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The PRODIGAL JUDGE

The Famous Novel by VAUGHAN KESTER

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Keel Boat.

"Price!" began Mahaffy. They were back in Raleigh in the room the judge called his office, and this was Mahaffy's first opportunity to see him since the subject of the duel, as they had only just parted from Nancy and Cavendish, who stopped at one of the stores to make certain purchases for the raft.

"Not a word, Solomon—it had to come. I am going to kill him. I shall feel better then."

"What if he kills you?" demanded Mahaffy harshly. The judge shrugged his shoulders.

"That is as it may be."

"Have you forgotten your grandson?" Mahaffy's voice was still harsh and rasping.

"I regard my meeting with Pentress as nothing less than a sacred duty to him."

"We know no more than we did this morning," said Mahaffy. "You're mixing up all sorts of side issues with what should be your real purpose."

"Not at all, Solomon—no at all! I look upon my grandson's speedy recovery as an assured fact. Pentress dare not hold him. He knows he is run to earth at last."

"Price!"

"No, Solomon—no, my friend, we will not speak of it again. You will go back to Belle Plain with Nancy and Cavendish; you must represent me there. We have as good as found Miss Malroy's behalf. For us that has an important bearing on the future, and since I cannot, you must be at Belle Plain when Carrington arrives with his pack of dogs. Give him the advantage of your sound and mature judgment, Solomon; don't let any false modesty keep you in the background."

"Who's going to second you?" snapped Mahaffy.

"The judge was the picture of indifference."

"It will be quite informal, the code is scarcely applicable; I merely intend to remove him because he is not fit to live."

"At sun-up," muttered Mahaffy.

"I intend to start one day right even if I never live to begin another," said the judge, a sudden fierce light flashing from his eyes. "I feel that this is the turning point in my career, Solomon; he went on. 'The beginning of great things! But I shall take no chances for every possible contingency. I am going to make you and Nancy my grandson's guardians. There's a hundred thousand acres of land hereabout that must come to him. I shall outline in writing the legal steps to be taken to substantiate his claims. Also he will inherit largely from me at my death.'

"Something very like laughter escaped from Mahaffy's lips, with your inopportune mirth! What in God's name have I if I haven't got? Take that from me and what would I be? Why, the very fate I have been fighting with tooth and nail would overwhelm me. I'd sink into unimportance—my unparalleled misfortunes would degrade me to a level with the commonest! No, sir, I've never been without hope, and though I've fallen, I've got up. What Pentress has based on money he stole from me. By God, the days of his profit-taking are at an end! I am going to strip him. And even if I don't live to enjoy what's mine, my grandson shall! He shall wear velvet and a lace collar and ride his pony yet, by God, as a gentleman's grandson should!"

"It sounds well, Price, but where's the money coming from to push a lawsuit?"

"The judge waved this aside."

"The means will be found, Solomon. Our horizon is lifting—I can see it lift! Don't drag me back from the portal of hope! We'll kindle the stuff that comes across the water; I'll warm the cockles of your heart with imported brandy. I carry twenty years' hunger and thirst under my waistcoat and I'll feed and drink like a gentleman!"

"The judge smashed his almost lips in a ecstasy of enjoyment, and dropping down before the table which served him as a desk, seized a pen."

"It's good enough to think about, Price," admitted Mahaffy grudgingly.

"It's better to do; and if anything happens to me the papers I am going to leave will tell you how it's to be done. Man, there's a million of money in sight, and we've got to get it and spend it and enjoy it! None of your scale-company, and feasting, and refined surroundings!"

"And are you going to meet Pentress in the morning?" asked Mahaffy. "I suppose there's no way of avoiding that?"

"Avoiding it?" almost shouted the judge. "For what have I been living? I shall meet him, let the consequences be what they may. Tonight when I have reduced certain facts to writing I shall join you at Belle Plain. The strange and melancholy history of my life I shall place in your hands for safe keeping. In the morning I can be driven back to Boggs."

"And you will go there without a second?"

"If necessary, yes."

"I declare, Price, you are hardly fit to be at large! Why, you act as if you were a child of five. There's Nancy—there's Cavendish!"

The judge gave him an indulgent but superior smile.

"Two very worthy men, but I go to Boggs attended by a gentleman or I go there alone. I am aware of your prejudices, Solomon; otherwise I might ask this favor of you."

Mr. Mahaffy snorted loudly and turned to the door, for Nancy and Cavendish were now approaching the

house, the latter with a meal sack slung over his shoulder.

"Here, Solomon, take one of my pistols," urged the judge hastily. "You may need it at Belle Plain. Good-by, and God bless you both."

Just where he had parted from the judge, Carrington sat his horse, his brow knit and his eyes turned in the direction of the path. He was on his way to a plantation below Girard, the owner of which had recently imported a pack of bloodhounds; but this unexpected encounter with Ware had affected him strangely. He still heard Tom's stammering speech, he was still seeing his ghastly face, and he had come upon him with startling suddenness. He had chanced to look back over his shoulder and when he faced about there had been the planter within a hundred yards of him.

Presently Carrington's glance ceased to follow the windings of the path. He stared down at the gray dust and saw the trail left by Hues and his party.

For a moment he hesitated; if the dogs were to be used with any hope of success he had no time to spare, and this was the merest suspicion, illogical conjecture, based on nothing beyond his distrust of Ware. In the end he sprang from the saddle and leading his horse into the woods, tied it to a sapling.

A hurried investigation told him that five men had ridden in and out of that path. Of the five, all coming from the south, four had turned south again, but the fifth man—Ware, in other words—had gone north. He weighed the possible significance of these facts.

"I am only wasting time!" he confessed reluctantly, and was on the point of turning away, when, on the very edge of the road and just where the dust yielded to the hard clay of the path, his glance fell on the foot of a man and his hand on the foot of Tom's trobbing of his heart quickened curiously.

"Betty!" The word leaped from his lips.

That small foot had left but one impression. There were other signs, however, that claimed his attention; namely, the boot-prints of Slosson and his men; and he made the inevitable discovery that these tracks were all confined to the one spot. They began suddenly and as suddenly ceased, yet there was no mystery about these; he had the marks of the wheels to help him to a sure conclusion. A carriage had turned just here, several men had alighted, they had with them a child or a woman. Either they had re-entered the carriage and driven back as they had come, or they had gone toward the river. He felt the soul within him turn sick.

He stole along the path; the terror of the river was ever in his thoughts, and the specter of his fear seemed to fit before him and lure him on. Presently he caught his first glimpse of the bayou and his leg shook under him; but the path wound deeper still into what appeared to be an untouched solitude, wound on between the crowding tree forms, a little back from the shore, with an intervening tangle of vines and bushes. He scanned this closely as he hurried forward, scarcely conscious that he was searching for some trampled space at the water's edge; but the verdant wall preserved its unbroken continuity, and twenty minutes later he came to the sight of the Hicks' clearing and the keel boat, where it rested against the bank.

A little farther on he found the spot where Slosson had launched the skiff the night before. The keel of his boat had cut deep into the slippery clay; more than this, the impress of the small shoe was repeated here, and just beside it was the print of a child's bare foot.

He no longer doubted that Betty and Hannibal had been taken across the bayou to the cabin, and he ran back up the path the distance of a mile and plunged into the woods on his right, his purpose being to pass around the head of the expanse of sluggish water to a point from which he could later approach the cabin.

But the cabin proved to be better defended than he had foreseen; and as he advanced the difficulties of the task he had set himself became almost insurmountable; yet sustained as he was by his imperative need, he tore his way through the labyrinth of trailing vines, or floundered across acroft patches of green slime and black mud, which at each step threatened to engulf him. In their treacherous depths, until at the end of an hour he gained the southern side of the clearing and a firmer footing within the shelter of one of the outbuildings, which here he stopped and took stock of his surroundings. The two or three buildings Mr. Hicks had erected stood midway of the clearing and were modest improvements adapted to their owner's somewhat flippant pursuit of agriculture. While Carrington was still staring about him, the cabin door swung open and a woman stepped forth. It was the girl, Bess. She went to a corner of the building and called loudly:

"Joe! Oh, Joe!"

Carrington glanced in the direction of the keel boat and an instant later saw Slosson clamber over its side. The tavern-keeper crossed to the cabin, where he was met by Bess, who placed in his hands what seemed to be a wooden bowl. "What is this slouching about?" he entered. Ten or fifteen minutes slipped by, then he came from the shed and after securing the door, returned to the cabin. He was again met by Bess, who relieved him of the bowl; they exchanged a few words and Slosson walked away and afterward disappeared over the side of the keel boat.

This much was clear to the Kentuckian; food had been taken to some one in the shed—to Betty and the boy—more likely to Betty.

He waited now for the night to

come, and to him the sun seemed fixed in the heavens. At Belle Plain Tom Ware was watching it with a shuddering sense of the swiftness of its flight. But at last the tops of the tall trees obscured it; it sank quickly then and blazed a ball of fire beyond the Arkansas coast while its dying glory spread across the heavens, turning the flanks of the gray clouds to violet and purple and gold.

With the first approach of darkness Carrington made his way to the shed. Hidden in the shadow he paused to listen, and fancied he heard difficult breathing from within. The door creaked hideously on its wooden hinges when he pushed it open, but as it swung back the last remnant of the day's light showed him some dark object lying prone on the dirt floor. He reached down and his hand rested on a man's booted foot.

"George!" Carrington spoke softly, but the man on the floor gave no sign, but he heard, and Carrington's questioning touch stealing higher he found that George—if it were George—was lying on his side with his arms and legs securely bound. Thinking of the Kentuckian's shock him gently to arouse him.

"George?" he repeated, still bending above him. This time an inarticulate murmur answered him. At the same instant the woolly head of the negro came under his fingers and he discovered the reason of his silence. He was as securely gagged as he was bound.

"Listen, George—it's Carrington—I am going to take off this rag, but don't speak above a whisper—they may hear us!" And he cut the cords that held the gag in place.

"How yo' get her, Mas'r Ca'ington?" asked the negro guardedly, as the rag fell away.

"Around the head of the bayou."

"Lawd!" exclaimed George, in a tone of wonder.

"Where's Miss Betty?"

"She's in the cabin yonder—fo' the love of God, do these here other ropes with yo' knife, Mas'r Ca'ington—'em perishin' with 'em!" Carrington did as he asked, and groaning, George sat erect. "I'm like I was gone to sleep all over," he said.

"You'll feel better in a moment. Tell me about Miss Malroy."

"They done fetched us here last night. I was drivin' Missy into Raleigh—her and young Mas'r Hazard—when 'em men stop us in the road."

"Who were they, do you know?" asked Carrington.

"Lawd—what's that?"

Carrington, knife in hand swung about on his heel. A lantern's light flashed suddenly in his face and Bess Hicks, with a low startled cry, pressed her lips, paused in the doorway. Springing forward, Carrington seized her by the wrist.

"Hush!" he grimly warned.

"What are you doin' here?" demanded the girl, as she endeavored to shake off his hand, but Carrington drew her into the shed, and closing the door, set his back against it. There was a brief silence during which Bess regarded the Kentuckian with a kind of stolid fearfulness. She was the first to speak.

"I reckon you-all have come after Miss Malroy," she observed quietly.

"Then you reckon right," answered Carrington. The girl studied him from beneath her level brows.

"You-all think you can take her away from here," she speculated. "I ain't afraid of yo' knife—you-all might use it fast enough on a man, but not on me. I'll help you," she added. Carrington gave her an incredulous glance.

"You don't believe me? What's to hinder my calling for help? That would fetch me men up from the keel boat!"

"Don't be too sure of that," said Carrington sternly. The girl met the menace of his words with soft, full-throated laughter.

"Why, yo' hand's shakin' now, Mr. Carrington!"

"You know me?"

"Yes, I seen you once at Boggs." She made an impatient movement. "You can't do nothing against them. You ain't no help you. Miss Malroy's to go down river tonight; they're only waiting fo' a pilot—you-all got to act quick!"

Carrington hesitated.

"Why do you want Miss Malroy to escape?" she asked.

The girl's mood changed abruptly. She scowled at him.

"I reckon that's private matter. Ain't it enough fo' you-all to know that I do? I'm showing how it can be done. Them four men on the keel boat are strangers in these parts, they're waiting fo' a pilot, but they don't know who'll be. I've heard you-all was a river man; what's to hinder yo' taking the pilot's place? Looks like yo' was willing to risk yo' life fo' Miss Malroy or you wouldn't be here now, ready," said Carrington, his hand on the door.

"No, you ain't—jest yet," interposed the tavern-keeper sprang ashore and mounted the bank, where his slouching figure quickly lost itself in the night.

(To be Continued.)

—Union, February 21: Under the new county government law as passed by the present legislature, the offices of county supervisor and township commissioners are abolished, and instead there are three officials, who will be known as county commissioners. These county commissioners, according to the bill, which was introduced by Senator Mabeth Young, will draw a salary of \$600 a year, one of whom shall act as chairman and they shall elect a clerk, who will also draw a salary of \$600 a year, and either the clerk or one of the officials will have to be in the office of the board at the court house every day except Sunday to transact business between the hours of 9 a. m. and 5 p. m., the commissioners to meet at the board every Monday and Saturday to transact the county business, except an hour for noon meals. According to the provision of the law one of the commissioners shall have special charge of supervising the overseer, guard of the county chaingang and road working forces, another shall have charge of the bridges, drains and things of like character, and the third shall remain in the office with the clerk. Absence from any of the regular meetings of the board without good and sufficient excuse shall cause \$5 to be deducted from the salary for each absence. The term of office shall be two years or until their successors are qualified.

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Miscellaneous Reading.

ENGLAND TO BLAME.

Shuster Talks Bitterly of the Trouble in Persia.

New York, February 23.—The arrival yesterday of W. Morgan Shuster, whom Russia unseated as treasurer general of Persia, brought to a close for good a noted chapter of his life.

"I couldn't have made a different decision," said he, "but I am sorry I had to leave Persia. There was a chance there to do such work as Cromer did in Egypt. It meant the service of a lifetime."

From the typewritten statement he gave out at quarantine and from his perfectly free conversation with the reporter as the big liner crept up the bay it was apparent that Mr. Shuster reserved most of his bitterness for the role England had played in the international drama which centered about him in Teheran. He had expected nothing better from Russia, but words almost failed him in describing his conceptions of the British government's acquiescence in Russian aggression. On the other hand, his cordial reception in London had confirmed him in his "original belief that the British people have little sympathy with the immoral and disastrous foreign policy of their present government."

At another point he said: "The British government will submit to anything Russia wants. I talked to prominent members of parliament in London, to big business men and others, and I did not find a single one who was not heartily sick and ashamed of Sir Edward Grey's foreign policy."

"By why should England be afraid of a discredited power like Russia?" he was asked.

"I will answer that by asking another question: Why is England a craven before Germany? My eyes have been opened in England. Every Englishman walks to his office with his knees knocking together when he hears the name of Germany mentioned. It is not a very flattering thing to the Anglo-Saxon."

He made this formal arraignment of the English foreign policy: "England dealt civilization and progress a foul blow when she set to work to create a strong Russia after the Japanese war. The British people are beginning to realize this now, and they will see it still more clearly in the next ten years."

In his endeavor to outpoint Germany in the European diplomatic game, the British foreign office has paid a stiff price for something which will never be delivered—Russian support against Germany. The eyes of the British foreign secretary have been so glued on Europe for the last few years that he has completely overlooked the British empire in Asia. One result is that there is no longer a buffer state between Russia and the Indo-Persian frontier.

Another is that 72,000,000 Mahomedans in India have so far changed their feelings toward England as to no longer be an offset to Hindu agitations. Another result is that England has lost caste as the friend and helper of struggling peoples, and this outward manifestation of national prestige is being felt among all classes of the British people themselves.

British commerce in Persia, of course, suffers immensely. The Manchester merchants can testify on this point. To say nothing of English bankers, for the policy recently pursued by the British government in Persia has not even been the sordid excuse of self-profit.

It has been neither moral nor successful, and even practical men will admit that in statesmanship every act, every policy must be either moral or successful. From Russia no one who knew her expected much else, although her callousness to the first principles of fairness and decency has surprised even her friends.

The reactionary St. Petersburg cabinet, which is now in full control, has played fast and loose with every nation except Germany, and with her behind England's back. Germany will, in due course, build an extension of the Bagdad railway into Teheran and another branch through Russia or the Persian Gulf to Persia.

Russia herself will be on the Persian Gulf in another ten years, for England has shown too plainly that she cannot stop her. Kipling's bear who walks like a man will then be a stern reality for the Indian government.

I trust that there will be a loud laugh the next time the czar calls a peace conference. There will certainly be twisted smiles on the faces of the Persians.

THE SOUTH POLE.

London is On the Lookout for News of Its Discovery.

"South Pole Discovered."

Any day now, says a London letter, that message may be flashed over the cables and telegraph wires that encircle the globe. The sender may be an Englishman, a Norwegian, an Australian or a Japanese. Five expeditions, starting the summer of 1906, from many different countries, have been battling against the cold and ice of the Antarctic for more than two years, and the first of them is expected to return in touch with the "outside world" about this time.

Stewart's Island, south of New Zealand, is the first habitation that will be reached by the explorers on their return trip. A telephone connects the island with New Zealand, from there the cablegrams will be sent out.

In this five-cornered competition for the sake of science, and incidental fame, the most celebrated contestants are Capt. Robert Fulton Scott of England, and Capt. Ronald Amundsen of Norway. The Australian, Mawson, is leading a third band, and the Japanese and German expeditions complete the entry list in the unprecedented race.

Never before have so many expeditions been in either polar region at one time.

"Competition is called the life of trade," said Sir Ernest Shackleton today, "and I believe that the spirit of the contest must have exercised such an influence over the rival expeditions as to spur at least one of them to achieve the goal." Sir Ernest is the English Antarctic explorer, who, in 1909, attained the "farthest south," getting to latitude 88 degrees 23 minutes south, or within 110 miles of the pole.

"My national pride makes me hope that Scott will beat out Amundsen," he said, "and I have such confidence in him that I believe he has reached the pole whether Amundsen has or not. I know so little about the German, Australian and Japanese expeditions that I cannot justly speculate on their success, but I do not believe personally that any of them has done as well as either Scott or Amundsen."

Captain Scott left England on June 10, 1910, waving good-bye to his wife and baby at Cardiff, Wales. He had farwelled to civilization at Christ Church, New Zealand, on November 29, and since then nothing has been heard from him. His ship, the whaler, Terra Nova, has returned to New Zealand, and is awaiting the telephoned command to go to Stewart's Island and get her master and pilot, as well as his brave companions.

The Scott expedition is the best equipped that ever entered the South Pole region. Fitted out by a government appropriation of \$100,000 advanced to by a popular subscription of the same amount, everything—that could possibly be of use was purchased. Over a hundred of the best Siberian sledge dogs, as well as three motor-sledges form part of the equipment, and in the party are several of the foremost scientists, geographers and astronomers in Britain.

According to the plans of Captain Scott, outlined before the departure on his polar quest, he would establish two bases on the Antarctic ice. The first, one at Mac Mudo bay, the other at King Edward's Land, or some 450 miles apart, to be, if possible, connected by wireless telegraphy. Each of these bases would be about 850 statute miles from the South Pole and by means of them both ends of the barrier would be explored. It is known that the Mac Mudo bay post was securely established by Captain Scott, the news having been brought back to New Zealand by his ship, the Terra Nova.

How much more has been accomplished by the Englishman and his party, is largely a matter of conjecture. From the Mac Mudo bay base, over the 850 miles to the pole, the real work of the expedition had to be done. The explorer declared he expected to take from 120 to 150 days to make the journey to and from the base.

Sentiment plays a part in the plans of Captain Scott, who said before leaving that he would have white men with him at the pole. He commented on the fact that Commander Peary had a single negro with him when he reached the North Pole. Scott declared that he would have sixteen men with him on his final dash, including the scientists of the party.

So well provisioned is the Scott expedition that it would not be necessary for him to abandon the attempt in the event that his first dash did not meet with success. He could return to the base of supplies, rest during the "off-season" and return to the task refreshed during the next six months.

"In fact we shall jolly well stop there till the thing is done," said Captain Scott just before he cut loose from civilization.

Captain Scott is a veteran explorer, having attained great success on his memorable invasion of the Antarctic in 1906-04, when he reached the then "farthest south," getting to latitude 16 minutes 33 seconds south, or within 150 miles of the pole. Shackleton's expedition of 1909 was the only one that has surpassed this.

The Norwegian, Captain Amundsen, is experiencing his first visit to the Antarctic. His previous fame was achieved on the other end of the world—the north. One of his greatest accomplishments was the negotiation of the great Northwest Passage. Captain Amundsen's ship, the Fram, is also at New Zealand, "standing hard by," ready to take her skipper aboard when he returns from the frozen Antarctic.

Had Amundsen and Scott departed only a few months sooner, they would be in ignorance of the fact that the other pole has been discovered. However, they received the news just shortly before cutting loose from civilization, and both declared that the knowledge would act as an incentive to greater effort. In the event that one of them has succeeded, there does not remain a single extremity of the earth that has not been explored by civilized man.

In some ways the conquest of the South Pole is easier and in some ways harder than that of the North Pole. The North Polar journey was made over sea; that to the South Pole is over land, and, therefore, the southern explorers are not subjected to open leads, the sudden dangers of

PROPHECY FOR THE KAISER.

What Does the Year 1913 Hold for the German Empire?

The recent Socialist victories in Germany have revived the singular story of Emperor William I. and the fortune teller, which at the time of the old kaiser's death was whispered with awe by the superstitious. There is now only one part of the prophecy unfulfilled, and the date for that is set for next year.

The story goes that in 1849 the crown prince, who was later to become the first emperor, found himself in Baden, and heard so many stories of an old fortune teller that he was induced to go to see her. The sorceress was seated at a table on which was spread various bits of wood bearing figures. Her custom was to touch these pieces of wood with a pencil, guided, as she assured her clients, entirely by inspiration. Combined in some way these figures gave you the most exact information as to the future.

"In what year will the German empire be founded?" first asked the prince, whose head was already full of his great ambition.

The old woman took up the figures 1, 8, 4 and 9 and formed the number 1849 for the current year. Then she touched various other figures and placed them one by one in a column under the first line. The prince said when she had finished that the date 1849 appeared twice, in different forms, thus:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |

"Add them," said the fortune teller, "and you will find the year in which the German empire will be founded."

The prince did as he was told and found the total to be 1871.

"When will I die?" he asked next.

The sorceress made the date 1871, and then began touching the figures again. She touched four and arranged them as she had done in the first instance. Prince William saw that she had again repeated the date.

"Add them," she said: "they will give the year in which you will die."

They came to 1888.

The prince put his third and last question:

"When will the German empire fall?"

A third time the woman fixed the last date and added four figures. When she had finished the prince saw:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 |

"Add them and you have the date of the fall of the German empire."

They came to 1913.

This old story was told when William I. died in 1888, after being crowned emperor in 1871. Twice have the old witch's figures told the truth. Superstitious folk look at the election returns and wonder what will be the empire's fortunes in 1913.—New York Times.

A Good Law.

The bill introduced by Senator Chestnut of Beaufort to make a year's residence in the state a prerequisite to the right to vote in a primary passed both houses, and as an act went up to the governor, who vetoed it. The general assembly over-rode the governor's veto, and the act is now law. Its text is as follows:

"Section 1. That hereafter only citizens of this state, or other citizens of the United States, who shall have been residents of this state for at least one year, with the bona fide intention of becoming citizens of this state, shall be entitled or allowed to vote in any primary election, state, county or municipal in this state, and that upon a person offering to vote and his vote being challenged for non-citizenship, the challenge being accompanied by an affidavit of some registered voter, made of his own knowledge, or on information and belief, to the effect that such person is not a citizen as defined above, he shall not be allowed to vote, unless he file with the managers at the polls his affidavit that he is a citizen, specifying whether born or naturalized, and if naturalized, exhibit to the managers his certificate of naturalization."

Better to be upright with poverty than depraved with an abundance.

opening ice, or the heart-breaking labor which made it necessary to travel six miles in order to cover one mile of distance. The southern journey is on solid ground and straight ahead.

But the Antarctic continent is so mountainous and a "dash over ice-covered mountains presents difficulties not met in the travel over an ice-covered ocean. The chief difficulty, however, is the terrific cold, the icy winds, and the inconceivable blizzards that result from the mountain formation of the Antarctic continent. In the north, while it never becomes really mild, there are moderations of temperature. In the south the deadliest cold prevails in the height of summer.

In the far south there are no Esquimaux; no kind of man could make his habitat there. But in the dim and distant past, ages ago, according to the theories of scientists some race of human beings populated the continent. If their surmise is correct, the discovery of the South Pole may be of greater importance to science than the North Pole, because of new facts that may eventually be shed on the evolution of mankind, in event that relics of these mythical prehistoric men can be found by the scientists accompanying the expedition.

MARSHAL MICHEL NEY.

Famous Soldier Was Not Shot As History Asserts.

Rev. Dr. J. Mack of Fort Mill, writes the Daily Mail: "You are right in affirming that Ney was not executed in France and that his escape from death was due to the fact that he was prominent as a Mason. In 1831 the St. Louis Republican gave this fact:

"During the reign of Louis Philippe, Mr. George C. Melody, of St. Louis, spent several weeks in Paris. Some years before this, while the king was in exile, he had been shown many courtesies by Mr. Melody in St. Louis, and it was now the king's time to extend to Mr. Melody many tokens of friendship.

In the course of a confidential conversation Mr. Melody asked the king this question: 'Is the statement in history that Marshal Ney was shot true?' The king replied, 'Mr. Melody, I know that you are one of the highest Masons in America. I am known as one of the most exalted Masons in Europe. Marshal Ney held a position among Masons equal to either of us. The prisons were full of men condemned to be shot. These men were daily marched out to meet their fate. Some other man may have filled the grave intended for Marshal Ney.' To this Mr. Melody replied very quietly, 'May I please your majesty, Marshal Ney was not shot.'

"Ney told a minister in South Carolina how he escaped," Rev. Basil G. Jones states: "He fell by preconcerted arrangement as if he was dead, was taken up, disguised, and finally escaped to the United States; the Ancient Fraternity aiding in his escape from the first."

"Ney was one of the most exalted Masons in Europe. Wellington was the same in England and Louis Philippe the same in France. Wellington admired Ney and 'thinks are French records that prove the intercession of the iron duke for the bravest of the brave.' Peter Stuart Ney, the Carolina school teacher, was a Mason and Masons know why his life was spared. 'There is life out of death for the widow's son.'—Anderson Daily Mail.

A Dynamite Freak—"Not long ago," said W. F. Kavanagh, a Leadville, (Col.) mining man, "there occurred to me one of those freaks of dynamite in one of the deep shafts of the Carbonate Camp that might not happen again in a thousand years.

"The men at the bottom of a shaft had put in five four-and-a-half-foot bolts which were to be exploded with dynamite cartridges one and one-half inches in diameter. As is usual in such cases, they gave the customary signals to the hoisting engineer, and, after lighting the fuse, stepped on the ball of the bucket and started upward. When about ten feet from the bottom one of the men had an epileptic seizure and toppled out. His partner tried to reach the bell cord to stop the bucket, but it was too late. The bell cord could be reached only from the lower part of the shaft. When the engineer saw only one man come through the collar of the shaft at the surface his face blanched.

"Where's Jim?" he asked excitedly. "Quickly the miner related the circumstances that surrounded the blood-bath. From contact with the sharp rock in an effort to reach the bell cord before the bucket entered the timbering. The men, their hearts beating wildly, listened in suspense for the five explosions of dynamite that would tear their unfortunate comrade to pieces. They heard five faint reports, one after the other. They were simply the detonating caps of the cartridges. Every one of the charges of dynamite had missed fire—failed to explode. I have known of one or even three shots out of the five missing, but I don't believe there is another case on record where five missed as providentially as in this case."—New York Press.

—Columbia, February 23: The committee consisting of Senator Crosson and Messrs. Daniel and Bowman, reported that it had a proposition from Capt. J. M. Graham, on which he would abandon his present contract for convict labor at the hostry mill. Capt. Graham made two propositions: First, "With a cash payment of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) and be allowed to work the contract as now in force for the space of six (6) months from the first day of March, 1912 to August 31, 1912, if so much be necessary, for the purpose of making up my present contracts of goods sold and yarn bought." Proposition 2, "For a title deed to the old dispensary property, situated in the city of Columbia, and be allowed the same time as above for winding up present contracts, if so much be necessary. Under either of the above propositions I agree to work the labor under the same terms as under the present contract. (Signed) J. M. Graham."

Fools try to convince a woman; wise men persuade her.