

THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

By VAUGHAN KESTER
Illustrations by D. MELVILLE

SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the "lure" of an old worn-out southern plantation, known as the Barony. The place is to be sold, and its history and the events which surround the sale, are 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 child of the old southern family, makes his appearance. Yancy tells how he adopted the boy, Nathaniel Ferris, the son of the late Captain Hazard, a friend of the family, and how he was later adopted by the late Judge Hazard, who was a friend of the family. Yancy tells how he was later adopted by the late Judge Hazard, who was a friend of the family. Yancy tells how he was later adopted by the late Judge Hazard, who was a friend of the family.

CHAPTER XVIII (Continued).

"Miss Betty, he's just like my Uncle Bob was—he ain't afraid of nothing! He takes them pistols of his—loaded—If you notice good you can see where they bulge out his coat!" Hannibal's eyes, very round and big, looked up into hers.

"Is he as poor as he seems, Hannibal?" inquired Betty.

"He never has no money, Miss Betty, but I don't reckon he's what a body would call poor."

It might have baffled a far more mature intelligence than Hannibal's to comprehend those peculiar processes by which the judge sustained himself and his intimate fellowship with adversity—that it was his magnificence of mind which made the squalor of his daily life seem merely a passing phase—but the boy had managed to point a delicate distinction, and Betty grasped something of the hope and faith which never quite died out in Slocum Price's indomitable breast.

"But you always have enough to eat, dear?" she questioned anxiously. Hannibal promptly reassured her on this point. "You wouldn't let me think anything that was not true, Hannibal—you are quite sure you have never been hungry?"

"Never, Miss Betty, honest!" Betty gave a sigh of relief. She had been reproaching herself for her neglect of the child; she had meant to do so much for him and had done nothing! Now it was too late for her personally to interest herself in his behalf, yet before she left for the east she would provide for him. If she had felt it was possible to trust the judge she would have made him her agent, but even in his best aspect he seemed a dubious dependence. Tom, for quite different reasons, was equally out of the question. She thought of Mr. Mahaffy.

"What kind of a man is Mr. Mahaffy, Hannibal?"

"He's an awful nice man, Miss Betty, only he never lets on; a body's got to find it out for his own self—he ain't like the judge."

"Does he—drink, too, Hannibal?" questioned Betty.

"Oh, yes; when he can get the hicker, he does." It was evident that Hannibal was cheerfully tolerant of this weakness on the part of the austere Mahaffy.

"But, no matter what they do, they are very, very kind to you," she continued tremulously.

"Yes, ma'am—why, Miss Betty, they're lovely men!"

"And do you ever hear the things spoken of you learned about at Mrs. Ferris' Sunday-school?"

"When the judge is drunk he talks a heap about 'em. It's beautiful to hear him talk; you'd love it, Miss Betty," and Hannibal smiled up sweetly into her face.

"Does he have you go to Sunday-school in Raleigh?"

"You needn't be afraid, I got something important to say."

Hannibal looked up into her face. The memory of his own loss was never very long absent from his mind, and Miss Betty had been the victim of a similarly sinister tragedy. He recalled those first awful days of loneliness through which he had lived, when there was no Uncle Bob—soft-voiced, smiling and infinitely companionable.

"Why, Hannibal, you are crying—what about, dear?" asked Betty suddenly.

"No, ma'am; I ain't crying," said Hannibal stoutly, but his wet lashes gave the lie to his words.

"Are you homesick—do you wish to

go back to the judge and Mr. Mahaffy?"

"No, ma'am—it ain't that—I was just thinking—"

"Thinking about what, dear?"

"About my Uncle Bob." The small face was very wistful.

"Oh—and you still miss him so much, Hannibal?"

"I bet I do—I reckon anybody who knew Uncle Bob would never get over missing him; they just couldn't, Miss Betty! The judge is mighty kind, and so is Mr. Mahaffy—they're awful kind, Miss Betty, and it seems like they get kinder all the time—but with Uncle Bob, when he liked you, he just laid himself out to let you know it!"

"That does make a great difference, doesn't it?" agreed Betty sadly, and two piteous tearful eyes were bent upon him.

"Don't you reckon if Uncle Bob is alive, like the judge says, and he's ever going to find me, he had ought to be here by now?" continued Hannibal anxiously.

"But it hasn't been such a great while, Hannibal; it's only that so much has happened to you. If he was very badly hurt it may have been weeks before he could travel; and then when he could, perhaps he went back to that tavern to try to learn what had become of you. But we may be quite certain he will never abandon his search until he has made every possible effort to find you, dear! That means he will sooner or later come to west Tennessee, for there will always be the hope that you have found your way here."

"Sometimes I get mighty tired waiting, Miss Betty," confessed the boy. "Seems like I just couldn't wait no longer—" He sighed gently, and then his face cleared. "You reckon he'll come most any time, don't you, Miss Betty?"

"Yes, Hannibal; any day or hour!"

"Whoop!" muttered Hannibal softly under his breath. Presently he asked: "Where does that branch take you to?" He nodded toward the bayou at the foot of the terraced bluff.

"It empties into the river," answered Betty.

Hannibal saw a small skiff beached among the cottonwoods that grew along the water's edge and his eyes lighted up instantly. He had a juvenile passion for boats.

"Why, you got a boat, ain't you, Miss Betty?" This was a charming and an important discovery.

"Would you like to go down to it?" inquired Betty.

"That will do, Hannibal—wait there—don't go any farther!" Betty called after him when he had reached a point sufficiently distant to be out of hearing of a conversation carried on in an ordinary tone. "Now, what is it? Speak quickly if you have anything to tell me!"

"I got a heap to say," answered the girl with a scowl. Her manner was still fierce and repellent, and she gave Betty a certain jealous regard out of her black eyes which the latter was at a loss to explain. "Where's Mr. Tom?" she demanded.

"Tom? Why, about the place, I suppose—in his office, perhaps." So it had to do with Tom. . . . Betty felt sudden disgust with the situation.

"No, he ain't about the place, either! He done struck out for Memphis two hours after sun-up, and what's more, he ain't coming back here tonight—" There was a moment of silence. The girl looked about apprehensively. She continued, fixing her black eyes on Betty: "You're here alone at Belle Plain—you know what happened when Mr. Tom started for Memphis last time—I reckon you ain't forgot that!"

Betty felt a pallor steal over her face. She rested a hand that shook on the trunk of a tree to steady herself. The girl laughed shortly.

"Don't be so scared; I reckon Belle Plain's as good as his if anything happened to you?"

By a great effort Betty gained a measure of control over herself. She took a step nearer and looked the girl steadily in the face.

"Perhaps you will stop this sort of talk, and tell me what is going to happen to me—if you know?" she said quietly.

"Why do you reckon Mr. Norton was shot? I can tell you why—it was all along of you—that was why!" The girl's furtive glance, which she searched and watched as it always did to Betty's pale face, "You ain't no safer than he was, I tell you!" and she sucked in her breath sharply between her full red lips.

"What do you mean?" faltered Betty.

"Do you reckon you're safe here in the big house alone? Why do you reckon Mr. Tom cleared out for Memphis? It was because he couldn't be around and have anything happen to you—that was why!" and the girl sank her voice to a whisper. "You quit Belle Plain now—tonight—just as soon as you can!"

"This is absurd—you are trying to frighten me!"

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"Deed I would! Does she leak any, Miss Betty?"

"I don't know about that. Do boats usually leak, Hannibal?"

"Why, you ain't ever been out rowing her, Miss Betty, have you?—and there ain't no better fun than rowing a boat!" They had started down the path.

"I used to think that, too, Hannibal; how do you suppose it is that when people grow up they forget all about the really nice things they might do?"

"What use is she if you don't go rowing in her?" persisted Hannibal.

"Oh, but it is used. Mr. Tom uses

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Another judge called Fletcher, a very surly person, said to counsel, "Sir, I'll not sit here to be baited like a bear tied to the stake." "No, not tied, m'lud," was the suave interruption.—Westminster Gazette.

That Will Get You Out.

One of the best ways in which to break up a cold is to manage somehow to get free tickets to the grand opera.

Wants a Leap Year Proposal.

Pittsfield, Mass.—Adam Turner, Sr., forty-eight years old, announces through a local paper that he wants to get married, and any woman who has always been economical and saving is eligible to sue for his hand. He is by trade an interior decorator. His only son is twenty-one years old.

Repentance—once so universally practiced at this season of the year, as well as on birthdays, and sometimes on Sundays—is rapidly becoming one of the obsolete virtues. Even novelists seem to have grown tired of the "wobbling" heroine, the lady who plunged into exotic sins one day and betook herself (metaphorically) to a

it in crossing to the other side where they are clearing land for cotton. It saves him a long walk or ride about the head of the bayou."

"Like I should take you out in her, Miss Betty?" demanded Hannibal with palpitating anxiety.

They had entered the scattering timber when Betty paused suddenly with a startled exclamation, and Hannibal felt her fingers close convulsively about his. The sound she had heard might have been only the rustling of the wind among the branches overhead in that shadowy silence, but Betty's nerves, the placid nerves of youth and perfect health, were shattered.

"Didn't you hear something, Hannibal?" she whispered fearfully.

For answer Hannibal pointed mysteriously, and glancing in the direction he indicated, Betty saw a woman advancing along the path toward them. The look of alarm slowly died out of his eyes.

"I think it's the overseer's niece," she told Hannibal, and they kept on toward the boat.

The girl came rapidly up the path, which closely followed the irregular line of the shore in its windings. Once she was seen to stop and glance back over her shoulder, her attitude intent and listening, then she hurried forward again. Just at the boat the three met.

"Good evening!" said Betty pleasantly.

The girl made no reply to this; she merely regarded Betty with a fixed stare. At length she broke the silence abruptly.

"I got something I want to say to you—you know who I am, I reckon?" She was a girl of about Betty's own age, with a certain dark, sullen beauty and that physical attraction which Tom, in spite of his vexed mood, had taken note of earlier in the day.

"You are Bess Hicks," said Betty.

"Make the boy go back toward the house a spell—I got something I want to say to you," Betty hesitated. She was offended by the girl's manner, which was as rude as her speech. "I ain't going to hurt you—you needn't be afraid of me. I got something important to say—send him off, I tell you; there ain't no time to lose!" The girl stamped her foot impatiently.

Betty made a sign to Hannibal and he passed slowly back along the path. He went unwillingly, and he kept his head turned that he might see what was done, even if he were not to hear what was said.

"That will do, Hannibal—wait there—don't go any farther!" Betty called after him when he had reached a point sufficiently distant to be out of hearing of a conversation carried on in an ordinary tone. "Now, what is it? Speak quickly if you have anything to tell me!"

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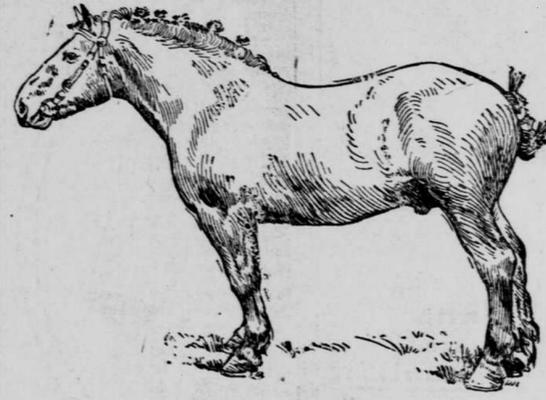
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COMBINATION OF EXCELLENT QUALITIES OF CLYDE, SHIRE AND PERCHERON HORSES

Ideal Type of All Three Great Breeds Is Nearly the Same—All Breeders Seek to Achieve Improvement Over Original Animals of District.



Percheron Stallion "Hoché."

It is, as a rule, well to stick to one breed of horses and to breed that one which has the greatest number of good stallions in one's district. Under Dean Curtis, however, at the Iowa college, Ames, Iowa, an effort is being made to combine the best that is in the Shire and Clyde horses, and the resources of the college fully justify the experiment and also the kind of horses that are being produced. Many of our most successful show horses have resulted from a cross of Clyde and Percheron, Clyde and Shire or Shire and Percheron in varying degree. The ideal type of all three great breeds is nearly the same; all seek improvement over the original horse of their districts, and when a horse enters the ring, although he is forced to make allowance for differences in each breed, yet he has preference to say—send him off, I tell you; there ain't no time to lose!" The girl stamped her foot impatiently.

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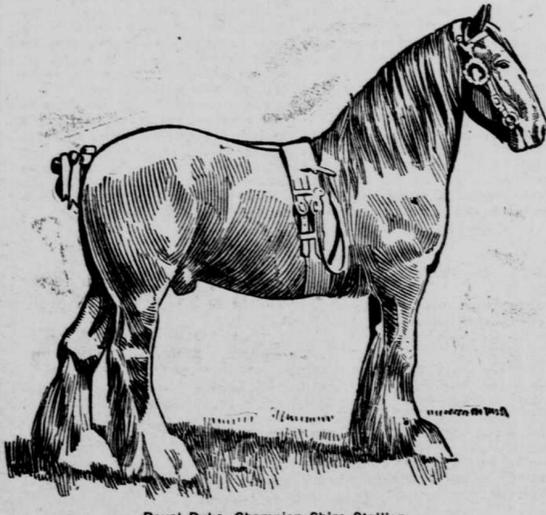
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alignment to the stifles and hip bone. It will be found in seeking these points that every breed has serious and, in fact, disqualifying differences, and Dean Curtis is merely doing what has been frequently done with other breeds when he tries to take a short cut by combining gray Shires with Clydes and uniting the excellencies of both. That it will take time and an intensification of the desired horse by inbreeding is nothing against the experiment.

A great deal has been done in both Shire and Clyde to improve them, but some sire has been sacrificed to get perfection of hoof and pastern in the one breed, and the Clyde was never a heavy barreled horse, the Scotsman preferring a quick, active, grain-fed horse to one which consumed more hay, an article he is not apt to be much the same standard in his mind for all. The ideal begins with deep feet, yet not boxy, but with wide hoof heads and a broad elastic heel and frog. The set of the pasterns must be oblique to give plenty of spring and save concussion, plenty of breadth in canon bone and tendon with quality, big muscular forearms, with the muscle coming down evenly, not in bunches, both for strength and to denote muscular tendency throughout. Head and neck strong without coarseness, but denoting strong vitality. The draft horse's shoulder may be straighter than the carriage horse's, but it should be oblique enough for the horse to wear himself well and travel easily, which will not be the case with an upright shoulder, or if the legs are not truly set on the body the latter point is often overlooked. A shortish back and a good girth and barrel, with plenty of spread underneath coming from length of shoulders and quarters and big muscular thighs and stifles are needed and the hock should be long and deep and clean, with a proper



Royal Duke, Champion Shire Stallion.

NITROGEN DECIDES FERTILITY OF SOIL

In the Body of Plant or Animal It Is One of Most Important Elements.

(By C. C. WENTZLER.)

To most people soil is either rich or poor.

If a soil is productive, it is regarded as rich; on the other hand if only limited and inferior crops can be raised, the soil is regarded as proportionately worthless.

Few people excepting those who have made more or less of a study of the soil are aware that, practically, one element decides the fertility of the soil. This is nitrogen.

Nitrogen is one of the most important elements in nature. It balances the air so that we can breathe it. Without nitrogen to hold the oxy-

gen in check, it would be absolutely impossible to strike a match. A spark would cause an explosion that could be heard as far as the sun while every living thing would be instantly destroyed.

In the body of plant or animal, it is one of the most important elements. In the soil it is the principle element which decides its fertility. Soils are rich or poor according to the amount of nitrogen they contain, especially with regard to the other elements which make up the soil. It is from the soil that most plants get their nitrogen and it is from these plants that we get flesh, butter and eggs, in the shape of protein.

Profits in Onions.

The man who reads of \$1,000 to \$2,000 profits per acre in onions or in any other crop loses his head as to the extent of planting a half-acre as a first venture, not knowing whether his soil and climate are adapted to the crop or what chances of sale or storage he has, does not use proper discretion.

Peas and Tomatoes.

Where there is a good market for both peas and tomatoes these crops may be grown together to good advantage. The peas should be planted as soon as the ground can be prepared and the tomatoes are set after danger of hard frost, which, in most sections of the north, will not be before the fifteenth or twentieth of May. If the rows of peas are four feet apart, two or three pea plants must be removed at the required distances in the rows to make a place for each

tomato plant, i. e., if the tomato plants are to stand four feet apart each way the pea plants will be removed at intervals of four feet in the row. This plan has been used with entire success in Pennsylvania.

Rations for Shoats.

Nine parts of corn and one part of tankage make the best and cheapest rations for growing shoats, and will operate to reduce the amount of corn consumed for each pound of gain compared with a ration of corn only.

PICKED OUT THE WRONG EYE

Physician Meant Well Enough but He Had Left the Motorman Seriously Handicapped.

Frank E. Payne, a member of the state railroad commission, said when investigating a trolley accident recently, he was told of a motorman on a work car who was running at high speed when the trucks left the rails because of snow and sleet, and the car was thrown on the side of the right of way, bringing up against a telephone pole.

"The motorman was not seriously hurt, but was cut and bruised about the head and face by flying glass. He was carried to a physician's office where his wounds were dressed and bandaged. When the physician had placed the last pin, he asked the wounded man if he felt like he could walk."

"Sure, I can walk all right," returned the patient, "but I wish you would fix those bandages so I can see."

"Why, man, returned the physician, I left one of your eyes uncovered for the purpose."

"But, doc, that eye you left uncovered is a glass one."—Indianapolis News.

Eczema in Red Blotches.

205 Kanter Ave., Detroit, Mich.—"Some time last summer I was taken with eczema. It began in my hair first with red blotches, then scaly, spreading to my face. The blotches were red on my face, dry and scaly, got large; on my scalp they were larger, some scabby. They came on my hands. The inside of my hands were all little lumps as though full of shot about one-sixteenth of an inch under the skin. Then they went to the outside and between and all over my fingers. It also began on the bottoms of my feet and the calves of my legs, and itch, oh, my! I never had anything like it and hope I never will again. The itching was terrible. My hands got so I could scarcely work.

"I tried different eczema ointments but without results. I also took medicine for it but it did no good. I saw the advertisement for a sample of Cuticura Ointment and Soap and sent for one. They did me so much good I bought some more, using them as per directions, and in about three weeks I was well again. Cuticura Soap and Ointment entirely cured me." (Signed) Benj. Passage, Apr. 8, 1912.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free, with 32-p. Skin Book. Address post-card "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston."

Needed Help.

Charles D. Hilles, secretary of the president, says the funniest advertisement he ever saw was stuck up in front of a grocery store on a side street in Cincinnati. It reads thus:

"Twins are come to me for the third time. This time a boy and a girl. I beseech my friends and patrons to support me stoutly."—Popular Magazine.

Proof.

Mrs. Casey (sitting up in bed)—Milk, did ye put out the cat?
Mr. Casey—Oh did.
Mrs. Casey—Oh don't believe it!
Mr. Casey—Well, if ye think Ol' m' a liar, get up and put 'er out yerself.

Work, that is the great physician. He heals most of the wounds of mankind.—Marjorie Benton Cooke.

A CURE FOR PILES.

Cole's Carbolic Soap itching and pain and cures piles. All druggists. 25 and 50c.

A man has no use for a woman who attempts to convince him that he is wrong and succeeds in doing it.

Red Cross Ball Blue, all blue, best bluing value in the whole world. makes the laundry smile.

Some girls are given away in marriage and some throw themselves away.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, 25c a bottle.

Modern young men court in haste and repent at leisure.

NERVOUS DESPONDENT WOMEN

Find Relief in Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound—Their Own Statements So Testify.

Platea, Pa.—"When I wrote to you first I was troubled with female weakness and backache, and was so nervous that I would cry at the least noise, it would startle me so. I began to take Lydia E. Pinkham's remedies, and I don't have any more crying spells. I sleep sound and my nervousness is better. I will recommend your medicines to all suffering women."

—Mrs. MARY HALSTEAD, Platea, Pa., Box 98.

Here is the report of another genuine case, which still further shows that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound may be relied upon.

Walcott, N. Dakota.—"I had inflammation which caused pain in my side, and my back ached all the time. I was so blue that I felt like crying if any one even spoke to me. I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and I began to gain right away. I continued its use and now I am a well woman." —Mrs. AMELIA DAHL, Walcott, N. Dakota.

If you want special advice write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.

Great Emperor's Pet Name

In Home Circle German War Lord Permits Himself to Be Known as "Willy."

In the Woman's Home Companion there is an intimate personal story of Emperor William's only daughter, Victoria Louise, in which many new facts are brought out about the emperor and empress of Germany. Following is a brief extract:

"The emperor, in absence of his consort, speaks of her as 'my wife'; the empress in the home circle addresses him as 'Willy.' The former alludes to his family, from the crown prince to the princess, as 'my young ones,' the latter speaks of them not by title, but as 'my children,' both expressions so clearly conveying the close existing attachment.

"Very often the emperor gives evidence at unexpected moments of the ever-present thought with him of his family. At times, when they were small children, and he was being es-

tergated at state banquets as the guest of princes or dukes, he would slip bouillons into his pocket, quietly saying, 'These are for the young ones; something brought home always tastes better; I know that from experience.'

"It is told of the emperor that in Rome, when he was selecting a gown to take home as a present to the empress, a relative advised as choice an elaborate creation, mainly of lace. 'Impossible!' he answered. 'With the children constantly clambering over her, it would soon be in ribbons.'

Deadline of Repentance.

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