NOBODY'S PROPERTY.

Continued from First Page.

he does, stick to your story and answer in as few words as possible."

When Brown had finished, Jake scratched his head dubiously and asked for a repetition. The merchant went over the narrative again and again till the negro had it all clearly fixed in his head and vowed he would tell it just as his master wished "ef de Lawd was willin'."

"I'm not looking for the Lord's help in this business," replied Brown.

"Who's yo' 'pendin' on, Marse Jim?"

"You and the devil," was the grimly candid response.

"Gosh-a-mighty!" exclaimed Jake, with chattering teeth, and straightway the well drilled story became an inextricable tangle in his frightened brain.

The barrack of the Federal garrison was situated on the main thoroughfare of the town. It was a two story frame building which had once been a furniture shop and still retained on its front the weatherworn sign of the former proprietor. Above the ramshackle edifice the stars and stripes waved idly on the sultry breeze. A sentinel paced back and forth before the open door, occasionally shifting his piece from shoulder to shoulder to vary the monotony and indulging in frequent yawns. Up and down the street in front of the barracks extended a row of gnarled china trees, in whose deep shade a number of soldiers off duty were amusing themselves with the gambols of several young raccoons, whose look of intelligence and premature age, coupled with their comical motions, excited the frequent laughter of the bystanders.

Brown inquired for Captain Adams, and, leaving Black Jake at the foot of the stairs, he was ushered by one of the soldiers to the captain's office on the second floor, a rather bare room facing the street.

Adams was seated at his desk, busily writing. He was a man of about thirty, with closely cropped black hair and rather thin, swarthy cheeks. He had not recovered the flesh lost during his illness. But there was no look of delicacy in his color and build, and in the steady, self contained glance with which he greeted his visitor one might read a knowledge of human nature and self confidence in dealing with it.

"Be seated, sir," he said, pointing to a chair. "I shall be through in a moment."

True to his word, in a moment he had sealed and directed the document upon which he was engaged. Dropping it in a box at his right hand with a number of envelopes of a similar size, he turned his keen dark eyes upon Brown.

"Now, sir, I am at your service."

"You are Captain Adams?" began Brown as a matter of form.

The officer bowed.

"Well, sir, I am Mr. Brown."

Again the captain bowed and gazed at the merchant intently. The latter shifted uneasily in his chair and looked toward the open door.

"If you have anything of a secret nature to communicate," said the captain, interpreting the glance, "have no fear. There is no one in hearing."

In spite of the officer's assurance, Brown betrayed his distrust by another glance at the door. Then he opened his budget.

Adams listened carefully to Brown's story with the disgust which, open or concealed, every honorable man feels for an informer, even when duty tells him that he must act upon the information. When the merchant had finished, the soldier said:

"You are sure that your statement is quite correct?"

"Quite correct, sir. I have brought my witness. He is down below."

"Produce him," said the captain.

Brown went out and returned in a moment with Black Jake, who stumbled at the threshold and followed his employer into the room in anything but a state of equanimity.

"Now, Jake, tell the captain all about it," said Brown blandly, at the same time giving the negro a menacing look.

The frightened negro scraped his foot and bowed to the captain, glancing apprehensively at the same time at Brown. The latter had seated himself somewhat in the rear of the captain, where he could watch Jake closely without being observed by the officer. The negro began:

"Cap'n, I want to tell yo' at de start dat Mr. Brown warn't dar an' ain't got nothin' to do wid dis."

Brown gave Jake a terrible look, which made the negro tremble in his shoes.

"Dat is, he ain't got much to do wid it," added Jake losing his presence of mind.

The captain looked up, but failed to catch Brown's murderous glance.

"Go on. Mr. Brown has told me the main facts. I want to hear the particulars."

"Yes, sah, I gwine tell 'em," hastened Jake, looking toward Brown. The particulars—what were they? Perhaps they were the things that his master had forbidden him to mention. Jake threw himself in the breach heroically.

"Fo' Gawd, cap'n, no pusson knows anything 'bout dis business but me, Marse Jim warn't dar, an' he ain't been dar."

Brown shifted in his chair. If looks could kill, Jake would have dropped dead.

"Go on with your story, Jake," said the merchant, glancing uneasily at Adams, who was engaged in sharpening a pencil.

"Methinks he doth protest too much," thought the captain, and, turning to Jake, who stood with quaking knees, he said:

"Don't be frightened. I'm not going to hurt you."

"I ain't skeered ob yo', sah," replied the negro, and, meeting Brown's eye, he added: "I ain't skeered ob nobody. I des got a chill. I cotch it in de swamp." Then, to give the semblance of veracity, he said, "I gwine buy me some medicine when I gits dat $5 what Marse Jim done promise me."

Adams smiled quietly, and Brown, rising, as if for a drink of water, whispered in Jake's ear:

"You infernal scoundrel, if you mention my name again I'll shoot you as soon as you leave this office!"

Pretending to think the merchant was going, Adams, who was something of a diplomat as well as a soldier, hastened to remark:

"A good idea, Mr. Brown. The negro is evidently rattled, but a few moments

"Cap'n, I want to tell yo' at de start."

alone with him will enable me to ascertain all I need to know. You will find a chair in the room across the hall."

Brown, who was taken by surprise, obeyed the suggestion, and Adams closed the door behind him.

The officer then resumed his chair and lighted his pipe. Then, partly closing one eye, he gazed at the negro with a searching, quizzical expression.

"Come here, Jake."

The negro advanced.

Adams took a little compass from his pocket. He knew that negroes were extremely superstitious, and he resolved to utilize this peculiarity in the extraction of truth.

"Do you know what this is, Jake?" said the soldier, laying the compass on the table in such a manner as to give the negro a full view of the needle.

"No, sah."

"Well, Jake, it is a truth machine." Adams turned the compass. "Notice that the needle always points the same way. No matter how you place it, you can't make it tell a lie."

"Gosh-a-mighty!" said the awestricken negro.

"Now, Jake, hold out your hand."

The negro extended his right hand.

"No, Jake; I want your left, the one nearest your heart."

The left hand was substituted and trembled so that Jake was forced to support it by his right. The captain then very solemnly laid the compass on the negro's palm. Then, after a pause, the captain resumed:

"Jake, why did Mr. Brown promise to give you $5?"

The negro shook from head to foot and gazed at the needle in the compass like one hypnotized.

"Fo' goodness' sake, cap'n, lemme lay dis thing down!"

"No! Answer my question!" said Adams sternly.

Negroes cannot grow pale. In extreme stress of pain or fear their faces assume a peculiar ashen hue which gives them a much more ghastly appearance than it is possible for any Caucasian countenance to assume. Poor Jake's features were pathetic in their agony.

"If I tell yo' de trufe, cap'n, Marse Jim done swod he gwine kill me!"

"No, Jake; he shan't hurt you. I'll protect you," said the officer.

Thus assured, Jake told the Federal officer the whole story of his master's villainy. Not a fact was omitted. With the compass still in his hand the negro's anxiety to relate nothing but the truth was almost painful to witness. Adams' stratagem succeeded even beyond his expectation. In cross examining Jake in regard to Brown's motives he became acquainted not only with the merchant's assurance in aspiring to Mary Edgewood's hand, but also learned for the first time of the engagement existing between Miss Edgewood and Layburn.

CHAPTER III.

When he had learned all that Jake knew, Adams again assured the negro that no harm should happen to him through Brown. Then he gave him a five dollar bill and opened a door in the rear of the office, which communicated with the back stairs, for the negro to make his exit.

The captain next summoned Brown from the room across the hall.

The informer could not conceal his surprise and alarm as his eyes made the circuit of the office and failed to find Jake.

"I have dismissed the negro, Mr. Brown," said the officer without asking the merchant to be seated.

"I presume the rascal has been telling you a pack of lies," said Brown, perceiving instantly the change in the captain's manner.

"Unfortunately for you, Mr. Brown," replied Adams, "Jake has told the truth. It appears, sir, that you attempted to appropriate the cotton yourself in the most contemptible and underhand manner and, being baffled in your dishonorable scheme, spite and disappointment have led you to inform upon others. That duty requires me to act upon your information causes me sincere regret."

"It is an infamous lie of that scoundrel," exploded Brown, in a rage, "and I'll shoot him on sight!"

"No, Mr. Brown; you will not shoot Jake," said Adams quietly. "I give you notice that if Jake suffers any violence I shall arrest you, and you will be tried by a court martial. Further, if you are found guilty I shall make it my business to see that you receive the extreme penalty."

The captain looked at the merchant for some time in silence, then added:

"For some of the lowest and basest actions there is no punishment assigned by law. The nature of your guilt comes under this head. You may go, sir."

At this contemptuous dismissal Brown sneaked from the room. When he reached the foot of the stairs, he stopped a moment to try to pull himself together and resume his usual manner. Then he walked down the street to his place of business, soothing his malicious soul with the thought that Layburn and Meriweather would lose the cotton they had hindered him from appropriating. It was true that he had been despised and suffered contumely, but he had sown his revenge with a wide hand, and the seeds would not fail to bear bitter fruit for his enemies.

* * * * * * *

The Edgewood mansion, like most antebellum southern homes, was embowered in a mass of greenery. Great oaks, stately relics of the primeval forest, stood sentry about its wide door, and here and there a lofty pine towered in the air, lifting its crest above all other growth, and as it swayed softly in the breeze sang to the ear of fancy drowsy legends of the long ago.

The house itself was built in the colonnade Grecian style first introduced by Thomas Jefferson soon after the Revolution, a style eminently suited to the warm climate of the south, and up the white columns, softened by the shade of the gnarled oaks, rose vines and jasmines went clambering in a riot of bloom and fragrance.

On one side of the house stretched a spacious garden, filled with roses, myrtles, pinks and other old fashioned flowers, which grew and blossomed in a kind of wild liberty, delightful to the eye.

In the center of this bosky Eden was an old summer house covered with trailing honeysuckle, whose graceful tendrils interlaced lattice and roof in so intricate a manner as to enable the frail structure to defy the disintegrating hand of time, even after the framework had gone to decay.

It was sunset, and Mary Edgewood was seated on a bench in the summer house listening to old Ben Layburn, who stood by the door with his hat in his hand.

The girl was intensely interested, for her snowy tatting had fallen unnoted to the ground, and she clasped and unclasped her hands as if she were greatly troubled.

"Miss Mary, yo' ax me how Black Jake fine all dis out when he done lef' de room? Dis de way it was, young miss. When de cap'n let Jake out de door, Jake say he skeered to go down dem back stairs kaze he didn't know whar Brown mought be, so he crouched down outside de door. Den, when Brown come back in de room whar de cap'n was, Jake 'lowed he'd listen an' hear how de lan' lay wid Brown an' de cap'n. Jake say he curi's to know ef de cap'n gwine stan' by him lak he said he gwine do."

"And you are sure, Uncle Ben, that Captain Adams is going to arrest Mr. Layburn and Mr. Meriweather and take the cotton away from them?"

"Dat what he gwine do, Miss Mary. Jake heerd him say dat he's powerful sorry dat his duty compels him to act on de inflammation."

The young girl's anxiety deepened, and her fingers trembled visibly.

"An' I knows, Miss Mary, dat Cap'n Adams is gwine arrest Marse Alf dis night, kaze when I heerd Jake's tale I went a-pryootin' down to de garrison, an' I cotch a word or two what de cap'n drap, an', layin' dem words 'long-side ob what I knows already, I 'low de cap'n's sholy gwine jail Marse Alf an' Marse Jack dis night 'fore sun-up."

"Haven't you warned Mr. Layburn?"

"Bless Gawd, Miss Mary, I dunno whar he is. Him an' Marse Jack went off together dis mornin', an' Marse Alf ain't been back since. But dey's comin' back tonight, for I heerd 'em say dey gwine carry dat cotton to Mobile on de steamboat what goes down de river tonight."

"Have you informed Mrs. Layburn of the danger that threatens her son?" asked the girl.

"No, Miss Mary; I ain't tole her nothin' 'bout it. 'Twouldn't he'p Marse Alf. An' ole miss, she's dat ole an' shaky de shock mought kill her," said old Ben. "'Sides dat, Miss Mary, I knowed Marse Alf didn't want ole miss to know nothin' 'bout dat cotton till it was sole an' he had de money in his han', kaze, you see, he's plannin' to give ole miss a pleasant surprise," added the old negro, looking earnestly at Miss Edgewood.

"Why have you come to me, Uncle Ben? I am only a weak woman and can do nothing," said the girl, picking up her tatting and trying to resume her work.

"Miss Mary, I come to yo' kaze I was nigh crazy, an' I was 'bleeged to talk to somebody," said the old negro, with faltering voice and tugging at his old wool hat. "Den—den, Miss Mary, I knowed how it stan's 'tween yo' an' Marse Alf. 'Tain't all for de miss dat Marse Alf's reskin' hisself to get dis cotton. Furthermo', Miss Mary, I come to yo' kaze der's some'h'n' yo' kin do to he'p Marse Alf ef so be yo'll des do it."

Old Ben eyed the girl closely as she struggled with her tatting.

"As yo' say, young miss, yo's weak an' yo's a woman, but sometimes de weakest is de mos' powerful. You know de Scripter say dat David laid out Goliah wid a pebble from de brook an' a sling."

"Surely, Uncle Ben, you don't wish me to kill Captain Adams with a pair of scissors," said Mary Edgewood, smiling.

"No, little miss; I don't want yo' to do no killin' 'cept'n' wid yo' pretty face an' de sweetness ob yo'r voice," said Ben. Then, advancing a step under the honeysuckle vine, he added in a lower tone:

"'Pears to dis ole nigger dat if yo' was to ax de cap'n not to tetch Marse Alf an' to let dat cotton alone he mought to it. Yo' see, it's dis way, Miss Mary. De war's over an' done wid, an' what good would it do to jail Marse Alf? He ain't gwine fight no more. An' what in de name ob Gawd would be de use ob takin' dat cotton 'way from Marse Alf an' Marse Jack? De Unointed States is so rich it wouldn't make 'em much richer, an' it would make Marse Alf and Marse Jack monst'ous poor. Dem young marsers b'longs to de quality, an' dey des 'bleeged to have some money to buy plows an' corn an' mules to start plantin' wid, for de Lawd knows ef de quality ain't 'lowed to have nothin' an' de country is give up to de poor white trash what never seed de inside ob a carriage an' never rid behine a Kaintucky horse what's gwine come ob dis poor 'stracted lan'!"

"But, Uncle Ben, Captain Adams may not grant my request," said the girl meditatively.

"Well, ef so be he don't, Miss Mary, we won't be no wuss off. But, Lawd, he ain't gwine say no, dat he ain't. Yo' know, little missie, dat yo' never looked a man squeer in de face wid dem blue eyes ob yourn an' ax him to do some'h'n' an' he never done it. An' de cap'n ain't gwine be de fust one to say no for a soldier can't refuse a pretty 'oman nothin'."

Uncle Ben scanned the girl's face to see the effect of his reasoning, and, perceiving that she still hesitated, he brought forward his last and strongest argument.

"Furthermo', Miss Mary, it's des impossible for de cap'n to say no. Didn't yo' an' yo'r ma take him home an' nuss him when he was at de p'int ob death. Bless Gawd, dat man would 'a' been dead dis minute ef he had stayed in dat dar prison, an' he knows it. Ah', little miss, yo' know what de cullud folks say?"

"What do they say, Uncle Ben?"

"We'l, de cullud folks 'low, an' dey's good at readin', dat de cap'n loves yo'

The girl was intensely interested.

mighty nigh as hard as Marse Alf. Now, dar's some men would do dey level best in dem conditions to git Marse Alf in trouble, but de cap'n ain't dat kine."

"Does Captain Adams know that Mr. Layburn and I are—are great friends?"

"Yes, Miss Mary: he got it from Jake. 'Cordin' dat nigger's account, he des turned hisself wrong side out."

It was now quite dark, and Mary Edgewood rose to return to the house. She had almost resolved to follow Ben's suggestion and seek an interview with Adams in behalf of her lover. One lingering doubt remained, and she said to the negro as she left the summer house:

"I will do what I can, Uncle Ben. I have great respect for Captain Adams, I believe he is conscientious, and for that reason, I fear he may think that his duty forbids him to grant my request."

Old Ben scratched his head.

"I'ze des an ole nigger, Miss Mary, but it 'pears to me it would be more lak duty for de cap'n to favor two honer'ble young gentlemen ob de quality lak Marse Alf an' Marse Jack dan to play into be han' ob a underhanded man lak dat Brown, what used to be a nigger trader."

Mary Edgewood did not tell her mother of her intended interview with Captain Adams lest she might forbid it, but she took her negro mammy, Aunt Martha, into her confidence and informed the old woman that she must accompany her. The faithful creature was vastly impressed by the importance of the proposed visit, and immensely flattered by the position of trust that she was invited to fill. It afforded Mary much comfort to find that Aunt Martha saw no impropriety in the proceeding. Garbed in a large figured calico gown and a voluminous white apron and her head encircled by an enormous turban, Aunt Martha with her 250 pounds of flesh, deemed herself a chaperon for a princess.

"Honey," said the old creature, "ef yo' ma ain't to know nothin' 'bout dis business wid de cap'n yo' can't go till 10 o'clock. By dat time ole miss 'll be snoozin' away in her bed, an' we can crope away unbeknownst."

"Very well, Aunt Martha."

"An', honey, 'tain't nothin' wrong what we gwine do, but to keep meddlesome folks from talkin' yo' better wear a thick veil."

By 10 o'clock the stillness of night had settled down upon the little country town, and the young girl crept out of the gate with her faithful attendant and glided along through the darkest and least frequented streets toward Captain Adams' quarters. If her heart continued to throb as tumultuously when she arrived in his presence, she feared that she might not be able to tell her errand.

When they reached the barrack, they were stopped by a sentinel.

"Halt!" said the soldier. "Who comes there?"

Mary Edgewood's heart almost stopped beating, and she could not utter a sound. That she would be halted by a sentinel had never occurred to her.

"Who comes there, I say?" repeated the soldier.

"Somebody to see de cap'n," said old Martha, stepping forward in front of Mary.

"Who is it?" said the sentinel, still barring the way.

"Mr. Soldier, we don't want no foolishness," said the old negress, swelling up as only a negro can. "It's a lady ob de quality what's got pressin' business wid de cap'n."

"Who is this lady of quality?" persisted the sentinel.

"Look a-hyer, Mr. Soldier man, it's de lady ob quality what nussed de cap'n when he was sick an' brung him back to life, an' if yo' don't let her pass yo' gwine git yo'se'f in trouble, yo' sholy is."

To be Continued.

Notice of Final Settlement.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned administrator of the estate of Mary A. McLeod, deceased, has filed his final account and report as such administrator in the County Court of the county of Washington, state of Oregon, and that said Court has appointed Monday, the 21st day of July, 1902, at 10 o'clock a. m. of said day, for the hearing of objections to said final account and for the settlement of said estate.

T. H. & E. B. Tongue, Attorneys. W. M. JACKSON, Administrator of the estate of Mary A. McLeod, deceased.

Dated this 19th day of June, 1902. 5 9

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Timber Land, Act June 3, 1878

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

United States Land Office,
Oregon City, Oregon, May 22, 1902.

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1878, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892, Lizzie Voss, of Astoria, county of Clatsop, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office his sworn statement No. 5765, for the purchase of the S ½ of Section No. 9 in T 8 N R 6 W, and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish his claim to said land before the Register and Receiver of this office at Oregon City, Oregon, on Friday, the 8th day of August, 1902.

He names as witnesses:

John Glaser, of Olney, Oregon.
Julius Garbe, of " "
Clara E. Larson, of Astoria, "
Chas. Weiman, of " "

Any and all persons claiming adversely the above described lands are requested to file their claims in this office on or before said 8th day of August, 1902.

CHAS. B. MOORES, Register.

Timber Land, Act June 3, 1878

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

United States Land Office,
Oregon City, Oregon, May 22, 1902.

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1878, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892, Clara E. Larson, of Astoria, county of Clatsop, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office his sworn statement No. 5763, for the purchase of the N W ¼ S W ¼ Sec 3, E ½ S E ¼, S W ¼ S E ¼ of Sec. No. 11 in T 8 N R 6 W, and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes and to establish his claim to said land before the Register and Receiver of this office at Oregon City, Oregon, on Friday, the 8th day of August, 1902.

He name as witnesses:

John Deneck, of Olney, Oregon.
John Glaser, of " "
Julius Garbe, of " "
George Voss, of Astoria, "

And any and all persons claiming adversely the above described lands are requested to file their claims in this office on or before said 8th day of August, 1902.

CHAS. B. MOORES, Register.

Timber Land, Act June 3, 1878—

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

United States Land Office,
Oregon City, Oregon, May 22, 1902.

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1878, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892, Clara Weiman, of Astoria, county of Clatsop, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office his sworn statement No. 5761, for the purchase of the S W ¼ S W ¼, W ½ S W ¼ Sec. 4, S E ¼ S E ¼ of Sec. 5 in T 8 N R 6 W, and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish his claim to said land before the Register and Receiver at this office at Oregon City, Oregon, on Friday the 8th day of August, 1902.

He names as witnesses:

John Deneck, of Olney, Oregon.
John Glaser, of " "
George Voss, of Astoria, "
Lizzie Voss, of " "

Any and all persons claiming adversely the above described lands are requested to file their claims in this office on or before said 8th day of August, 1902.

CHAS. B. MOORES, Register.

Timber Land, Act June 3, 1878

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

United States Land Office,
Oregon City, Oregon, May 22, 1902.

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1878, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892, Julius Garbe, of Olney, county of Clatsop, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office his sworn statement No. 5760 for the purchase of the N ½ N E ¼, S E ¼ N E ¼, N W ¼ Sec. 9, S E ¼, S W ¼ of Sec. No. 3 in T 8 N R 6 W, and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish his claim to said land before the Register and Receiver of this office at Oregon City, Oregon, on Friday, the 8th day of August, 1902.

He names as witnesses:

John Deneck, of Olney, Oregon.
John Glaser, of " "
George Voss, of Astoria, "
Clara Weiman, of " "

Any and all persons claiming adversely the above described lands are requested to file their claims in this office on or before said 8th day of August, 1902.

CHAS. B. MOORES, Register.

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