



"God bless yo', Miss Sunshine, fureber an fureber for what yo' dun did fur me, but I've got powerful bad news to tell yo'!"

"Is mother dead?" she asked as the color went out of her face and her lips grew white.

"She was dead when I dun got yere!" "Uncle Ben," whispered the girl, choking back the wails of sorrow which sought to pass her lips.

"I ain't hurted much—only jest a little bit—an I'll start right off!" he answered. "I'll go, an I'll keep gwine till I drop down in my tracks!"

"God grant that you may be in time!" she prayed as she turned away to enter the house of the dead, while the old man lost not a moment in setting out on his journey down the road.

Let us see how things went on at the camp. Marian had no sooner left than Steve Brayton still further strengthened the defenses.

"If yo' uns will give in, nobody will be hurt. If yo' uns don't give in, we uns ar' bound to wipe yo' out! We uns is a hundred strong, with two cannons!"

"That yo', the Baxter?" called Steve, as if doubting the other's identity.

Steve Brayton was known to be with him, and Steve was also known to be a fighter. It was therefore decided not to open fire until other means had been resorted to and failed.

His advance was from the south side, and both men had him under their eyes. It was the Baxter, and he halted about pistol shot away and called out:

"Hello, up there! I want to speak to yo' uns 'bout a mint!"

"Waal, fire off yo' breath!" replied Steve.

"We uns has dun clean surrounded yo' uns, and yo'd better give in!"

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"That yo', the Baxter?" called Steve, as if doubting the other's identity.

"Waal, I've got my gun pinterd for a shot right betwixt yo' doggone eyes, and if yo' hain't back that among yo' gang befo' I count 10 I'll pull trigger! If yo' want us, cum and git us!"

Five minutes later fire was opened on the fort from all around the circle, and the enemy were shouting and cheering as if a victory had already been nearly won.



"That's what we must hope for," answered Kenton, "but watch out that we are not taken by surprise."

The firing attracted the attention of a party of seven or eight guerrillas who were hunting for the fugitives on their own account, and they came up and joined forces with the larger body.

"That's one side. Now the other is that a straggler had been left behind," she did Captain Wyle, and for that reason he an his men try to get shot of 'em by fa' means or foul. He's got the whip-saw on yo' and means to hold it. It he gets hold of yo', cuthin's gait to happen, and yo'll be the one to be hurt.

With that major down on 'em about the Harrisonburg fort, and with the Baxter and half a dozen others ready to swear to anything the captain wants, yo' un won't stand no mo' show than a coon coted in a co'mick. Am I right?"

"Yes, that's about the way of it, but what about yo'?" You have been my friend and comrade from the start. You have periled your life to save mine. I owe you a debt of gratitude, and I don't want you to sacrifice yourself for my sake. They have nothing against you which will not be overlooked. They want to get me out of the way, and there is every chance that they will accomplish their object. I would be selfish to pull you down with me after what you have done for me.

"And what?" queried Steve.

"Give me one of the guns, prop me up over there, and then go! I'll die right here after making the best fight I can!"

"Yank," said Steve, he moved over and held out his hand. "Yo' don't begin to know Steve Brayton if yo' think he's any rich critter! I was his right down thar at Winchester, and I've lived thar all my life and habed and aimed Yankee as hard as anybody. I went into the war with a whoop, and I jest believed everything was plumb right and all hands round till I saw how the captain and the hull company was playin' dirt on yo'. Yo' un's Yankee hein, but yo' got mo' clean sand in yo' craw than anybody I ever met up with befo'! I'm goin' to stick right yere. If we uns git away, I'm goin' with yo'. If them guerrillas ar' too many fur us, we'll both die right yere!"

Kenton protested and argued, but Steve was determined. He took a tin pail which had contained food and filled it with water at a spring not far away. Then he carefully moved Kenton over to the south side of the camp, propped him up at a loophole in a sitting position and sat down beside him to wait.

"I've figured this out a bit," he said as he peered through his loophole for sign of danger. "If them chaps had found yo' at the house, yo'd hev bin carried off to camp. Bein as they'll find yo' yere, and bein as thar'll be a fort, thar won't be no carryin' away if they git the better of us!"

"You mean they'll kill me here and have done with it?" replied Kenton.

"Exactly, and me too! Then thar won't be any charges, witness or trial. They'll report that we fit to the last, and it will be all plain sailin' for them as wants us coter the way. Thar'fore, in shootin' we'd better jest shoot to kill and git all the revenge we kin. Steady, now! I think the critters hev smelt us out!"

Half a mile up the road from Rest Haven the gang had left their horses and divided into two parties to search the hills on each side of the highway. Steve had caught sight of two or three men moving toward the camp through the scrub.

"I won't shoot to kill—not this time!" he whispered as he thrust the barrel of the carbine through the opening. "I'll jest fling a bullet down thar to let 'em know that the Confederate Yankee army has had breakfast, pulled its boots on and is ready for business!"

His shot was followed by a yell which announced to the other party that the fugitives had been discovered, and 10 minutes later the camp was surrounded. Among the enemy was a man who had

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HANGING ON A FRIDAY.

No Reason for Executing Criminals on the Fifth Day of the Week.

An investigation of the question whether Friday is a day which is especially set apart for hanging shows that most members of the legal profession are ignorant on that point. They cannot affirm whether it was accident or design that caused the unlucky day of the week to be chosen for the execution.

One member of the legal profession maintained that there was an old custom which marked out Friday as the day for hangings because the crucifixion of the two thieves occurred on that day. Another light of the law remarked: "You see, Friday is a bad day. There is only one good Friday in the whole year, consequently it is looked upon by judges as a most appropriate day for hanging criminals."

It may be stated right here that there is nothing in the above reasons, and that it is only a chance circumstance that four-fifths of the executions take place on a Friday. In the earlier days of English justice, when the hanging of a man was a most ordinary occurrence, and was the penalty which followed lighter offenses, such as stealing, forgery, arson and other felonies, as well as murder, hangings occurred on every day of the week, except Sunday.

The act governing the time of execution provided that a felon should be executed on the next day but one after his conviction. In consequence no particular day of the week was ever fixed upon. All this was changed in 1830 when Lord Chief Justice Jeffrey, in a result of eight weeks, sentenced no less than 250 persons to be hanged. Well indeed might he be said that he hanged more traitors than the whole of his predecessors since the conquest! That was after the Monmouth rebellion in 1685, when the king ordered that these delinquents of his favorite judge as "the chief traitors of his reign" should be hanged.

That, too, was in the time of the famous Jack Ketch, who, because so notorious as an executioner that his name is generally given to the common hangman in the city of London. It was of this "Ketch" act, as the moderns flippantly call that functionary, that his wife remarked, "Any hangman can put a man to death, but only my Jack knows how to make a gentleman die sweetly." Later on a more humane spirit prevailed English justice. It was recognized that forty-eight hours was indeed a short period wherein to allow a criminal to repent and to make his peace with his Creator.

The first step was to hold all criminal trials on Friday. That was not the period when a trial lasted a week or longer. It generally took the court only a few hours to decide on a felon's fate. Justice was indeed quick—very frequently too quick—and a murderer would be sentenced on the same day. By sentencing him on Friday his execution would fall on Sunday, according to the two days' law, and, as no hangings were allowed till Monday, the felon thus gained a day's respite. In consequence of this Monday was the normal hanging day, and in accordance with the "Old Bailey" this explains the dark way in which Monday was always spoken of.

In 1838 the two days' law was repealed, and the present law came into force, which allows a murderer reasonable time. The custom of appointing Monday for a hanging still remained. In order not to have two executions on the same day the judges sometimes appointed Tuesday, and for high fifty years in the English criminal calendar it will be found that ninety-nine out of a hundred executions have occurred on a Monday or a Tuesday. Nowhere else this distinction is beginning to die out, although it has only commenced in England. On the other side of the water no distinction is made, and murderers are hanged on whatever day the judge sees fit.—Ottawa Cor. Albany Argus.

Ferrous and Rheumatism. Every one has noticed ferns as they spring up from the ground in spring. The stalk and leaves are curled into a ball, which slowly unrolls under the influence of the sun, light and rain. The pattern is given an inflection of the roots of ferns, and is supposed to receive power from the friendly plants to straighten the members which are curled and crooked by the spirit of rheumatism, just as the fern straightens its own stalk.—Youth's Companion.

Cause for Worry. Wife—What keeps you out late to-night? Cashier (Free, Easy & Co.)—I couldn't make my cash accounts balance.

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