



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 Crenshaw, 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, says the Barony, but the Quintards deny it. Yancy, however, has 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 Price, 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. 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 discovers some startling things to the judge. Hannibal and Betty meet again. Murrell arrives in Belle Plain. He is playing for big stakes. Yancy awakes from long dreamless sleep on board the raft. Judge Price makes startling discoveries in looking up land titles. Charley Norton, a young planter, who assists the judge, is mysteriously assaulted. Norton informs Carrington that Betty has promised to marry him.



THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

By VAUGHAN KESTER ILLUSTRATIONS BY D. MELVILLE

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"Now, what do you wish to say to me?" he asked. "We want your word that you'll keep away from Belle Plain." "Well, you won't get it!" responded Norton. In the same instant one of the men raised his fist and struck the young planter in the back of the neck. "You cur!" cried Norton, as he wheeled on him. "Damn him—let him have it!" "It was mid-afternoon of the day following before Betty heard of the attack on Norton. She ordered her horse saddled and was soon out on the river road with a groom in her wake. Betty never drew rein until she reached Thicket Point. As she galloped into the yard Bruce Carrington came from the house. "How is Mr. Norton?" she asked, extending her hand. "The doctor says he'll be up and about inside of a week. If you'll wait I'll tell him you are here." Carrington passed on into the house. He entered the room where Norton lay. "Miss Malroy is here," he said. "Betty—bless her dear heart!" cried Charley weakly. "Just toss my clothes into the closet and draw up a chair. There—thank you, Bruce—let her come along in now." And as Carrington quitted the room, Norton drew himself up on the pillows and faced the door. "This is worth several beatings, Betty!" he exclaimed as she appeared. He bent to kiss the hand she gave him, but groaned with the exertion. Then he looked up into her face and saw her eyes swimming with tears. "What—tears?" and he was much moved. "It's a perfect outrage!" Betty paused irresolutely. "Charley—"

"What am I to do without you?"—his voice was almost a whisper. "What is this thing you have done?" Betty's heart was beating with dull sickening throbs. "If you had only come!" she moaned. "Now I am going to be married tomorrow. I am to meet him at the Spring Bank church at ten o'clock." "How can I give you up?" he said, his voice hoarse with emotion. He put her from him almost roughly, and leaning against the trunk of a tree buried his face in his hands. Betty watched him for a moment in wretched silence. "It's good-by—" he muttered. She went to him, and, as he bent above her, slipped her arms about his neck. "Kiss me—" she breathed. He kissed her hair, her soft cheek, then their lips met. Another hot September sun was beating upon the earth as Betty galloped down the lane and swung her horse's head in the direction of Raleigh. She would keep her promise to Charley and he should never know what his happiness had cost her. Norton joined her before she had covered a third of the distance that separated the two plantations. "We are to go to the church. Mr. Bowen will be there; I arranged with him last night; he will drive over with his wife and daughter, who will be our witnesses, dear." "Afterward Betty could remember standing before the church in the fierce morning light; she heard Mr. Bowen's voice, she heard Charley's voice, she heard another voice—her own, though she scarcely recognized it. "I'll tie the horses, Betty," said Norton. He had reached the edge of the oaks when from the silent depths of the denser woods came the sharp report of a rifle. The shock of the bullet sent the young fellow staggering back among the mossy and myrtle-covered graves. For a moment no one grasped what had happened, only there was Norton who seemed to grope strangely among the graves. He had fallen now, even as the shadows deepened he was aware that Betty was coming swiftly toward him. "I'm shot—" he said, speaking with difficulty.



"Charley—Charley!" She moaned. "Charley—Charley—" she moaned, slipping her arms about him and gathering him to her breast. He looked up into her face. "It's all over—" he said, but as much in wonder as in fear. "But I knew you could come to me—dear—" he added in a whisper. She felt a shudder pass through him. He did not speak again. CHAPTER XVI. The Judge Offers a Reward. The news of Charley Norton's murder spread quickly over the county.

FOUND A SACRED LAKE

GOLDEN ORNAMENTS RECOVERED FROM GUATAVITA SHOWN.

Treasures That Were Thrown into the Water by Indians of Colombia, in Their Religious Rites, Before the Spanish Conquest.

Stories of antiquarians and others interested in the races that inhabited the American continent before the coming of the white man visited the assembly room at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel to see the relics recently taken from the sacred lake of Guatavita, near Bogota, Colombia, and brought to New York by Mr. Hartley Knowles of London, the New York Herald reports.

The story of the finding of the relics, which consist of gold ornaments, emeralds and pottery, reads like a romance. Ever since the Spaniards conquered the Indian race that inhabited the fertile plateau in Colombia efforts have been made to recover treasures sunk in the lake each year by the Indians as a religious rite. Spaniards undertook the task, but draining the lake was too difficult for them. Another determined attempt was made in 1823 by Capt. Charles Stuart Cochrane, an Englishman, but it ended in failure. In 1909 a British corporation was formed, and it tunneled the mountains and drained the lake. It has now begun to mine the relics buried deep in the mud.

Lake Guatavita is almost in the center of the Great Andean plateau that was the home of the Chibch kingdom, composed of Indians who lived by agriculture and who had a civilized form of government. One of their cities, Usaquen, is said to have had more than a million inhabitants. The Chibchas paid homage to two gods, and the antithesis of the sun or evil spirit they believed was a huge serpent, which lived in the center of lake Guatavita and which when angered brought storms, drought and all the other evils which sometimes afflict an agricultural population. Therefore, though they hated the serpent, they pretended to worship him and sought to propitiate his wrath by gifts.

Four temples to the serpent stood on the bank of the lake, which was only a mile across, but very deep. Once a year a great feast was given the serpent deity. The chief ceremony consisted of casting gold ornaments and other precious objects into the center of the lake, where the god could get them. The exact center was found by stretching two hide ropes in the form of a cross, from the four temples. Rafts were then propelled toward the center of the lake, amid the din of musical instruments and the cheering of the multitude. One raft was occupied by the ruler, whose body was covered with gold dust. When the precious objects were dumped overboard the ruler himself jumped into the lake and washed off the gold. The first Spaniards to visit the country witnessed these ceremonies, and the practice gave rise to the Spanish legend of El Dorado.

Skipper's Good-By The captain of one of the "crack" American liners used to say that his wife was always the last person he spoke to on leaving port and the first on returning. In a sense, though not in the one understood by most of those who heard him make the statement, this was perfectly true, says the Liverpool Mercury. His house was on the banks of the Mersey, and he never passed it without "speaking" it by means of the ship's whistle. For the occasions he had a special code, which none of the crew, who all knew of the practice, could understand. One has under his control a powerful siren, on which he blows three terrific whistles as a signal to his wife. At night they are sufficient to wake her from her first sleep. Another captain, who retired not long since, had a certain whistle for goodby when he was dropping down the Mersey, and another for "all well" as he was coming up, and he invariably blew one or the other when passing a point to which his thoughts often turned when he was on the trackless deep. Both of these signals were well understood, not only by his wife and children, but by many of his friends.

Must Master the Iron Clubs The true secret of successful golf is accurate iron play. A man cannot be a really first-class player unless he is more or less a master of all manner of iron clubs. Deadly accurate approaching will make up for many defects in wooden club play, and, in consequence, it is the iron clubs above any other with which a player should practice. I am not going to say that it is necessary for a player to be a complete master of every class of iron shot and to have intimate knowledge of the correct way of playing them, but I will say that it is absolutely necessary for a player who is anxious to attain any great measure of success to have a good command of his iron clubs.—Harold H. Hilton, in the Outing Magazine.

A Chaser. The Inquisitive Old Woman—Guard, why did the train stop before we came to the station? The Guard—Ran over a pig, mum. The Inquisitive Old Woman—What was it on the line? The Guard—No—oh, no; we chased it up the embankment!

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