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ESTABLISHED 1855.

The PRODIGAL JUDGE

The Famous Novel by
VAUGHAN KESTER

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CHAPTER IV.

Law At Balaam's Cross-Roads.

But Mr. Yancy was only at the beginning of his trouble. Three days later there appeared on the borders of Scratch Hill a link gentleman armed with a rifle, while the butts of two pistols protruded from the depths of his capacious coat pockets. He made his presence known by whooping from the edge of the branch, and his name of Yancy. It was Charley Balaam, old Squire Balaam's nephew. The squire lived at the cross-roads, to which his family had given its name, and dispensed the little law that found its way into that part of the county. The whoops finally brought Yancy to his cabin door.

"Can I see you friendly, Bob Yancy?" Balaam demanded with the lungs of a stentor, sheltering himself behind the thick hole of a sweet gum.



BETTY.

for he observed that Yancy held his rifle in the crook of his arm and had no wish to offer his person as a target to the deadly aim of the Scratch Hiller who was famous for his skill.

"I reckon you can, Charley Balaam, if you are friendly," said Yancy. "I'm a family man, Bob, and I ask you candid, do you feel peevish?"

"Not in particular," and Yancy put aside his rifle.

"I'm a-going to trust you, Bob," said Balaam. And forsaking the shelter of the sweet gum he shuffled up the slope.

"How are you, Charley?" asked Yancy, as they shook hands.

"Only just tolerable, Bob. You've been warranted—Dave Blount swore hit onto you." He displayed a sheet of paper covered with much writing and decorated with a large seal. Yancy viewed this formidable document with respect, but did not offer to take it.

"Read it," he said mildly. Balaam scratched his head.

"I don't know that hits my duty to serve it to you. But I can tell you what's into hit, leavin' out the law—which don't matter now." Uncle Sammy's face at this juncture emerged from the path that led off through the woods in the direction of the Bellamy cabin. With the patriarch was a stranger. Now the presence of a stranger on Scratch Hill was an occurrence of such extraordinary rarity that the warrant instantly became a matter of secondary importance.

"Howdy, Charley. Here Bob Yancy, you shake hands with Bruce Carrington," commanded Uncle Sammy. At the name of Yancy and Balaam manifested a quickened interest. They saw a man in the early twenties, clean-limbed and broad-shouldered, with a handsome face and shapely head. "Yes, sir, hit's a grandson of Tom Carrington that used to own the grist-mill down at the Forks. You're some sort of wild-hog kin to him, Bob—yo, mother was a cousin to him. Tom. Her family was powerful upset at her marrying a Yancy. They say Tom cussed himself into a 'pleptic fit' when the news was fetched him." "Where you located at, Mr. Carrington?" asked Yancy. But Carrington was not given a chance to reply. Uncle Sammy saved him the trouble.

"Pack in Kentucky. He tells me he's been follerin' the water. What's the name of that place where Andy Jackson fit the Brits?"

"New Orleans," prompted Carrington good naturedly.

"That's hit—he takes rafts down the river to New Orleans, then he comes back on ships to Baltimore, or else he hoofs it north overland." Uncle Sammy had acquired a general knowledge of the stranger's habits and pursuits in an incredibly brief space of time. "He wants to visit the Forks," he added.

"I'm shortly goid. To my myself, Mr. Carrington, hit'll be pleased of your company—but first I got to get through with Bob Yancy," said Balaam.

haps be necessary to correct a miscarriage of justice. They were shy enough and timid enough, these remote dwellers in the pine woods, but like all wild things, when they felt they were cornered they were prone to fight; and in this instance it was clearly iniquitous that Bob Yancy's right to smack Dave Blount should be questioned. That denied, what was left of human liberty? But beyond this was a matter of even greater importance; they felt that Yancy's possession of the boy was somehow involved.

Yancy had declared himself simply but specifically on this point. Law or no law, he would kill whoever attempted to take the boy from him, and Scratch Hill believing to a man that in so doing he would be well within his rights, was prepared to join in the fray. Even Uncle Sammy, who had not been off the Hill in years, announced that no consideration of fact would keep him away from the scene of action and possible danger, and Yancy loaned him his mule and cart for the occasion. When the patriarch was helped to his seat in the ancient vehicle he called loudly for his rifle.

"Why, pap, what do you want with a weapon?" asked his son indulgently.

"If there air shootin' I may take a hand in it. Now you-all give me a fair hour's start with this mule critter of Bob's, and if nothin' busts 'em I'll be at the squire's as soon as the best of you."

Uncle Sammy was given the time allowance he asked and then Scratch Hill wound its way down the path to the branch and the high road. Yancy led the straggling procession, with the boy trotting by his side, his little sunburnt fist clasped in the man's great hand. He, too, was armed. He carried the old spot-in' rifle he had brought from the Barony, and suspended from his shoulder by a leather thong was the big horn flask with its hickory stopper his Uncle Bob had fashioned for him, while a deer-skin pouch held his bullets and an extra flint or two.

He understood that beyond these arms he had seen his Uncle Bob fetch Mr. Blount, he himself was the real cause of this excitement, that somebody, it was not plain to his mind just who, was seeking to get him away from Scratch Hill, and that a mysterious power called the Law would sooner or later be invoked to this dread end. But he knew this much clearly, nothing would induce him to leave his Uncle Bob! And his little finger nestled warmly against the man's hand. Yancy looked down and gave him a sunny, reassuring smile.

"It'll be all right, Nevvy," he said gently.

"You wouldn't let 'em take me, would you, Uncle Bob?" asked the child in a fearful whisper.

"Such an idea airn't entering my head. And this here warrant is just some of Dave Blount's cussedness."

"Uncle Bob," what'll they do to you?"

"Well, I reckon the squire'll feel obliged to do one of two things. He'll either fine me or else he won't." "What'll you do if he fines you?" "Why, pay the fine, Nevvy—and then lick Dave Blount again for stirrin' up trouble. That's the way we most in general do. I mean to say give him a good licking, and that'll make him stop his foolishness."

"Wasn't that a good licking you gave him on the Ox Road, Uncle Bob?" asked Hannibal.

"I'm pretty fair do' a starter, but I'm capable of doin' a better job," responded Yancy.

They overtook Uncle Sammy as he turned in at the squire's.

"I thought I'd come and see what kind of law a body gets at this here time of yours," the patriarch explained to Mr. Balaam, who, forgetting his lumbago, had hurried forth to greet him.

"But why did you fetch your gun, Uncle Sammy?" said the magistrate, laughing.

"Hit were to be on the safe side, Squire. Where air them Blounts?"

"Them Blounts don't need to bother you none. There air only Dave, and he can't more than half see out of one eye today."

The squire's court held its infrequent sittings in the best of the Balaam homestead, a double cabin of heavy logs. Here Scratch Hill was gratified with a view of Mr. Blount's battered visage, and it was conceded that his condition reflected creditably on Yancy's physical prowess and was of a character fully to sustain that gentleman's reputation; for while he was notoriously slow to be given a fight, he was reputed to be even more reluctant to leave off once he had become involved in one.

"What's all this here fuss between you and Bob Yancy?" demanded the squire when he had administered the usual brief and very much to the point. He had been hired by Mr. Pladen, of Fayetteville, to go to Scratch Hill and get the boy who had been temporarily placed in Yancy's custody at the time of General Quintard's death.

"Stop just there!" cried the magistrate, leveling a pudgy finger at Blount. "This here co't is already cognizant of certain facts bearing on that 'p'int. The boy was left with Bob Yancy mainly because nobody else would take him. Them's the facts. Now go on!" he finished sternly.

"I only know what Bladen told me," said Blount, sullenly.

"Well, I reckon Mr. Bladen ought to feel obliged to tell the truth," said the squire.

"He done give me the order from the judge of the co't—I was to show it to Bob Yancy—" demanded the squire sharply. With a smile, damaged, but clearly a smile, Blount produced the order. "Hm—m—m—pinted guardian of the boy—" the squire was presently heard to murmur. The crowded room was very still now, and more than one pair of eyes were turned pityingly in Yancy's direction. When the long arm of the law reached out from Fayetteville, where there was a real judge and a real sheriff, it clothed itself with very special terror. The boy looked up into Yancy's face. That tense silence had struck a chill through his heart.

"Well, Mr. Blount, what did you do with this here order?" asked the squire.

"I went with it to Scratch Hill."

"And showed it to Bob Yancy?" asked the squire.

"No, he wa'n't there. But the boy was, and I took him in my buggy and drove off. I'd got as far as the Ox Road forks when I met Yancy—"

"What happened then?" said a body of men who had gathered about the squire's court.

"I showed Yancy the order—" "You lie, Dave Blount; you didn't!" said Yancy. "But I can't say it I would have made no difference, Squire. He'd have taken his liking just the same and I'd have had my neevy out of that buggy."

"Didn't he say nothing about this here order from the co't, Bob?"

"There wa'n't much conversation, Squire. He wa'n't no more to light down, and then I smacked Dave Blount out over the wheel."

"How struck the first blow?"

"He did. He struck at me with his buggy whip."

"What you got to say to this, Mr. Blount?" asked the squire.

"I say I showed him the order like I said," answered Blount doggedly. Squire Balaam removed his spectacles and leaned back in his chair.

"It's the opinion of this here co't that the whole question of assault rests on whether Bob Yancy saw the order. Bob Yancy swears he didn't see it, while Dave Blount swears he showed it to him. If Bob Yancy didn't know of the existence of the order he was clearly actin' on the idea that Blount was stealin' his neevy, and he done what anyone would have done under the circumstances. If, on the other hand, he knew of this order from the co't, he was not only guilty of assault, but he was guilty of resistin' an officer of the co't." The squire paused impressively. His audience drew a long breath. The impression prevailed that the case was going against Yancy, and more than one face was turned scowlingly on the fat little justice.

"Can a body drop a word here?"

"It was Uncle Sammy's thin voice that cut into the silence.

"Certainly, Uncle Sammy. This here co't will always admire to listen to you."

"Well, I'd like to say that I consider that Fayetteville co't mighty officious with its orders. This part of the county won't take nothin' off Fayetteville. We don't want no more of that kind of interference with us!" There was a murmur of approval. Scratch Hill remembered the rifles in its hands and took comfort.

"The Fayetteville co't air a higher co't than this, Uncle Sammy, explained the squire indulgently.

"I'm afeer of that," snapped the patriarch. "I've seen hits steeple."

"Air you finished, Uncle Sammy?" asked the squire deferentially.

"I low I am. But I low that if this here case is goin' agin Bob Yancy I'd recommend him to go home and not listen to no foolness."

"Mr. Yancy will oblige this co't by settin' still while I finish this case," said the squire with dignity. "As I've already p'inted out, the question of veracity presents itself strongly to the mind of this here co't. Mr. Yancy has sworn to one thing, Mr. Blount to another. Now the Yancys air an old family in these parts, Mr. Blount is a stranger, and we don't know nothin' agin them—"

"And we don't know nothin' in their favor," Uncle Sammy interjected.

"Dave's grandfather came here from Virginia about fifty years back and settled near Scratch Hill—"

"We never knowed why he left Virginia or why he came here," said Uncle Sammy, and knowing what local feeling was, was sure he had shot a telling bolt.

"He come about twenty-five years ago. Dave's father pulled up and went to Fayetteville. Nobody ever knowed why—and I don't remember that he ever offered an explanation—" continued the squire.

"He didn't—he just left," said Uncle Sammy.

"Consequently," pursued the squire, somewhat vindictively, "we ain't had any time in which to form an opinion of the Blounts; but for myself, I'm suspicious of folks that keep their eyes on the stump."

"Some folks about twenty-five years ago. The tallest trees in the world are the Australian eucalyptus, which attain an altitude of 480 feet. The biggest are the mammoth trees of California, some of which are 276 to 373 feet in height and 108 feet in circumference at the base. From measurements of the rings it is believed that certain of these trees are over 2,000 to 2,500 years old. The oldest tree in the world is said to exist on the island of Cooch, off the coast of Asia Minor. It is several thousand years old, but just how many no one has dared to say. The tree is carefully preserved by a wall of masonry round it, and the trunk is thirty feet in circumference.

But there are parts of trees in the form of useful timber which are even older, probably, than any on the stump. Beams in old buildings are preserved today which are known to be over a thousand years old. Pope the Christian era are perfectly sound today, and it is known that they have been immersed in water for upward of 2,000 years.

Some woods have remarkable durable qualities when immersed in water. The wood of the cedars, which many rotting in from five to ten years; but when immersed in water they last longer than iron or steel. It has been made by our government to preserve woods indefinitely by treating them with oils and tar. The telegraph poles and railway ties have had their average life extended from five to ten years by this process.—Harper's Weekly.

A DARK DEED

By ETTA W. PIERCE.

CHAPTER XXX.—Continued.

Sir Gervase carried the news to Miss Pam's chamber. Directly I was summoned thither, and folded to the old woman's heart.

"You poor, wronged child!" she said, and wept over me with maternal tenderness. "What a dreadful lot you have had in life! You may thank your mother for it. Look at the grief and pain which she brought on this house today! Now, what is to be done about Fairy? Ah, I am filled with remorse when I remember how I repulsed her at the church. You see I was so shocked and horrified that I forgot my own child. I shall never know what I did. I shall never forgive myself. Poor child! her wrongs seem to be scarcely less than your own."

"Fairy is to be found," I answered, "and brought back to her old place at Greylock Woods."

"You noble, generous girl!" cried Aunt Pam, and she kissed me fervently.

Alas! Advertisements, begging Fairy to return immediately to the friends who were anxiously waiting for her, were dispatched to all the prominent newspapers in the country; private detectives, stimulated by offers of reward, also went forth to search for the missing girl; but neither to the printed entreaties, nor the efforts of men versed in all the arts of their profession, did any response come. I was returned to my grand-daughter, Ethel, the child of his dead son, Robert Greylock, and to her heirs for ever.

The family lawyer congratulated me kindly. Aunt Pam held me to her heart, and whispered: "It is all as it should be," and Sir Gervase pressed my hand and said, quietly: "You are now the undisputed mistress of the Greylock fortune, and I hope you may find in it some recompense for your past hardships and privations. What will you do in your new position, first wish to do, cousin?"

"Find Nan, and divide my possessions with her."

He smiled sadly.

"Faithful and loyal as ever! And next?"

My esteem for the baronet was growing hour by hour. He was noble, generous, good. I could speak to him more frankly than to anybody in the world.

"Next I must go to school," I answered; "I am ashamed now of my utter ignorance. I know absolutely nothing."

He looked at me, in my deep mourning, with kind, compassionate eyes.

"You are still young enough to spare a year or two, cousin, for the acquisition of such knowledge as you need."

I had an interview with Iris Greylock in the darkened drawing room, after everybody else had left it. Miss Pamela had fled from her presence in utter horror, and with a derisive little laugh my mother seized my mourning-gown and drew me down to a sofa by her side.

"I believe that dreadful old spinster would have been better pleased if I had not appeared at this funeral at all," she began, vivaciously. "She thinks only of my little errors, not of the combination of circumstances that forced me into them. Now, my child, you and I must understand each other! You find yourself in possession of a superb fortune, and you actually know nothing about the proper management of it. Think of what you have been—a servant, a mendicant, beggared, and then—"

"I am too stupid to be able to talk about it," I said, uttering a gasp of surprise.

"You are not stupid—you are only need some competent person to guide and direct you now. In me, Ethel, you will find the want supplier—I am your natural counselor and guardian. I will assume the whole charge of your future and your fortune. You shall not be troubled in any way with stupid money matters. You are too young, by far! I am a born financier. My interest in all your affairs, ever since the time when my mother held out to him—I fancied his hand trembled."

"Yes," he said, in a strange tone, "this is her handwriting."

"Read, I tell you!" urged my mother, with a triumphant glance at me.

He almost shouted these words from the paper:

"Dear Mamma—Let me call you that for the first time—I am now the wife of Arthur Reginald Kenyon—the man I loved so passionately at school—the man I still love, in spite of his many faults. He has been driven to take this step, partly by stress of circumstances, partly by the urgency of his great passion for me. Give me no further thought, and do not seek to find me. I am well and happy—let that satisfy you."

I was looking straight at Sir Gervase. His brown face, of a sudden, grew as stern as white as death. He took me by the hand, and held it out to him—I fancied his hand trembled.

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One morning Sir Gervase and I sat in the warm, bright breakfast-room, in counsel over the utter failure of all my efforts to discover Nan. Valuable assistance he had certainly rendered in the matter, but whether for Nan's sake or simply to gratify me, I could not determine. His reserve was impenetrable. I was as far as ever from discovering whether or not his love for Nan still lived. He had just returned to the Woods after an absence of two days, the cause of which he did not explain, but as I watched him I fancied he looked worn and out of spirits.

"How strange," I cried out, feverishly, "how very strange that I hear nothing of Nan! I have pressed everybody into my service. I have set skilled persons searching here, there and everywhere, and the result is—total failure! If I could secure but the smallest clue to guide me, I would take scrip and staff and set forth on a pilgrimage of discovery myself."

"I think," said Gervase, deliberately, "that she has gone upon the stage."

"Fairy is to be found," I answered, "and brought back to her old place at Greylock Woods."

"You noble, generous girl!" cried Aunt Pam, and she kissed me fervently.

"What more likely?" he queried.

"You may not know it, but she was a wonderful dancer—a talent inherited, doubtless, from her father. She was aware of its possession—she would soon discover its market value. Thoroughly blameless and refined women are sometimes by necessity driven into the ballet."

"The ballet!" I echoed, in utter horror. "Nan in spangles and tights, and rouge! No, you cannot imagine it, Sir Gervase—no more can I! She would never stoop to that! You are on the wrong track."

"I think not," he answered, stubbornly.

"If you have a clue, why do you not tell me?"

"I have none," he answered; "but being in town yesterday and the day previous, I took the opportunity to make some inquiries among professional people—some personal search about the city theatres. No such person as Nan had been seen there, yet, all the same, as I remember her wonderful dancing, my belief remains unshaken."

The children of woe cannot choose their calling. How could I tell what Nan might be forced to do, turned out poor and upon the world?

"Then send messages to other cities, to other theatres!" I cried out, wildly; "we must search the whole world over. Do you think I will leave her to such a life?"

"No," he replied, "I am sure you will not. And I have anticipated your wish in the matter, cousin, and already dispatched a trusty person to prosecute the very search of which you speak."

"A thousand thanks!" I began gratefully; but the opening of the breakfast-room door interrupted me. My mother entered.

She was charmingly dressed, and in her bosom glowed a cluster of Jacquemont roses. At sight of Sir Gervase tete-a-tete with me, her eyes began to sparkle. She noticed at once my ruffled demeanor.

"Whatever is the matter with you two?" she said lightly, as she limped up to us in her graceful, breezy way. "Quarrelling? Fie, fie!"

Then, with sudden alarm: "Ah, Sir Gervase, do not let a beg of you—do not tell me that you are going back to England!"

"Not a present," he answered; "I have a work to accomplish here before I return to my own land."

"So glad! Ethel," tapping my shoulder, "seems to depend altogether upon your counsel and assistance now. I am sure she would not know how to get on in her new position without you. Oh, I understand, and with a piercing glance at us both, 'you were talking about Fairy! Has anything yet been heard of her?'"

"No," I answered.

She drew a letter suddenly from her pocket. The air seemed charged with electricity. My heart gave a great apprehensive bound.

"Prepare yourselves for a great shock," said my mother with her sweetest smile. "I have just received the letter from poor Fairy. You know her handwriting, Sir Gervase; Ethel does not. Look—read! The dear, airy, crafty creature has actually married—whom do you think?—Why, that mad lover, who tried to kill her out on the marshes! Romantic women, you know, are prone to forgive such things, seeing in them only a proof of love."

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I tried not to the last word. I did not cry out or interrupt, but the sheet I picked it up, examined it closely, then gave it back to my mother, whose smiling face at that moment was an offense to my eyes.

"A clumsy falsehood, without date or postmark," I said dryly. "Nan never wrote a line of that kind—not a line, not a word of it is genuine."

Following in the announcement of the plan, issued after today's conference.

The announcement was made here today following the conferences that have been in progress for several days from prominent bankers of New York and leading representatives of the south, such as Governor O'Neal of Alabama, Clarence Ousley, representing the permanent Southern Cotton congress and commissioner of agriculture of South Carolina, that a proposition has been presented to these gentlemen, representing respectively the governors' conference and the cotton congress, composed of producers and business men of the south, which means the placing in the cotton belt states of about \$50,000,000 immediately for the handling of the cotton crop of 1911.

"In other words, the proposition is to give the farmer \$25 per bale advance on his cotton without interest, charging him only \$1 per bale to cover expenses of grading and hauling, letting him turn over the cotton to the holders, who will advance him \$25 per bale and give him the opportunity to designate the date of sale prior to January 1, 1912, and to participate in any advance in price to the extent of three-fourths of the rise in the market.

The Chances.

"It is calculated that by the present ordinary holding plan the farmer takes all the chances of the rise in the market. By this plan he takes no more chance than he did under the old plan, and he has every opportunity of maximum price in a rising market, and saving the losses sustained by damage and by loss of weight and warehousing charges.

"Provision is made against any apparent violation of the Sherman anti-trust law in that each committee named by the governor or commissioner of agriculture of each state has power to name the day of sale if cotton reaches 12 or 13 cents, which according to the testimony gathered gives only a close, legitimate profit on the cost of production.

"Of course everything depends on the acceptance of the plan by the individual farmer in connection with his pledge to reduce acreage the coming year. The individual farmer alone can make success possible.

Bankers Behind It.

"The undertaking is fathered by a number of bankers, of whom Col. R. M. Thompson is the head. The committees have been offered assurances from some of the strongest banks in the city of a thorough backing of these already strong interests.

"These gentlemen here, as well as President Barrett of the National Farmers' Union, consider the plan acceptable to the growers, and they are tonight returning to their respective states to present it to their people, and if it be agreeable to the producers to put it into immediate operation.

"Senator Bailey has been advising as to the legal aspect of the proposition."

E. J. Watson, president of the Southern Cotton congress, commenting on the plan tonight, said:

Prevents a Corner.

"We have carefully considered the whole thing in all its phases. I can't say what the growers are going to do. The financial end is strong. It holds out prospects of fine results and ctops any efforts at a corner of the market. It seems to insure an honest price for cotton and to safe-guard the commodity, which is the very keystone of American finance. Some one besides the farmer may make some money out of it, but as that is done the farmer is being assured several dollars a bale more than he would get under the present iniquitous marketing methods. We are therefore willing to submit and recommend the proposition to our people, and, if they wish to accept it, then help them to make it effective as we can."

"There is no doubt that the holding and reduction of acreage pledge, if movement we have been pushing so successfully, has checked the downward tendency of prices under the persistent hammering up to this time. So far we have fought the battle unwaged; now that money to the extent of \$50,000,000 is offered we may fight harder and in the end we hope to put a check to methods of marketing of a much more important commodity which the Federal government ought to have wiped out long ago."

Proposed Arrangement by Southern Cotton Conference.

New York, November 21.—New York bankers who have been conferring here for the last few days with representatives of the Southern Cotton congress, announced this afternoon that they had raised a fund of \$50,000,000 to be placed in the cotton belt for the purpose of handling the cotton crop of 1911 and enabling growers to participate in any rise in the market.

The negotiations were conducted on behalf of the south by Governor Emmet O'Neal of Alabama; Senator Bailey of Texas, who has been advising his colleagues as to the legal aspects of the proposition; E. J. Watson, president of the permanent Southern Cotton congress, and commissioner of agriculture of South Carolina, and Clarence O. Ousley of Fort Worth, Tex., representing the governor of his state.

The Money Powers.

The bankers who will furnish the fund, according to the statement, are headed by Col. Robert M. Thompson, of the brokerage firm of H. P. Pell & Co. of this city. The financial support of several of the strongest banks in New York has been given to the plan.

The plan proposes to advance the growers \$25 per bale upon his cotton, based on the market value at the time the cotton is sold. The \$25 per bale is paid in advance, and is regarded as a legitimate minimum charge for the expense of grading and handling. The cotton is not held, nor taken from the channels of trade, but is placed at the best advantage. The grower is given the right to designate the day of sale prior to January 1, 1912, and will participate in any advance in price to the extent of three-fourths of the rise of the market.

Details Not Arranged.

Details of the plan are yet to be worked out. It has been decided, however, to place the funds through the committees named by the governor or commissioner of agriculture of a state, and these committees shall be empowered to sell when cotton reaches 12 cents and compelled to sell when it reaches 13 cents regardless of advice from the growers. Provision against any violation of the Sherman anti-trust law is contained in the agreement.

"Of course," reads the statement, "everything depends upon the acceptance of the plan by the individual farmer in connection with his pledge to reduce acreage the coming year."

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Announcement.

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"Of course everything depends on the acceptance of the plan by the individual farmer in connection with his pledge to reduce acreage the coming year. The individual farmer alone can make success possible.

Bankers Behind It.

"The undertaking is fathered by a number of bankers, of whom Col. R. M. Thompson is the head. The committees have been offered assurances from some of the strongest banks in the city of a thorough backing of these already strong interests.

"These gentlemen here, as well as President Barrett of the National Farmers' Union, consider the plan acceptable to the growers, and they are tonight returning to their respective states to present it to their people, and if it be agreeable to the producers to put it into immediate operation.

"Senator Bailey has been advising as to the legal aspect of the proposition."

E. J. Watson, president of the Southern Cotton congress, commenting on the plan tonight, said:

Prevents a Corner.

"We have carefully considered the whole thing in all its phases. I can't say what the growers are going to do. The financial end is strong. It holds out prospects of fine results and ctops any efforts at a corner of the market. It seems to insure an honest price for cotton and to safe-guard the commodity, which is the very keystone of American finance. Some one besides the farmer may make some money out of it, but as that is done the farmer is being assured several dollars a bale more than he would get under the present iniquitous marketing methods. We are therefore willing to submit and recommend the proposition to our people, and, if they wish to accept it, then help them to make it effective as we can."

"There is no doubt that the holding and reduction of acreage pledge, if movement we have been pushing so successfully, has checked the downward tendency of prices under the persistent hammering up to this time. So far we have fought the battle unwaged; now that money to the extent of \$50,000,000 is offered we may fight harder and in the end we hope to put a check to methods of marketing of a much more important commodity which the Federal government ought to have wiped out long ago."

Some Facts About Trees.

The tallest trees in the world are the Australian eucalyptus, which attain an altitude of 480 feet. The biggest are the mammoth trees of California, some of which are 276 to 373 feet in height and 108 feet in circumference at the base. From measurements of the rings it is believed that certain of these trees are over 2,000 to 2,500 years old. The oldest tree in the world is said to exist on the island of Cooch, off the coast of Asia Minor. It is several thousand years old, but just how many no one has dared to say. The tree is carefully preserved by a wall of masonry round it, and the trunk is thirty feet in circumference.

But there are parts of trees in the form of useful timber which are even older, probably, than any on the stump. Beams in old buildings are preserved today which are known to be over a thousand years old. Pope the Christian era are perfectly sound today, and it is known that they have been immersed in water for upward of 2,000 years.

Some woods have remarkable durable qualities when immersed in water. The wood of the cedars, which many rotting in from five to ten years; but when immersed in water they last longer than iron or steel. It has been made by our government to preserve woods indefinitely by treating them with oils and tar. The telegraph poles and railway ties have had their average life extended from five to ten years by this process.—Harper's Weekly.

King Solomon's Mines.

They May Have Been the Ancient Gold Workings at Rhodesia.

Rhodesia, that province of British Africa lying between the Zambezi and the Limpopo rivers, has considerable deposits of gold. The ancients mined and carried away enormous quantities of the precious metal, but under the scientific mining systems of the present day their operations will be greatly surpassed.

It has been thought that Rhodesia was the ancient land of Ophir, the lands of the King Solomon's mines, but this theory is strongly combated by some investigators. The ancient gold workings are the basis of modern workings. For every ten square miles of Rhodesia, it is stated, there was one ancient mine—that is, there are 75,000 old workings—which means that a stupendous wealth was dug out of the earth before the days of Cecil Rhodes. The ancients must have gone to the north and east. It was probably brought into the crown of the Queen of Sheba and filled the coffers of Solomon.

The ancient smelting furnaces are said still to be of easy recognition. They are sunk into the "floor." The furnace blowpipes are made of the finest granite powder cement, and the nozzles of the blowpipes are covered with splashes of gold. The linings of the holes are covered with specks of gold. When the first lining became worn by the heat, a fresh lining of cement of an excellent quality, which has outlasted time, was smeared round on top of the old lining. It is said that one can take an old lining, split off the layers with a knife, and find gold splashes in abundance.

The tools of the ancient workers which have so far been discovered include a small soapstone hammer and burning stones of water worn rock, to which gold still adheres. There are evidences that the ancients carried on an extensive industry in the manufacture of gold ornaments and utensils.

A generous man doesn't give his friends away.

If a man is troubled with indigestion it is his waste of time to try to convince him that the world is growing better.