Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

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Five years before the outbreak of the Civil War, love of adventure, hatred of slavery and the desire to help my friend, George Wesner, led me, Charles Bradley, a civil engineer, of Attakapas County, Louisiana, to become an agent of the underground railroad. Wesner had been nursed through the smallpox by a young slave, Lucy, belonging to the Coverley plantation. He discovered facts which proved that Lucy was white and of good family. A secret love match followed, which progressed well until Coverley proposed to sell Lucy to his son, and refused to sell her to anyone else. Wesner became desperate. I agreed to help him steal Lucy, and went to New York to arrange with the anti-slavery society for the care of any slave we could bring North. We arranged our end of the underground railway, with my woodyard, several miles up the river, as the main station and hiding-place. At home we set up a general merchandise store to avoid suspicion. Wesner makes the first venture, and starts North with 10 of Coverley's slaves, including Lucy. The venture is successful. Wesner delivers the slaves to the agents in New York, and places Lucy in school at Andover. I take charge of the second raid. Disguised as a peddler, I see and arrange with some of the Raymond negroes for their escape, Dave, their leader, gathers 13 slaves together, and after great trouble and many narrow escapes we ship them North by sea along with a cargo of cotton. Our total profits on the cargo are $9000. In the following Spring we plan a third venture, and the Lanman plantation is our first objective. We collect another lot at the rendezvous, and Wesner takes them north to Cairo over the old route. Lucy is recognized by a Southerner in Massachusetts, and is betrayed. Meantime Pierce, a friend of Wesner's, hears of the warrant for Lucy's arrest, and he starts out to warn her. Pierce and Lucy are overtaken, and the Sheriff, Gregg, starts back to Louisiana with Lucy by train. Pierce telegraphs the agent at Cairo. Wesner is there, and, aided by the Cromwells, he boards the train at a station a few miles north, and rescues Lucy. Wesner puts Lucy among friends, and then starts back to Attakapas. On the steamer he discovers two slave stealers, and later rescues a band of their victims. He takes the slaves to Canada. Meantime, I send eight slaves North by the old route. I go to Shreveport to do some surveying and detective work. Wesner comes to see me, and barely escapes detection by the Sheriff, Gregg.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The John Little lay at the landing, loaded and bound down. Wesner engaged his stateroom and kept it until the boat left and he was sure Gregg was not on board. He had no objections to meeting Gregg, but not in Shreveport at that time, and in the disguise he then wore, as it was too familiar, and might create unpleasant recollections.

Gregg's being there could have but one solution: He and Beatham were together in some plot, whether Gregg's or Beatham's I could not divine.

Gregg's abilities as a detective I did not fear; Beatham was simply a shrewd County Sheriff. I was thoroughly disguised but concluded that I must be there a week perhaps more, before I would be able to find any clew to their plans.

Again, I was a stranger, and not likely to gain their confidence.

I had previously received a letter from a gentleman living some miles back from Shreveport, asking me to come at the first opportunity and survey a lot of timber land, owned by himself and others. I had returned no answer as I was otherwise engaged. This, however, was the opportune chance. I immediately hurried to the steamboat landing, and, with nearly as much celerity as Wesner, boarded the boat, bought my ticket and secured a stateroom.

Travel was very light at this season. The boat was not advertised to leave until 5 o'clock, and I kept watch of the shore, thinking that Gregg might be on his way to New Orleans, and we should have the pleasure of his company, but he did not make his appearance. Wesner did, however, before the boat was a dozen lengths from the shore. I explained to him my idea, and he readily fell in with it. At New Orelans I wrote to Mr. Richardson that I would be ready to survey his land as soon as I could get my instruments from home. These Wesner agreed to send to the hotel in La Fayette. I had stopped one night at the St. Charles on my return with Wesner, as I had left my trunk and samples in my room, agreeing to pay for my room rent while absent.

I changed my clothes, removed my disguise, and appeared upon the street as Charles J. Bradley, and, going directly to La Fayette, I booked my name at the hotel there. My instruments arrived, and with them a letter from Wesner. The letter was about some other business, and contained no allusion to the U. G. R. R. Its tone I did not like. There was a big blot of ink on the upper corner of one sheet. It was never there by accident. George Wesner did not blot his papers. An odd phrase, also, alluding to it, gave me uneasiness. "There is a big blot on this sheet. I have tried to erase it, but, as you will notice, with only partial success."

He had scraped a little off one corner. After this came his signature.

The evening after my instruments arrived I was on my way to Shreveport. Arriving there I found at least two weeks' work, and wrote to Wesner to that effect. I had no chainman with me, and it was necessary to hire two. One, at least, must be a man who could read and write. I also wanted a couple of axmen. I determined to have my friend Beatham's assistance in this. Accordingly I watched for him, introduced myself, stated my business, and asked him if he could recommend a person suitable to take the head end of the chain—or two men for chainmen. (Richardson furnished his own axmen). He said he could, and would be pleased to do so. He owned a mulatto boy who was brought up in New Orleans, could read and write, was a carpenter, and just at present was doing nothing of any account. At my request he sent him to me. I questioned him. Beatham had not misrepresented the boy. He could read and write, and had ideas above his station. Books were scarce, and his facilities for obtaining them were poor. His principal sources of reading matter were the various circus and menagerie posters, with which the South was always flooded. He could repeat from memory the names of all the famous acrobats, enormous elephants, wonderful bareback riders, beautiful women, and funny clowns which had been exhibited in the state for the last five years. Beatham informed me that his only fault was chasing circuses, and to look out for him if one came along, as he was sure to follow. He once tagged after Joe Pentland's great show for 58 miles.

I now flattered myself that I had the straight road to Beatham's confidence, and as he lived only about a mile from Richardson's, I spent my spare time with him. Evenings, after I had corrected my field notes, I would ride over to his place. Alec, the mulatto boy, would sometimes accompany me. Beatham was rather patient, than otherwise, and Alec informed me that he was right down good to him. I knew well enough that Beatham must talk sooner or later, and asked no questions myself. The second night I was there we were on the veranda smoking. An old shingle horse, some one had brought out for a horseblock, stood near. Beatham sat astride that, pulling away at a corncob pipe, his favorite smoke. Mine was the cheroot of those days, varied with an occasional pull at a T. D. The mosquitoes were hungry. Beatham smoked and slapped, slapped and smoked alternately, varying both actions in intensity as the mosquitoes advanced or retreated.

"Much acquainted 'round Tucapaw, Mr. Bradley?" he inquired.

"Yes," I answered.

"How long been there?"

I told him.

"Know old Eb Coverly?"

"Yes, sure."

"You heard about the niggers?"

"I ought to. I was at the first hunt," I replied. "They started from our store—Wesner & Bradley's."

"Show, now, I remember, so they did. I had forgotten that. Didn't Wesner have a row with the old man about a yaller girl of his'n?"

"I don't know about that," I replied. "George is prettty close-mouthed."

Here, Alec, who had been standing near, grinned. Beatham saw the grin. "Here, you d——d nigger, you scoot out of this, or I'll make you think Jim Myers and Jo Pentland's shows are both on top at once." Here he let go at Alec a half-pound plug of tobacco he had in his hand.

Alec scooted, taking the tobacco with him.

"He's got the tobacco," I laughed out.

"Never mind," said Beatham, "he will keep away, and be a pretty good nigger while the tobacco lasts. But about these niggers of Coverly's. Where do you suppose the d—d critters went?"

"I couldn't tell you, Mr. Beatham," I replied. "I was there in the hunt. We found no trace where they entered the swamp, as, of course, they must, for there was no other way for them to hide."

"No," said Beatham, "there wasn't, that's plain."

"I was there, also, when the others ran off, and went with old 'Skew Bill' and all the boys, but with the same result We could not find a trace of them. Wesner and myself were on parole for a week, but saw no one. Every road around that neighborhood was watched—results the same. Wesner always suspected a Yankee brig, that lay at Franklin. However, I was at New York when she reported, and, in company with the Lacroix boys, boarded her. There was nothing but sugar and cotton on her—no niggers."

"I am glad," said Beatham, "at last to see one man from that cursed French hole who doesn't lay the loss to the Oboe man. Where do you think they did go?"

"Well," I replied, "it seems plausible to me that they were stolen and run off to Texas and sold there. You know the thing has been done."

"Yes, Jack Davis, a Florida chap I knew, used to steal niggers in Georgia and sell them in Florida, and did a good thing at it. 'Spose he would he' been at it now, if one nigger he stole four times hadn't got footsore walking back and forth from Tallahassee to Milledgeville, so he just took what Jack gave him as his share, bought himself and two other niggers, and then gave Jack away. He told his old master he thought Jack was a dangerous fellow to have around stealing folks' niggers. People round Tallahassee thought the darkies' masters were in with Jack. Howsumever. I didn't know—all I do know is that when the regelaters got to Jack's house he had gone to Texas two weeks. They burned his house and licked his wife out of spite. Jack came back a couple of years later and got his wife. Shot two of the regelaters at the same time. Got a crack at me, too—I was one of them, and," he continued, "I reckon there is white men at the bottom of this business. Now, Mr. Bradley, I know just where that yaller girl of Coverly's is. Don't know about the rest of them. Did you ever see her?" he asked.

I replied that I had some years ago.

"Well, I seen a man within a week that sat right on the car seat side of that 'ere girl, and he said she was educated like a Yankee schoolmarm, was hansom as any woman he ever saw, and no man not posted would ever know she was a nigger."

"Coverly knows; it was him that sent this man there."

"I don't know as I am bound to keep dark. Coverly must ketch his own niggers. The man was Sile Gregg, Deputy United States Marshal, and he feels awful sore over it. Coverly got out a warrant when he heard where the girl was, and sent Gregg clean up to Massachusetts to arrest her. After he got her arrested she was stole from him within 50 miles of Cairo, Ill. I tell you, Sile is pretty blue; didn't make a cent out of the trip."

Here he proceeded to give me Gregg's account of Lucy's rescue. Gregg laid the rescue to Pierce, and had no idea who the rescuing party really were. He was sour on Shaughnessy, who he thought had failed him, but allowed that the rescuing party were the smartest set of men he ever met.

Lucy, once safe in Orleans, in Gregg's judgment, would sell for $500. He could buy off Coverly for $1500, and was quite determined to recapture her on his own account, and having confidence in Beatham's skill as a detective and negro hunter, was endeavoring to induce him to take a share in the enterprise. Beatham wrote Entwisle at Gregg's request. It seemed that Gregg had stumbled upon Entwisle's name in connection with the Underground railroad.

"How did she get to Massachusettts Mr. Beatham?" I inquired.

"My opinion is," he replied, "that girl and the rest of them niggers was taken right up the Teche, carried across to the Mississippi, and some onery steamboat capen was paid for stowing 'em away and landing 'em in Cincinnati in the night."

"I know," I replied, "how thoroughly the country was searched for them."

Gregg assured Beatham that he would know the voice of the man who carried Lucy out of the car, should he ever hear him again, and he also added he was a dead shot with the pistol, and could have killed him as easily as broken his arm.

It was evident from all this that Beatham did not know of the White River fight, or, if he did, he had paid no attention to it. Gregg had secured from Dick Coverly a conditional bill of sale of Lucy for $1500, and his idea was that with Beatham's help they could kidnap and take her to New Orleans. Beatham made no secret of the matter, as he knew I was a neighbor of Coverly's, and would naturally be interested in the recovery of his property.

That night I wrote a detailed account of the intention to Wesner, as it was no secret, or in any way implicated him. I also added for his satisfaction that Mr. Beatham said Lucy was at Lee, or near there.

Wesner wrote to Pierce an explanation of the contemplated coup de main, and requested him to watch for the pair, describing Beatham as well as possible. Gregg's personality being already familiar to him. He did not think their plan would materialize. Pierce was not so confident, and, not wishing to duplicate his former experience, sent Lucy to Portland, Me.

I finished up my surveying, settled up with Mr. Richardson, took leave of Beatham and the rest of my Shreveport acquaintainances.

Poor Alec was down-hearted and promised to write to me all the news, but of course it was impossible for me to reply to his letters.

Beatham accompanied me to the steamboat. On the way he remarked that he had about made up his mind to have nothing to do with Gregg's attempt to recapture Lucy, unless Gregg would pay all the bills, for he thought there was more risk than money. I strongly advised him not to attempt anything of the kind, as there was a feeling in the North against returning fugitives, especially such a woman as Lucy was reported to be, and if caught with her in their possession the people would either mob and kill them or they would be arrested and sent to jail—and as Gregg had escaped alive once, he had better rest satisfied.

CHAPTER XXIX.

On my arrival at New Iberia George met me at the landing. He looked sick, tired and discouraged. There were 14 persons at the rendezvous. Obed and Mason had picked these up in different places, none, however, within a radius of 40 miles of us. Some of these had been secreted four months. Fever had broken out among them; Mason had been down, Obed not much better, and they had nearly starved, as there was no one except Obed to go for food, and he was quite weak. It was now well into August, the bayous were low, and the weather intensely hot.

"Charlie," said he, "this is my last venture. We must get these poor devils out of this. I feel as if I had lived all this time with a rope around my neck. Lucy, poor girl, is lonesome nad anxious. I am not going to sell out here, for I love this country too well. I will go North, marry Lucy, and await better days. Charlie, they have got to come. Blood will undoubtedly flow, but the end is near." This was in August, 1859.

The next night we took our canoe and paddled up the bayou a short distance to the mouth of a little brook, dry at this season. We had with us about 200 pounds of provisions, consisting mostly of ship bread and dried meats. In addition, we took a few gallons of whisky and 100 lemons. These Wesner and myself carried up to the bed of the brook and securely hid.

Something after 12 o'clock, everything being safe, Wesner left me to fight mosquitoes until daylight and I could see to travel. I don't think I ever endured so much misery from these pests as I did that night. The torture was awful, and nearly drove me frantic. I built a smudge, but the smoke from it only served to nerve them to fiercer attacks and more daring assaults. Their stings were like needles, and their buzzing was like the wails of the dying.

I welcomed the first crack of day, and as soon as I could tell a stick from a snake, started up the brook, a bottle of quinine in my pocket and a jug of whisky slung over my shoulder. The mud in the bed of the brook was ankle deep, and I had to leave that and hew my way through the thicket to the higher ground. The place was literally alive with snakes and every other species of vermin and insect life indigenous to a Louisiana swamp. I was too far from the bayou for alligators, but the frogs bellowed all night and assisted the mosquitoes in their infernal concert.

It was about seven miles from where I left the brook to our rendezvous. At noon I arrived, tired, footsore, covered and smarting with the stings of flies and mosquitoes.

Obed was sitting disconsolate outside the door. His rifle lay across his knees. He had heard me thrashing around in the bushes 20 minutes before I came in sight, but thought it was one of us, as the noise came straight toward the cabin.

Inside the cabin the sight was pitiful. Mason lay in his berth, his features shrunken with fever, and his big black eyes, enlarged to twice their size, shone with unnatural light. He knew me and smiled in recognition, endeavoring to stretch out his hand. I mixed some quinine and whisky and gave him a swallow. The rest of the sick ones watched my motions, following me with their corpse-like eyes as I moved around the room. To me, accustomed as I was to sickness among the negroes and mulattoes, the sign of death appeared to be written upon their cadaverous features, and in their hollow, sunken eyes. The mulatto, as a rule, is not very hardy, and these were no exceptions. The presence of a white man, Obed said, would help them more than medicine, as through their wasted lives they had had no other resource in case of trouble than massa or missus.

The next day, accompanied by Obed, I returned to the "cache." We took along four of the strongest fugitives, and I loaded them with all the stores they could carry, and, taking a small load myself, we returned to camp. The day was hot and journey rough, but we arrived with our loads about dark. We now had supplies sufficient for three weeks, and by the end of that time I told them I hoped they would all be strong enough to move toward the North.

The next afternoon I returned to the place where Wesner had left me, and found him waiting for me with the canoe.

CHAPTER XXX.

At the postoffice I found a letter from Beatham, written in his peculiar style of orthography, incidentally informing me of the death of my stepfather, Robert Kirkland, and containing a long account of the White River fight. To us this was convincing proof that there was no clew, however remote, connecting any person in our vicinity with the raid, and again it as conclusively proved that the route must be abandoned for the future. Where should we go? We must leave the swamp, must get these people North, for, should one of them be found here, there would be red-hot times in the Teche country.

Upon this subject we pondered long and deeply. If the poor unfortunates, now in the swamp, were back upon the plantations, all would be well. But they were not. They were sick, unable to travel, and on our hands. We felt responsible for their lives, and we clearly understood if their masters found them and caught us, our responsibility would end with a short shrift and a long rope, and they would suffer untold horrors.

We had three alternatives—to let Obed and Mason take the chances of getting them through to Cairo—to undertake a new route and go ourselves, or to go with them by the old route—either was fraught with danger. It was not probable that there would be water enough in the swamps to float a boat for three months, and it was impossible for the fugitives to remain where they were for that length of time.

At last Wesner suggested writing to Entwissle, to inquire if there were any chance to ship by water, as there were a number of places around Vermillion Bay, and even on the Atchafalaya, where we thought we could get through safely, provided there was a vessel to receive us immediately upon arrival.

Wesner mailed the letter at New Orleans, going there for that purpose. It was 10 days before he received an answer. There was no vessel to be relied upon at present. There was a shipbuilding concern in East Boston that during the previous Winter had a crew somewhere on the Sabine River, cutting timber for a vessel frame. He had telegraphed to these parties, and the answer was:

"Timber not shipped, but will be as soon as a vessel can be chartered."

Not satisfied with this, Entwisle had written that he would visit Boston and see what arrangements could be made and would write us immediately from there.

Wesner, who had perfect confidence in Entwisle, was content to wait. Two days later the looked-for letter, postmarked Boston, arrived. The frame was for Philadelphia parties, and must be delivered there. At present it was piled out on the bank at the mouth of a small creek making into the Sabine near the town of Orange, Tex., on the Louisiana side of the Sabine. He could make very liberal arrangements with the Boston parties, as they were much pleased to get a little freight money to help them out. There were about 650 tons of the timber. He could make arrangements for any number of lay days, at a demurrage of only $15 per day, after the first 20 days allowed to load, and he suggested to Wesner to visit the place and see for himself what the chances were for carrying the plan to a successful termination. Wesner telegraphed him that he would go. While he was absent I made a visit to the rendezvous, taking in more provisions. All the sick were recovering, and, best of all, with returning health were growing hopeful. This was a good omen.

The day after Wesner returned we mounted our horses and set out for the Sabine to explore a feasible route. The great difficulty would be taking our people 50 miles, perhaps 70, without being discovered. A part of our journey must be through the swamp and forest, and by night. Southwest was the grand prairie; this we would be obliged to cross, but as our course lay toward Texas, and there was not one chance in a hundred of any of the party being known, we did not consider this a very serious obstacle. Some time was consumed in finding a suitable route for the first 25 miles, but finally we succeeded in locating the road to our satisfaction. We easily found the ship timber. The trees along the river banks had been cut down and quite a clearing made. This was to let in the sunlight that it might dry the timber, as oak in its green state will sink to the bottom. In the woods and at the edge of the clearing stood the camp occupied by the timber cutters during the previous Winter. Here we passed the night.

There was a dimly defined path leading from the camp away from the river. This we supposed must lead to some plantation or settlement. It was very narrow, as it had not been traveled for months. We did not explore it. About seven miles below the clearing, and one-half mile from the river bank, we located our camp for the negroes. It was on a solitary hummock about an acre in extent, surrounded by at least a foot of water and mud, in the midst of the worst tangled swamp man ever saw.

Torn from the moist, soft soil by the winds sweeping from the Gulf of Mexico lay great oaks and tall cypress trees, mingled in wild confusion. Out among their rotting trunks the water moccasin glided in disgusting security, the rank September growth of the semi-tropical weeds hiding his loathesome body. Picture this place surrounded by an almost impenetrable canebrake, its bayous and brooks the abode of the alligator and grenouille, and it will give a faint idea of our camp upon the Sabine, into whose gloomy recesses no ray of sunshine ever penetrated. It was secure from man's footsteps—we cared for nothing else.

We were 15 days upon this expedition, from the time we left until our return. Our first move was to take a lot of provisions to the rendezvous. We found the fugitives as we left them—anxious, but hopeful—for the sick had recovered, and were ready to move.

Wesner wrote the result of our expedition to Entwisle and waited an answer.

CHAPTER XXXI.

I had long entertained an idea regarding Lucy, and while upon our Sabine expedition I broached the subject to Wesner. Coverly was old, the loss of his slaves had left him poor. Dick had probably paid him no money for Lucy, but had given his note.

"Now," said I to George, "why not write Pierce to make the old man an offer for the girl. He will sell. He never can get her again, and he knows it. One thousand or fifteen hundred dollars will be of more value to him than the ownership of a slave in Massachusetts. He has spent enough for her already. He offered her to Gregg for $1900, and will sell to Pierce for less. Will you do it?"

"Charlie, I can't bear the idea of applying the words buy or sell to her. Once I could. You should see her now."

"Shall I write to him?"

He hesitated a moment. "No, I will. If she is once clear of that hunted feeling, she will be happier. I will write as soon as we get back."

Some two weeks after this I was in Franklin. As I was riding slowly along I saw the old man Coverly ride up to the office of the only lawyer in the place, dismount, pass the bight of his bridle through the hole in the hitching post, drop the loop over the top and walk into the office.

The day was exceedingly warm, and the old man dropped into a chair by the open window and commenced to fan himself vigorously with his hat. He caught sight of me, and called to me to come in. I had had no trouble with him, and rather courted an interview, so I fastened my horse and complied with his request.

Coverly, knowing I had been North, and having an idea that Massachusetts and Ohio were all the territory north of the Ohio River, asked me if I were acquainted in Massachusetts. I told him that I was not, and never had been there. He then volunteered the information that he had received a letter from there, offering him $1200 for that girl of his that run off. "Mr. Selwyn has the letter," said he. "Selwyn, let Mr. Bradley see that letter!"

I took the letter, and here is a copy verbatim; evidently to me, who knew Pierce, it was strained in spelling and syntax:

"Boston, Mass, Sept 11. 1859.—Dear Sir—I am not a nigger speckelater, never was and am an aberlishioner, but there is a poorly sort of a gal here, that says you have a bill o' sale of her. I know an' you orter, that you can't never get thet gal agen eny more. I am the feller that was with her when she was stole by the marshal an' I am the chap as stole her back. She is in Kanada or Maine or somewhere now. See here, I will give you 12 hundred dolers for this gal, you put a bill of sall for the gal, sined by yoo an' your son Dick all O. K. in he bank of New Orleans. I will send the money to the cashier. Yoo'll be just so much in, for the gal is gone from yoo forever an' yoo'll never see her, sell or no sell. P. S.—Free papers just as good. No foolin'—I've got the property an' yoo can't play no pints.

"LEWIS PIERCE.

"Direct as above."

I finished and looked up.

"Well, Bradley, what do you think of that?"

"I think if this man Pierce is fool enough to pay you for what is evidently already his, you had better take it."

"My opinion coincides with yours," Selwyn added.

Coverly was old and obstinate. He took the letter from my hands and put it in his pocket, and sat awhile revolving the matter in his mind. Finally he said to Selwyn: "Write this to Pierce. Tell him $1500 will take her. I hate to like h—l, but all I want is the money. Tell him to deposit it in the Bank of New Orleans, payable to my order, when the cashier receives the papers. You make out a set of free papers, for I would sooner set her free than sell her to an infernal Yankee Abolitionist."

Selwyn made his memorandum as Coverly directed.

CHAPTER XXXII.

When I saw Wesner again he handed me a letter from Entwisle. I append copy:

"New York, Sept. 6, 1859.—George Wesner, Esq.—Dear Sir: In relation to the shipment of ship timber now lying upon the banks of the Sabine River, you are hereby informed that I was mistaken regarding it. I am fully informed by the owner in Boston that the Sabine is not navigable for vessels large enough for the cargo, but only for small craft. There is but from 10 to 13 feet of water upon the bar at the mouth of the river, and this timber must be floated down and shipped from Sabine Pass, and the vessel must lie off that place.

"The vessel we had in view was of too deep a draft, and we have consequently chartered the brig Cyrus Adams. The captain fully understands the business, and will take his crew and come prepared to raft the timber and float it down to the brig. Please write me and govern yourself accordingly. Yours truly,

"ENTWISSLE.

"P. S.—The brig is loading machinery for Galveston, and will call for the timber on her return. Will let you know when she sails from here. S. E."

Wesner was a bit discouraged upon receipt of this, as it would take until well into November to get these people off our hands, and we must get them away from the rendezvous before the swamps filled on account of the Calcasieu River, which we were obliged to ford. There were other creeks, bayous and coolies also between that river and the Sabine. This expedition was vastly different from our usual route, as there we wanted water—here dry land.

I went to New Orleans, and from there telegraphed to Entwisle that we must leave within 10 days, if we used that route, and to write me full particulars so there could be no mistake. I would wait in New Orleans until the letter arrived.

In a few days I received an answer to my telegram. Mr. Entwisle wrote that the brig would take a lot of machinery to Galveston, and would leave New York in about a week from the date of his letter. To discharge her cargo she must remain a week or 10 days in Galveston, and she might be expected to arrive at Sabine pass in about 40 or 50 days from her sailing date.

The captain was a Jerseyman by the name of Reynold Cheswick, and was thoroughly reliable. His instructions were to remain at Sabine Pass until he had opened communication with us. We were further instructed to remain at the timber camp and watch the river. In the letter was a piece of morocco leather about two inches long by one and a half wide, with edges notched. Captain Cheswick had the other piece, and, as Mr. Entwisle wrote, it must be his letter of introduction.

This precaution was as much for the captain's protection as ours, for if by any unforeseen accident we were captured or our plans ascertained, strangers could not personate either party, unless they produced the counterpart of the piece of leather.

There was no further news from Pierce. His letters to us all came by way of New York, as we had business correspondents there, but Boston letters would be strictly scrutinized in our postoffice, for, viewed with Attakapas eyes, Boston was a modern edition of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah, without even the one righteous person to redeem the lot.

Wesner was very anxious to learn the results of Pierce's negotiations before leaving, and so waited a few days, but, no letters arriving, I went to Franklin to see if I could ascertain the reason why. I met Selwyn on the street, and he volunteered the information. Coverly was sick with the prevalent fever, and could not attend to business. Pierce had accepted his terms, and "if the old fool don't back out," said Selwyn, "he is in just $1500."

When Wesner heard this he concluded that it was useless to wait longer, as the negroes would be as safe on the Sabine as on the Teche. There were provisions at the rendezvous sufficient for 10 days.

At daylight on October 6 we broke camp en route for the Sabine, and prepared to take what luck was in store for us. For the first 10 miles our route led through a dense swamp. This we could have avoided, but purposely kept it for safety. This swamp we had not explored, but calculated, upon general principles, that it would be passable if we had daylight to help us. Wesner was to meet us at 8 P. M. that night. The place selected was a small belt of timber about 15 miles from our starting point. He was to bring a couple of saddle horses and also a pack horse, a mule and some other articles. These he had previously deposited near the timber. In leaving the camp I took the lead, Obed following. There were no landmarks, and through the gloom no ray of sun ever penetrated. It was a dismal start, and nothing but an exalted faith in our undertaking kept our flagging spirits to the work. Obed carried a small ax, and was frequently obliged to use it to cut away the tangled roots and vines to enable the women and children to force their passage through. There was very little water to incommode us, but the heat was intense. The close, tangled woods formed a barrier to the circulation of air, and the burning sun, shining upon the trees, sent the moisture from them in clouds of steam.

The negroes, after the first mile, panted like tired dogs, while, writing under the sultry heat, I was fast losing my energy. We made but a mile an hour. This was slow. But worse was to come, for across our path, one day, not long before, had traveled an angry hurricane. Twisted and gnarled, the trees were piled up in intermingled confusion. To go around this blow-down might be possible, but I would not undertake it, and therefore ordered the party to rest. Down they sat in true Ethiopian style, their hands clasped around their knees.

I set the men at work cutting a path. Sometimes there would be a place where it was possible to travel, and this helped us out. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon we passed the last windfall and again had plain swamp. This was bad at best, and it was sunset when we arrived at the edge of the timber, where we were to meet Wesner. From here the growth was open, no underbrush to obstruct, and at 8 o'clock the whole party were within a few rods of the appointed place. Directing the people to lay low, and keep quiet, I stole noiselessly toward the edge of the timber. Wesner was there, anxious and waiting. He had three horses with him as he had proposed.

"How is it?" he asked.

I answered him, "All right."

"Good—"

Our next stage would be three miles across an open prairie to another belt of timber; beyond this timber was a canebrake that promised concealment. Within its friendly shelter we proposed to rest a day or two.

At 10 o'clock we were again on the move. The night, as Obed expressed it, was "dark as a nest of black cats," but about midnight we reached the timber, crossed it and were safely hidden in the brake. There were no inhabitants in very close proximity to the place, yet I thought best to be cautious. We were now 25 miles from our rendezvous. From here we proposed to make straight across the country, on a beeline for the Sabine, swerving from a direct line only as the conformation of the country obliged us, or to avoid the scattering settlements. As before mentioned—Wesner and myself, on our return from the Sabine, came this route and selected our camping place.

We stopped in this brake until the next night, then moved on, traveling by night, leaving in this manner some 75 miles behind us. This brought us to the big prarie, which we were obliged to cross by daylight. Here was the only chance for trouble on the route.

(To be continued.)

I TOOK THE LETTER. "DEAR SIR: I WILL GIVE YOU $1200 FOR THE GAL."

Bachelor Reflections.

Greens is spinach when there isn't company.

Marriage is like a dyed sock; unless the love is the right kind, it's sure to crock.

A woman is about as much of a success at driving a husband as she is at driving a long wire nail.

I heard a girl tell another girl once that the most delicious feeling she ever experienced was having a man catch her up a tree—New York Press.

Fair Warning.

"My dear," said Mr. Becker at the breakfast table, the other morning, "what would you do if I were one of those husbands who get up cross in the morning and slam things around and kick up a row just because the coffee happens to be cold?"

"John," replied his better half, "I wouldn't do a thing but make it hot for you."—Chicago News.

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