

(Continued from page 6.)

darkness they could yet see little. They were upon the opposite side from the town, with no gleam of lights visible, prairie and sky blending together into spectral dimness, with no sound audible but the continued quarrel in the front room of the jail. Keith crept along to the end of the building from where he could perceive the lights of the town twinkling dimly through the intense blackness. Evidently the regular evening saturnalia had not yet begun, although there was already semblance of life about the numerous saloons, and an occasional shout punctured the stillness. A dog howled in the distance, and the pounding of swift hoofs along the trail told of fresh arrivals. An hour later and the single street of Carson City would be alive with humanity, eager for any excitement, ready for any wild orgy, if only once turned loose. That it would be turned loose, and also directed, the man lying on his face in the grass felt fully assured. He smiled grimly, wishing he might behold "Black Bart's" face when he should discover the flight of his intended victims. But there was no time to lose; every moment gained, added to their chance of safety.

"Are those horses tied there by the blacksmith's shop?" he asked, pointing.

The negro stared in the direction indicated, confused by the shadows thrown by the dim lights.

"I reck'n dey am, Massa Jack; I done make out fo'."

"Then two of them must belong to us; come on, boy."

He ran forward, crouching behind every chance cover, and keeping well back behind the line of shadows. A slight depression in the prairie helped conceal their movements, and neither spoke until they were crouching together beside the wall of the shop. Then Neb, teeth chattering, managed to blurt out:

"Fo' de Lawd's sake, yer don't actually mean ter steal dem hosses?"

Keith glanced about at the other's dim, black shadow.

"Sure not; just borrow 'em."

"But dat's a hangin' job in dis yere country, Massa Jack."

"Sure it is if they catch us. But we'd be strung up anyway, and we can't be hung twice. Besides there is a chance for us with the ponies, and none at all without. An hour's start in the saddle, Neb, and this bunch back here will never even find our trail; I pledge you that. Come, boy, stay close with me."

It was the quiet, confident voice of assured command, of one satisfied with his plans, and the obedient negro, breathing hard, never dreamed of opposition; all instinct of slavery held him to the dominion of this white master. Keith leaned forward, staring at the string of deserted ponies tied to the rail. Success depended on his choice, and he could judge very little in that darkness. Men were struggling in along the street to their right, on foot and horseback, and the saloon on the corner was being well patronized. A glow of light streamed forth from its windows, and there was the sound of many voices. But this narrow alley was deserted, and black. The fugitive stepped boldly forward, afraid that otherwise he might startle the ponies and thus create an alarm. Guided by a horseman's instinct he swiftly ran his hands over the animals and made quick selection.

"Here, Neb, take this fellow; lead him quietly down the bank; and he trust the loosened rein into the black's hand."

An instant later he had chosen his own mount, and was silently moving in the same direction, although the night there was so black that the obedient negro had already entirely vanished. The slope of the land not only helped cover their movements, but also rendered it easy for them to find one another. Fully a hundred yards westward they met, where a gully led directly down toward the river. There was no longer need for remaining on foot, as they were a sufficient distance away from the little town to feel no fear of being discovered, unless by some drunken straggler. At Keith's command the negro climbed into his saddle. Both ponies were restive, but not vicious, and after a plunge or two, to test their new masters, came easily under control. Keith led the way, moving straight down the gully, which gradually deepened, burying them in its black heart, until it finally debouched onto the river sands. The riotous noises of the drunken town died slowly away behind, the night silent and dark. The two riders could scarcely distinguish one another as they drew rein at the edge of the water. To the southward there gleamed a cluster of lights, marking the position of the camp of regulars. Keith drove his horse deeper into the stream and headed northward, the negro following like a shadow.

There was a ford directly opposite the cantonment, and another, more dangerous, and known to only a few, three miles farther up stream. Keeping well within the water's edge, so as to thus completely obscure their trail, yet not daring to venture deep for fear of striking quicksand, the plainsman set his pony struggling forward, until the dim outline of the bank at his right rendered him confident that they had attained the proper point for crossing. He had been that way only once before, and realized the danger of attempting passage in such darkness, but urgent need drove him forward.

"Follow me just as close as you can, boy," he said sternly, "and keep both your feet out of the stirrups. If your horse goes down hang to his tail, and let him swim out."

There was little enough to guide by, merely a single faint star peering out from a rift of the clouds, but Keith's remembrance was that the ford led straight out to the center of the stream, and then veered slightly toward the right. He knew the sand

ridge was only used by horsemen, not being wide enough for the safe passage



"Do You See That Straight Ahead of You?"

age of wagons, but the depth of the water on either side as entirely problematical. He was taking a big chance, yet dare not wait for daylight. Summoning all his nerve and alertness, he urged his horse slowly forward, the intelligent animal seemingly comprehending the situation, and feeling carefully for footing. The actions of the animal gave the rider greater confidence, and he loosened his grip on the rein, leaving the pony's instinct to control. The latter fairly crept forward, testing the sand before resting any weight upon the hoof, the negro's mount following closely. The water was unusually high, and as they advanced it bore down against them in considerable volume; then, as they veered to the right, they were compelled to push directly against its weight in struggling toward shore. The men could see nothing but this solid sheet of water rushing down toward them from out the black void, and then vanishing below. Once Keith's horse half fell, plunging nose under, yet gaining foothold again before the rider had deserted his saddle. A dim darkness ahead already revealed the nearness of the southern bank, when Neb's pony went down suddenly, swept fairly off its legs by some fierce eddy in the stream. Keith heard the negro's guttural cry, and caught a glimpse of him as the two were sent whirling down. The coiled rope of the lariat, grasped in his right hand, was hurled forth like a shot, but came back empty. Not another sound reached him; his own horse went steadily on, feeling his way, until he was nose against the bank, with water merely rippling about his ankles. Keith driving feet again into the stirrups headed him down stream, wading close in toward the shore, leaning forward over the pommel striving to see through the gloom.

He had no doubt about Neb's pony making land, unless struck by some driftwood, or borne to the center of the stream by the shifting force of the current. But if Neb had failed to retain his grip he might have been sucked under by the surge of waters. A hundred yards below he found them, dripping and weak from the struggle, yet otherwise unharmed. There were no words spoken, but the black and white hands clasped silently, and then Neb crept back into the saddle, shivering in his wet clothes as the cool night wind swept against him. Keeping close in toward shore, yet far enough out so that the water would hide their trail, the fugitives toiled steadily up stream, guided only by the black outline of the low bank upon their left.

CHAPTER VII.

In the Sand Desert.

Suddenly Keith halted, bringing his pony's head sharply about, so that the two faced one another. The wind was rising, hurling clouds of sand into their eyes, and the plainsman held one hand before his face.

"There's no need of keeping up a water trail any longer," he said quietly. "By all the signs we're in for a sand storm by daylight, and that will cover our tracks so the devil himself couldn't follow them. Got a water bag on your saddle."

"I reck'n dis am one, sah."

Keith felt of the object Neb held forth.

"Yes, and a big one, too; fill it and strap it on tight; we've got a long, dry ride ahead."

"What' yo' propose goin', Massa Jack?"

"To the 'Bar X' on the Canadian. I've worked with that outfit. They'll give us whatever we need, and ask no questions; I don't know of anything in between. It's going to be a hard ride, boy, and mighty little to eat except what I saved from supper."

"How far am it to dis yere 'Bar X'?"

"A hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies, and sand all the way, except for the valley of Salt Fork. Come on now, and keep close, for it's easy to get lost in these sand hills."

Keith had ridden that hundred and fifty miles of sandy desolation before, but had never been called upon to make such a journey as this proved to be. He knew there was little to fear from human enemies, for they were riding far enough east of the Santa Fe trail to be out of the path of raiding parties, while this desert country was shunned by Indian hunters. It consisted of sand hill after sand hill, a drear waterless waste, where nothing grew, and mid the dread sameness of which a traveler could only find passage by the guidance of stars at night or the blazing sun by day. To the eye mile after mile appeared exactly alike, with nothing whatever to distinguish either distance or direction—the same drifting ridges of sand stretching forth in every direction, no

summit higher than another, no semblance of green shrubbery, or silver sheen of running water anywhere to break the dull monotony—a vast sandy plain, devoid of life, extending to the horizon, overhung by a barren sky.

(To be Continued.)

In the Police Court.

There were quite a number of cases tried in the Police Court Tuesday and Wednesday.

David Wilder and James Wilder were tried for vagrancy. Both pleaded guilty and were each sentenced to pay fines of \$5.00 or 30 days.

Daniel Gass, for fast driving, was fined \$5.00 or 10 days.

Richard Bossard, for violation of the hack ordinance, was fined \$3.00 or 6 days.

Richard Bossard, fast driving, was given a sentence of \$5 or 10 days.

Nathan Williams, reckless driving, \$5.00 or 10 days.

Anderson Rowe left an obstruction on the sidewalk and did not put a light there to show that the obstruction was there. He was given a sentence of \$5.00 or 10 days.

Harvey Johnson, one of the negroes who escaped several days ago when a raid was made on them when they were playing skin, was tried for gambling and sentenced to pay a fine of \$25 or to serve 30 days.

Augustus Frierson, for gambling at the same time, was given \$20 or 30 days.

Frank James, non-payment of contract painter's license, \$7.50 or 15 days.

Ansel Davis, petit larceny, \$25 or 30 days.

Ed Carter, non-payment of contract painter's license, \$7.50 or 15 days.

LaFayette Anderson was tried for gambling. He was represented by Mr. J. H. Clifton. The case, which was referred to a jury, resulted in a mistrial.

Two whiskey cases were set for Friday morning at 10 o'clock.

Excursions Rates Via Southern Railway.

Monteagle and Sewanee, Tenn.

Account Monteagle Bible School and Monteagle Sunday School Institute, tickets will be sold June 30, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, August 11, 12 and 18, 1911, limited to reach original starting point returning not later than September 5th, 1911.

For information as to rates, etc., apply to Ticket Agents or address:

W. E. MCGEE,  
Division Passenger Agent,  
Charleston, S. C.  
J. L. MEEK,  
Asst. General Passenger Agent,  
Atlanta, Ga.

New South African Industry.

Four whaling vessels which are being fitted out at Cape Town will give South Africa a new industry.

Life.

Life is just the prospect of one summer vacation after another.—Atlanta Journal.

Natural Inference.

A New York newspaper chronicles the arrival in that city of an American boy who speaks no English. It is inferred that the little chap converses habitually in the baseball dialect.

Cocoon Culture.

Eight years are required to bring the average cocoon tree into bearing. There are usually 60 or 70 trees to the acre and the profits from cocoon culture are usually good.

Sympathy for the Little Folk.

Regardless of the duties which crowd into your busy day cultivate sympathy for the little folks—the trivial hurt will be forgotten in your care and the imaginary wrong of school hours will be dimmed by your attention and gracious word of encouragement.

Important Alaskan Industry.

Alaska's fishing industry, next in importance to mining, gives employment to 12,588 persons, of whom 2,823 are natives. In the last five years the territory has sent us a wealth of \$43,000,000 in salmon alone. The total output of fish in 1910 was worth \$11,181,388.

Frightened to Death.

A man died at Hanley, England, under curious circumstances lately. While a boiler was being stocked at the Deep Pit, two loud explosions took place. They were caused by the automatic opening of a valve, but Samuel Raybould, one of the stokers, exclaimed: "That's frightened me to death," and, falling, he instantly expired.

Fashions in Bulgaria.

Bulgaria believes in fringes, and they are over all with the rare exceptions when the undershirt, always of the best of white linen, may be scalloped at the bottom and even then the fringe effect is used in the over tunic, for the gathering of the many threads suggests to the wearer the numbers of their nation, as is their peculiar red dyed remainder of their blood, and the flowers, and grains, and fruits, embroidered on their gowns represent their industry.

FIRST COTTON BOLLS OPEN.

King Cotton (Planted on March 30 Opening Quite Extensively.

Mayesville, July 24.—The first opened cotton bolls of the season reported for this section, or from anywhere, at least in print, were exhibited today by M. C. Mayes who picked quite a number of fully matured and wide open bolls from a field of King cotton which was planted on March 30. This is considered quite early considering the seasons this year. No doubt, Mr. Mayes will be picking cotton in this field within the next two weeks at the longest. Mr. Mayes was among the first to exhibit cotton blooms this spring. He is one of the most successful planters in this section and one of the leading business men of the town.

THE WINSTON-SALEM SOUTHBOUND.

Important New Railroad Connection Sumter.

On May the 1st the Winston-Salem Southbound railway, ninety miles in length, in connection with the Atlantic Coast Line inaugurated through train service between Winston-Salem, N. C., and Florence, S. C., where close connections are made to and from Sumter and thereby opening up an entirely new territory already having twenty towns and regular stations with this section.

The train leaving Sumter at 7:40 a. m., daily and reaching Florence at 9 a. m. connects with the new train leaving there at 10:00 a. m., daily and arriving Darlington 10:25 a. m., Cheraw 11:43 a. m., Wadesboro, 12:42 noon, Lexington and Winston-Salem, 5:15 p. m.

The return schedule is to leave Winston-Salem at 12:10 noon daily and reach Sumter 9:25 p. m.

W. J. CRAIG,  
Passenger Traffic Manager,  
Wilmington, N. C.

Wanted Many of Them.

A certain small maiden had set her heart on having a turtle for a pet, and, giving her father final instructions as he set off on a southern journey, urged him to "Please be sure to get a great big lady turtle that will born a lot of baby turtles right away."

Bad Record of Baltic Sea.

The Baltic sea has the greatest wreck record of any body of water in the world. It averages one a day all the year round.

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Guaranteed Cure for all

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We have the E. Z. Seal and Mason Jars in all sizes, also extra tops.

Would appreciate your calling on us when in need of these goods.

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W. W. SIBERT.  
8 South Main St. Phone No. 233

**A Standing Case**

The State of South Carolina, }  
County of Sumter. } Court of Common Sense

**THE BANK OF SUMTER**  
Plaintiff.

Versus

Idleness, Sloth, Poverty, Spendthriftiness, Thriftlessness, Loss by Theft, Fire and otherwise, Lack of Business Habits and System, Loss by paying Bills twice, Loss of time in making change, Lack of business Credit and Standing, Loss from lack of Competent business and financial advice, et al.

Defendants.

**BARTOW WALSH, Cashier,**  
PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY

You are one of the Jury to pass on this case. Let the Plaintiff's Attorney argue the case before you. The Defendant's Attorneys are continually at work

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The Sea Side Hotel, Myrtle Beach, is Now Open for the Season.

This well know hotel having been refitted and refurbished, located on one of the finest beaches on the South Atlantic Coast is ready for the summer resorter. It appeals strongly to those wanting a sea side vacation, excellent surf bathing, boating, fishing, etc.

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