes the Divine Record or Message, and who sees the Arm of Jehovah connected with the world's affairs?

Anyone having lost faith in the Bible and its God has therefore little left except the form of godliness, without its power. Nevertheless, here and there in all nations and all sects of Christendom are to be found loyal souls, bewildered by the present trend of affairs, and crying out to God for further light, and appreciating and giving thanks for every blessing, even though they do not understand the philosophy of their own experience.

The Morning Star Dawn.  
St. Peter declares that the sun-burst of the New Dispensation of Messiah's Kingdom will be preceded by the morning star, which will shine into the hearts of God's faithful people in the early dawn, to herald its approach. The Sun of Righteousness has not yet arisen, but many of God's people are noting the clear light now shining upon the Divine Word, and are realizing that it comes from Him, and that He is preparing them, through a better understanding of the Bible, to appreciate the glorious sunlight of Divine mercy which will soon overshadow the world and scatter the darkness of earth's superstition, sin and death.

And so, as we get the matter rightly divided before our minds, we get the true understanding, the special enlightenment needed in our day, and we are enabled to rightly divide the Word better than did our fathers, so that today we can see, as our fathers did not see, the teaching of God's Word respecting the "high calling" and "restoration"—the spiritual portion of blessing for the Church, and the human portion of blessing for the world. We also see something about the times and seasons—which apply to the Church and which to the blessing of the world.

We are not to forget that the Lord promised that He would guide His people in the way of the Truth and show them things to come. We are to "study" to show ourselves approved—study the doctrine and endeavor to have our course of conduct harmonize with it—study to perform faithfully the duties of a loyal soldier of the cross of Christ.

These alone are able to give thanks in the highest sense of the term, because they, better than others, appreciate the Divine Program and can fully endorse the words of our text. I urge all of this class to be very thankful, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord in respect to all of their affairs, and waiting patiently for the full development of the Divine Program, assured by faith it will prove exceedingly, abundantly more than we could have asked or thought. I urge the remainder of mankind to cultivate thankfulness to whatever extent they can see and appreciate the Divine character, and to exercise faith therein. There is a blessing in it, not only for the present lifetime, but as a preparation for the life to come.