

Tallyrand and Firefly

By J. MacNEILL JOHNSON

CHAPTER XVIII.

The boys being now freed from this contraband freight floated leisurely and quietly down the river for some ten miles or more, and lashed the Jacksnapper to a tree on the Kentucky side, went ashore and slept soundly until morning. They cooked and ate breakfast, and commenced their journey home in good earnest, singing as loud as they could shout:

"Down the river row,
Down the river row,
I pull my paddle, and I row my boat,
And its down the river row."

The third day they reach the Shaws of Shawandossa, and surprised the family of Old Horseshoe by their unheralded visit. They were put to it to account for the fact that they had come down the river; but Juda Magruder's presence made it easier for them to explain, and they were soon at home in the new house, which Old Horseshoe, as well as Wenona and Minnehaha were very proud to show, and soon they began to talk about killing wolves.

Old Horseshoe scolded the boys in his old time way of scolding for not letting him know they were coming, for he said, if only he had known, he would have had the wolves baited so they could get another good haul. As it was he was afraid they could not kill many, for he had been catching a few in traps and they were wild and shy. But the next evening the boys went to the pass, and as they had only Old Horseshoe's two guns with them Firfly went with Old Horseshoe to drive up the valley, and Tallyrand and Juda Magruder guarded the pass.

About 10 o'clock a small pack, they thought about a dozen wolves, came through the pass, snapping and snarling, and passed on down the valley. As soon as they were well into the valley Tallyrand and Juda Magruder closed up at the pass and waited.

Pretty soon they heard Old Horseshoe's gun go off, then in five seconds Firefly's smaller gun belched, and these shots were quickly followed by the howling of wounded wolves, and they then heard Old Horseshoe holler as loud as he could, and his deep voice was followed by the eager boyish voice of Firefly. They knew if there were any wolves left unhurt they would soon be at the pass, and they made ready.

In about 3 minutes here came 7 or 8 wolves, running like wildfire, and making straight for the pass. As they arrived at the right place both the boys shot into the pack from the shelving rocks on either side of the pass. They saw they had shot down four; and as the others redoubled their speed into the pass they let drive at them, and got one more, but three got away through the pass.

It turned out that Old Horseshoe and Firfly had killed four and Tallyrand and Juda Magruder had killed five. It was never known which of the boys had killed the fifth wolf in the pass, both boys claimed it; and Old Horseshoe, in order to please them I suspect, said he thought this wolf was shot on both sides.

The next morning when the boys awoke Old Horseshoe was not to be found on the place; but after they had walked around half an hour looking at the new sheep pens with their hundreds of skipping lambs (for Old Horseshoe was fast becoming a sheep farmer) the old man appeared from the direction of Boone's Bluff, with a fine string of creek perch, and a wild turkey gobbler. The fish were cooked in Indian fashion for breakfast, and the Johnnie Cake was of the brownest and best.

The boys wanted to start home that morning to make ready for their visit to Red Cloud, but Old Horseshoe and his wife and daughter would not hear it; for they said the turkey was to be roasted in the embers for dinner. So they waited and watched the process of cooking. Tallyrand had often told Juda Magruder about this wonderful cookery, and he was greatly

interested, and insisted on seeing the whole process.

Tallyrand was a little uneasy when he started to explain to Old Horseshoe about their proposed visit to Red Cloud and War Cry; but the old man showed no resentment, and after smoking in silence said: "Tell Red Cloud, his brother, Old Horseshoe, rich man. Named F. A. Cheval. Live in Red Brick House. All wood painted white. Tell him Mr. F. A. Cheval own 25000 acres of rich land. Two guns—many hundred sheep; wife and daughter ladies—tell him ladies. Tell Red Cloud all this." And Tallyrand and Firefly promised to tell him.

The turkey was eaten as the one we explained before, and Juda Magruder talked about its sweetness for a whole month.

After the dinner was over Tallyrand, Firefly and Juda Magruder bade the family good-bye, and after taking some more messages from Old Horseshoe, Wenona and Minnehaha for the family at Verdun as well as Red Cloud's people, the boys unmoored the Jacksnapper, and sped down the river, rested, fresh and strong, and as they disappeared around a bend in the river their friends at the Shaws of Shawandossa could still hear the notes of the boat song:

"Down the river row,
Down the river row,
I pull my paddle, and I row my boat,
And its down the river row."

Great was their surprise when they reached Mr. Studebolt's Verdun mansion to find Suckie smiling and showing her perfect teeth that were set in gums as blue as a lamprey eel. What could it all mean? Tallyrand would not have been more surprised if he had met Zeke himself, and he could hardly wait for an explanation. But the explanation came, and it was this:

We already know that Mr. Studebolt wrote his overseer to go to Mr. Sessoms, his Memphis factor, and ask him to buy Suckie, but Tallyrand did not know this. Mr. Sessoms had gone to the Mains for this purpose, and there met "Marse Tom," who told him plainly that Zeke was not to be blamed for what he had done, and that he had made up his mind that Zeke's wife should not be left at The Mains to be abused on Zeke's account, and he had thought to carry Suckie with him to Little Rock, only he had no family, and he was afraid he could not find a good home for her. So they began to bargain, did Marse Tom and the factor, Mr. Sessoms, and after much talk about the prices likely young wenches were commanding in the New Orleans market, they agreed on the price of Eleven Hundred Dollars, then Marse Tom added: provided that such transfer is agreeable to Suckie herself.

They sent to the Negro Quarters, and had Suckie brought to the office, which was a low brick building in the large grove near the Mains Mansion. Suckie came, with her heart in her mouth, and seeing Mr. Sessoms, a stranger to her, at once guessed the cause for her being sent for. She did not wait to be told who the stranger was, but clasped her hands and fell on her knees before her young master, and begged piteously not to be sold.

Tom spoke to her in a kind voice, and said: "This is Congressman Studebolt's factor, who lives just across the river at Verdun. Mrs. Studebolt wants to buy you for her house-maid. Don't you want to go? They are kind people."

At first Suckie was afraid to trust her voice for a flood of happiness filled her soul so completely that she was afraid to speak. At last she said: "Oh, Marse Tom! Now Lord bless you. Yes, I does want to go." Without a word Mr. Tom turned to his desk and wrote out a Bill of Sale in the following words:

Hon. Henry Studebolt,
Verdun Plantation, Tennessee.
Bought of Thomas Bolter,

The Mains Plantation, Ark.
One Negro Wench named Suckie,
(wife of Zeke, the runaway) \$1100.00
Received payment from Mr. Sessoms, Factor.
This 1st day of June.

THOMAS BOLTER.
Per Son

Mr. Tom handed this Bill of Sale to Mr. Sessoms, who inspected it critically, and apparently being entirely satisfied, sat down on the opposite side of the desk, and wrote a check for \$1100.00, to which he signed his own name as factor, and handed the check to Mr. Tom; and was thenceforth no more Suckie Bolter, but Suckie Studebolt.

And so the great fear of her being sent to the New Orleans slave market to be sold on the auction block passed out of Suckie's life, and a little bird was singing in her heart. Suckie had been at the Verdun home three days when Tallyrand, Firefly and Juda Magruder reached home, and she was anxious to hear of Zeke, for neither Mrs. Studebolt or Aunt Dinah had even hinted at Zeke's name, and she had too much sense to ask about him. But when Tallyrand came she could not long conceal her desire to know something

of Zeke, and the family played "greeny" and soon gave Tallyrand a chance to talk to her in private.

Suckie listened with wide-opened eyes as Tallyrand told her how Zeke was now in a free country where there were no slaves, and where he would soon be so rich that he could send money enough to buy her out of slavery, and take her to Canada with him. He told her wonderful stories about wild geese and trapping red foxes, etc.

But as soon as Suckie learned that Zeke was out of danger of the law, and assumed an independent air and said: "Dat nigger never did have no sense. Ef he thinks I gwine leave Miss Sallie, and go off wid him he's a fool! Wild Geese nothin', Red Foxes! I should say Red Foxes! Naw Sir! Naw Sir! I stays with Miss Sallie I does."

Tallyrand wondered, and thought he had learned something new about African ingratitude; but he hadn't. And when he told his mother about Suckie's conduct Mrs. Studebolt said, with an amused smile: "She is just a daughter of Eve."

(To be continued)

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JACKSON SPRINGS N

Prohibition agents, Mr. Lemonds, with A. G. McDuff, and the co-operation of the biggest raid ever known section took place last week only regret was their time short. Jumping from one another, several stills were in Moore, Richmond and McDuff counties. About 4000 gallons and several gallons of peas were destroyed. On Wednesday stills were captured in McDuff county, and they wound up on Friday near Eagle Springs capturing a 100 gallon outfit, destroying about 1000 gallons and seizing a mule and a load of sugar. The officers unsuccessful in some of their never came in here without are to be congratulated for excellent work. There is sufficient to convict four men and may be hailed before Federal for sentiment is strong as whiskey man, and people are in relief from the whiskey any lawlessness; and will any more encouragement to off from other sections. I were captured last week and here than ever before. Yet less drinking in this section the days of the government and open bar rooms were brought as low as ten cents Drunkards and even some delirium tremens are making citizens now, and they do their sons to follow in the steps. Is there need for league in the county? It is the recent raid will stop so flow of whiskey coming in dance nights, and a few in this section will break up adding group.

The largest crowd that known attended the dance Saturday night. Quiet in the crowded dance hall, greatest excitement was the men who used their light freely where they thought not be seen, and John B. may get some into trouble.

R. A. Derby will ship carloads of peaches from here the season ends this week. The largest shipper from this point will have to be some change the Norfolk and Southern here to handle the large next year. The Manice orchard have 300 acres of peaches next year. The route of road will have to be changed hope there may be a suit found for a depot site elevation where good switch ties can be found. There routes the railroad can go be very far from the old line.

People rallied strong and register on Saturday for the to call for an issue of \$75 bonds to build school building Mineral Springs township district getting its proportion of the money according to property.

The post office fight is among the Republicans. A crowd that stood the recent election: Col. W. C. Jones and Thomas were placed on the list. Miss Jennie Clark the democrat to stand in the examination placed on the eligible list first examination; and all possesses all the qualifications good postmaster and has business experience she will let the Republicans fight it themselves. Miss Thomas, graduation in the local high school and has many record and attends summer teachers every summer. So popular and will get the endorsement of nearly every patron and be good policy for the Republic give her the \$1200.00 job. Jones is a Spanish-American veteran and may have some in Washington. But it is will drop out of the race for very often calls him away.

Messrs. G. R. Ross, J. A. Campbell are erecting a here, and it is hoped it will be completed by the first of September the cotton will be open. The crop around here is better than ever before. The boll weevil some time ago