

THE BRAD HIGHWAY

By JEFFERY FARNOL
"Why did 'ee do that?' he inquired,
staring at the man who had just
said...

CHAPTER XX--(Continued).
"Hi! but what o' Jarge?" cried Job.
"Black Jarge don't mind a man's
eyes, 'cept to black frequent; 'e don't
mind nothin' nor nobody."

"Thank you," said I; "should it come
to this, which has been foretold, I shall
certainly remember your advice."
Saying which, I turned away, and crossed the
road to the open door of the smithy, very
conscious of the three pairs of eyes that
watched me as I went.

"Upon the threshold of the forge I
paused to look about me, and there, sure
enough, was the smith. Indeed a fine,
big fellow he was, with great shoulders,
a mighty chest, and arms whose
bulging muscles showed to advantage in
the rag glow of the fire. In his left hand
he grasped a pair of tongs wherein was
a glowing iron scroll, upon which he
beat with the hammer in his right. I
stood watching until, having beaten out
the glow from the iron, he plunged the
scroll into the fire, and fell to blow-
ing with the bellows. But now, as I
looked more closely at him, I almost
doubted if this could be Black George,
after all, for this man's hair was of a
bright gold, and curled in tight rings
upon his brow, while, instead of the
stark, scowling visage I had expected, I
beheld a ruddy, open, well-featured face
of one who looked a pair of eyes of a
blue, you may sometimes see in a summer
sky at evening. And yet again, his mus-
cular size would seem to proclaim him the
famous Black George, and no other. It
was with something of a doubt in my
mind, nevertheless, that I presently
stepped into the smithy and accosted him.

"Are you Black George?" I inquired. At
the sound of my voice, he turned, and
I beheld, as I have said, a man whose
hair was of a bright gold, and whose
eyes were of a blue. He looked at me
for a moment, and then, with a sudden
glance, he turned away, and I saw his
brows draw suddenly
together, while the golden hairs of his
head seemed to curl upward.

"Suppose I be?"
"Then I wish to speak with you."
"Is that what you 'm come for?"
"Ye."
"Ye, you come far?"
"Ye."
"That's a pity."
"Why?"
"Ye, you mean 'ave a good way to go
back again."

"What do you mean?"
"Well, for one thing, I means as I
don't like your looks, my chap."
"Are you don't you like my looks?"
"Lord!" exclaimed the smith, "I would
should I know—but I don't of that 'I'm
artin' sure. You was wishful to speak
with me, I think 'e inquired.
"Ah!" nodded the smith, "to be sure,"
and, forthwith, began to sing most lustily,
marking time very cleverly with his
right hand and hammer.

"I beg your pardon, but out at this,
if you will listen to what I have to
say." But he only hammered away
his hammer, and roared his song the
louder, and though it sounded ill
enough at the time, it was a song I came
to know well later.

SCRAPPLE

THE WAR SPIRIT IN LITERATURE



THE PADDED CELL

