



THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

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SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the library of an old worn-out southern plantation, known as the Barony. The place is to be sold, and its history and the owners, the Quintards, is the subject of discussion by Jonathan Crenshaw, a business man, a stranger known as Eldon, and Bob Yancy, a farmer, when Hannibal Wayne Hazard, a mysterious child of the old southern family, makes his appearance. Yancy tells how he adopted the boy, Nathaniel Ferris buys the Barony, but the Quintards deny any knowledge of the boy. Yancy to keep Hannibal, Captain Murrell, a friend of the Quintards, appears and asks questions about the Barony. Trouble at Scratch Hill, where Hannibal is kidnaped by Dave Blount, Captain Murrell's agent, Yancy overtakes Blount, gives him a thrashing and secures the boy. Yancy appears before Judge Price, and is discharged with costs for the plaintiff. Betty Malroy, a friend of the Ferrises, has an encounter with Captain Murrell, who forces his attentions on her, and is rescued by Bruce Carrington. Betty sets out for her Tennessee home. Carrington takes the same stage. Yancy and Hannibal disappear, with Murrell on their trail. Hannibal arrives at the home of Judge Slocum Price. The judge recognizes in the boy, the grandson of an old-time friend. Murrell arrives at Judge's home. Cavendish family on raft rescue Yancy, who is apparently dead. Price breaks jail. Betty and Carrington arrive at Belle Plain. Hannibal's ride discloses some startling things to the judge. Hannibal and Betty meet again. Murrell arrives in Belle Plain. Yancy is playing for big stakes. Yancy awakes from long dreamless sleep on board the raft. Judge Price makes startling discovery in looking up land titles. Charley Norton, a young planter, who assists the judge, is mysteriously assaulted. Norton informs Carrington that Betty has promised to marry him. Norton is mysteriously shot. More light on Murrell's plots. He plans uprising of negroes.

(CHAPTER XVII—Continued.)

"I have never so regarded it, Solomon," said the judge mildly. "I have read a different meaning in the beef and flour and potatoes she's sent here. I expect if the truth could be known to us she is wondering in the midst of her grief why I haven't called, but she'll appreciate the considerate delicacy of a gentleman. I wish it were possible to get cut flowers in this cussed wilderness!"

The judge had been occupied with a simple but ingenious toilet. He had trimmed the frayed skirts of his coat; then, by turning his cuffs inside out and upside down a fresh surface made its first public appearance. Next his shoes had engaged his attention. They might have well discouraged a less resolute and resourceful character, but with the contents of his ink-well he artfully colored his white yarn socks where they showed through the rifts in the leather. This the judge did gaily, now humming a snatch of song, now listening civilly to Mahaffy, now replying with undisturbed cheerfulness. Last of all he clasped his dingy beaver on his head, giving it an indescribably jaunty slant, and stepped to the door.

"Well, wish me luck, Solomon, I'm off—come, Hannibal!" he said.

At heart he cherished small hope of seeing Betty, advantageous as he felt an interview might prove. However, on reaching Belle Plain, he and Hannibal were shown into the cool parlor by little Steve. It was more years than the judge cared to remember since he had put his foot inside such a house, but with true grandeur of soul he rose to the occasion; a sublimated dignity shone from every battered feature, while he fixed little Steve with so fierce a glance that the grin froze on his lips.

"You are to say that Judge Slocum Price presents his compliments and condolences to Miss Malroy—have you got that straight, you pinch of snoot?" he concluded affably. Little Steve, impressed alike by the judge's air of condescension and his easy flow of words, signified that he had. "You may also say that Judge Price's ward, young Master Hazard, presents his compliments and condolences—What more the judge might have said was interrupted by the entrance of Betty, herself.

"My dear young lady—" the judge bowed, then he advanced toward her with the solemnity of carriage and countenance he deemed suitable to the occasion, and her extended hand was engulfed between his two plump palms. He rolled his eyes heavenward. "It's the Lord's to deal with us as his own inscrutable wisdom dictates," he murmured with pious resignation. "We are all poorer, ma'am, that he has died—just as we were richer while he lived!" The rich cadence of the judge's speech fell sonorously on the silence, and that look of horror which had never quite left Betty's eyes since they saw Charley Norton fall, rose out of their clear depths again. The judge, instantly stricken with a sense of the inadequacy of his words, doubled on his spiritual tracks. "In a round-about way, ma'am, we're bound to believe in the omnipotence of Providence—we must think it—though a body might be disposed to hold that west Tennessee had got out of the line of divine supervision recently. Let me lead you to a chair, ma'am!"

Hannibal had slipped to Betty's side and placed his hand in hers. The judge regarded the pair with great benevolence of expression.

"He would come, and I hadn't the heart to forbid it. If I can be of any service to you, ma'am either in the capacity of a friend—or professionally—I trust you will not hesitate to command me—" The judge backed toward the door.

"Did you walk out, Judge Price?" asked Betty kindly.

"Nothing more than a healthful exercise—but we will not detain you, ma'am; the pleasure of seeing you is something we had not reckoned on!" The judge's speech was thick and unctuous with good feeling. He wished that Mahaffy might have been there to note the reserve and dignity of his deportment.

"But you must let me order luncheon for you," said Betty. At least this questionable old man was good to Hannibal.

"I couldn't think of it, ma'am—"

"You'll have a glass of wine, then," urged Betty hospitably. For the moment she had lost sight of what was clearly the judge's besetting sin.

The judge paused abruptly. He endured a moment of agonizing irresolution.

"On the advice of my physician I dare not touch wine—got, ma'am, and liver—but this restriction does not apply to corn whisky—in moderation, and as a tonic—either before meals, immediately after meals or at any time between meals—always keeping in mind the idea of its tonic properties—" The judge seemed to mellow and ripen. This was much better than having the dogs sicked on you! His manner toward Betty became almost fatherly. Poor young thing, so lonely and desolate in the midst of all this splendor—he surreptitiously wiped away a tear, and when little Steve presented himself and was told to bring whisky, audibly smacked his lips—a whole lot better, surely!

"I am sorry you think you must hurry away, Judge Price," said Betty. She still retained the small brown hand Hannibal had thrust into hers.

"The eastern mail gets in today, ma'am, and I have reason to think my share of it will be especially heavy, for it brings the bulk of my professional correspondence." In ten years the judge had received just one communication by mail—a bill which had followed him through four states and seven counties. "I expect my secretary—" boldly fixing Solomon Mahaffy's status, "is already dipping into it, an excellent assistant, ma'am, but literary rather than legal."

Little Steve reappeared bearing a silver tray on which was a decanter and glass.

"Since you insist, ma'am," the judge poured himself a drink, "my best respects—" he bowed profoundly.

"If you are quite willing, Judge, I think I will keep Hannibal. Miss

Bowen, who has been here—since—"

her voice broke suddenly. "I understand, ma'am," said the judge soothingly. He gave her a glance of great concern and turned to Hannibal. "Dear lad, you'll be very quiet and obedient, and do exactly as Miss Malroy says? When shall I come for him, ma'am?"

"I'll send him to you when he is ready to go home. I am thinking of visiting my friends in North Carolina, and I should like to have him spend as much time as possible with me before I start for the east."

It had occurred to Betty that she had done little or nothing for the child; probably this would be her last opportunity.

"The state of the judge's feelings was such that with elaborate absence of mind he poured himself a second drink of whisky; and that there should be no doubt the act was one of inadvertence, said again, "My best respects, ma'am," and bowed as before. Putting down the glass, he backed toward the door.

"I trust you will not hesitate to call upon me if I can be of any use to you, ma'am—a message will bring me here without a moment's delay." He was rather disappointed that no allusion had been made to his recent activities. He reasoned correctly that Betty was as yet in ignorance of the somewhat dangerous eminence he had achieved as the champion of law and order. However, he reflected with satisfaction that Hannibal, in remaining, would admirably serve his ends.

Betty insisted that he should be driven home, and after faintly protesting, the judge gracefully yielded the point, and a few moments later rolled away from Belle Plain behind a pair of sleek-coated bays, with a negro in livery on the box. He was conscious of a great sense of exaltation. He felt that he should paralyze Mahaffy. He even temporarily forgot the blow his hopes had sustained when Betty spoke of returning to North Carolina. This was life—broad acres and niggers—principally to trot after you totting liquor—and such liquor!—he lolled back luxuriantly with half-closed eyes.

"Twenty years in the wood if an hour!" he muttered. "I'd like to have just such a taste in my mouth when I come to die and probably she has barrels of it!" he sighed deeply, and searched his soul for words with which adequately to describe that whisky to Mahaffy.

But why not do more than paralyze Solomon—that would be pleasant but not especially profitable. The judge came back quickly to the vexed problem of his future. He desired to make some striking display of Miss Malroy's courtesy. He knew that his credit was experiencing the pangs of an early mortality; he was not sensi-

tive, yet for some days he had been sensible of the fact that what he called the commercial class was viewing him with open distavor; but he must hang on in Raleigh a little longer—for him it had become the abode of hope. The judge considered the matter. At least he could let people see something of that decent respect with which Miss Malroy treated him.

They were entering Raleigh now, and he ordered the coachman to pull his horses down to a walk. He had decided to make use of the Belle Plain turnout in creating an atmosphere of confidence and trust—especially trust. To this end he spent the best part of an hour interviewing his creditors. It amounted almost to a mass-meeting of the adult male population, for he had no favorites. When he invaded virgin territory he believed in starting the largest possible number of accounts without delay. The advantage of his system, as he explained its workings to Mahaffy, was that it bred a noble spirit of emulation.

He let it be known in a general way that things were looking up with him; just in what quarter he did not specify, but there he was, seated in the Belle Plain carriage, and the inference was unavoidable that Miss Malroy was to recognize his activities in a substantial manner.

Mahaffy, leaving away the afternoon in the county clerk's office, heard of the judge's return. He heard that Charley Norton had left a will; that Thicket Point went to Miss Malroy; that the Norton cousins in middle Tennessee were going to put up a fight; that Judge Price had been retained as counsel by Miss Malroy; that he was authorized to begin an independent search for Charley Norton's murderer, and was to spare no expense; that Judge Price was going to pay his debts. Mahaffy grinned at this and hurried home. He could believe all but the last; that was the crowning touch of unreality.

The judge explained the situation. "I wouldn't withhold hope from any man, Solomon; it's the cheapest thing in the world and the one thing we are most miserably apt extending to our fellows. These people all feel better—and what did it cost me?—just a little decent consideration; just the knowledge of what the unavoidable associations of ideas in their own minds would do for them!"

What had seemed the corpse of credit breathed again, and the judge and Mahaffy immediately embarked upon a characteristic celebration. Early candle-light found them making a beginning; midnight came—the gray and purple of dawn—and they were still at it, back of closed doors and shuttered windows.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Betty Leaves Belle Plain.

Hannibal had devoted himself loyally to the judge's glorification, and Betty heard all about the letter, the snuffing of the candles and the reward of five thousand dollars. It vastly increased the child's sense of importance and satisfaction when he discovered she had known nothing of these matters until he told her of them.

"Why, where would Judge Price get so much money, Hannibal?" she asked, greatly astonished.

"He won't have to get it, Miss Betty; Mr. Mahaffy says he don't reckon no one will ever tell who wrote the letter—he 'lows the man who done that will keep pretty mum—he just desent tell!" the boy explained.

"No, I suppose not—" and Betty saw that perhaps, after all, the judge had not assumed any very great financial responsibility.

"He can't be a coward, though, Hannibal!" she added, for she understood that the risk of personal violence which he ran was genuine. She had formed her own unsympathetic estimate of him that day at Boggs' race-track; Mahaffy in his blackest hour could have added nothing to it. Twice since then she had met him in Raleigh, which had only served to fix that first impression.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Bank of England Employees.
There are about 1,060 persons on the staff of the Bank of England, of whom 840 are at the head office in London and the remainder in the branches throughout the country. Five hundred porters and mechanics are also employed. The bank prints its own notes and Indian rupee notes, together with all postal orders and old-age pension orders; this work is done at the head office.

Royalty Sacred in Austria.
A woman in Vienna has been sent to prison for three months for speaking disrespectfully of Maria Theresa, who has been dead for 131 years. In Austrian law royalty is protected from criticism, written or spoken, for 200 years after death.

NORTH STATE LEADS

THE COTTON YIELD ACREAGE OF THE COUNTRY AS SHOWN BY REPORT.

REPORT IN PART IS GIVEN

A Crop of 25,500,000 Bales of Cotton Would Have Been Harvested This Year Had the North Carolina Record Been General.

Charlotte.—A mathematical sharp of this state has just run across United States Bulletin No. 114 showing amount of cotton actually produced in the country last year. He makes some calculations to show how North Carolina leads in the matter of yield per acre, and does some juggling with these figures as follows:

Total number of acres of cotton harvested in United States, 36,045,000.

Total number of bales cotton actually grown (that is, what is known as "ginners' crop" as distinguished from "commercial crop") expressed in 500 pound bales 16,109,349. This figures out for the whole United States 45 bales per acre (a little less than a half a bale).

The state of North Carolina harvested 1,624,000 acres and ginned 1,156,407 bales, which figures out .71 bales per acre (nearly three-quarters of a bale). If the whole United States had produced .71 bales per acre we would have made twenty-five and a half million bales or about fifty per cent more than was actually made.

Looking at it in another way if an average yield of .71 bale per acre could have been made, the country could have produced its 16,109,349 bales on about 22,700,000 acres instead of 36,045,000 acres.

North Carolina knows how to grow cotton, which is to say that notwithstanding some climatic handicap incident to the very northernmost limit of cotton territory she knows how to cultivate and fertilize.

Road Building in Lee County.

Money from the sale of the \$100,000 good roads bonds has been received by the road supervisor of Lee county—preparations are being made for the beginning of the work. The engineer, elected at a previous meeting, declined on account of other work but it is expected at a called meeting in the near future. Two work forces will be put on at once to improve the present roads until permanent work can be done. The necessary machinery and equipment will maintain work can be done.

A Red Letter Day For Stanley.

Wilson. — Thursday, July 25th, will prove a red letter day in the history of Stanley—the occasion being the annual picnic given in honor of the surviving heroes of the Southern Confederacy. Two special trains will go out from Charlotte to the festive scene; two brass bands and a company of military will be there to put spice in the outings, and there is no doubt in the world but what the old battle-scarred heroes will have new springs put under them on this glorious day.

North Carolina New Enterprises.

Raleigh. — The Citizens Holding Company, of Williamston, N. C., has been capitalized at \$25,000 to do a general real estate business. The present stockholders are B. F. Godwin, W. C. Manning and J. G. Godard. The Higgins Naval Store Company, of Wilmington, has been granted a charter with a capitalization of \$100,000, of which \$20,000 has been subscribed to by F. L. Higgins, W. L. Cantwell and K. C. Higgins.

Appropriation For Hookworm.

Statesville. — Dr. John A. Farrell, of Raleigh, the hookworm specialist, was in statesville for the purpose of getting the county commissioners to make an appropriation to inaugurate a hookworm campaign in Iredell. The matter will be taken up at a meeting of the commissioners to be held in the near future and it is believed the appropriation will be granted.

Salisbury Wants Press Association.

Salisbury. — The North Carolina Press Association will be asked to hold its next meeting in Salisbury. James H. Warburton and Stable Linn will go to Morehead City to extend and press the invitation. A number of local organizations have offered to assist in entertaining the newspaper men should they decide to hold their meeting here. Numerous entertainments will be arranged, side trips will be made to Granite Quarry and Whitney and the newspaper men will be warmly welcomed.

Surprise for Durham Politics.

Durham. — The surprise of the political situation came when R. N. Lee made his announcement for the county treasurer's nomination on the Democratic ticket. Mr. Lee has not been heard of for the place, and his announcement was a complete surprise to all who have been in close touch with the political situation. Slemmon Bowling is the present treasurer, and up to this date this office is the only county executive office that has more than one candidate.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JULY 28

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

LESSON TEXT—Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43. GOLDEN TEXT—"Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." Matt. 13:20.

The thirteenth chapter of Matthew's gospel is the great kingdom chapter of the Bible. Seven parables in this chapter give us each of seven aspects or applications of the principles of the kingdom. In this lesson we are taught the mixed character of the kingdom and also of the ultimate separation of two classes of which it is composed. "A man," v. 24, goes out to sow good seed in his field. This man we are told in v. 37, is the Son of Man, and elsewhere that the field is the world, the hearts of men. Then followed the propagating stage, that period over which man has no control. During this period while men ate and slept awaiting the time for cultivation and of harvest, the enemy of men's souls came and sowed tares, the common darnel which so closely resembles wheat in its earliest stages. After this propagating period had passed the man and his servants went out one day to find in their field evidence that another had also sown seed. The test of every life is the fruit produced. During these earlier stages the tares had looked so nearly like the wheat as not to be readily distinguished, but now that the harvest time approaches the difference is all too evident. It is significant from this parable that no blame is laid upon the servants that they should have allowed the two to grow up during this first stage. Surprise, anger and disappointment stirred the hearts of the servants when they discovered the mixed character of the approaching harvest. The master, however, clears them of all blame, for, said he, "Our enemy hath done this." Not an enemy, as the King James version has it. Satan is ubiquitous, but the Son of God is greater than he, see I. Peter 3:22.

Parables He Taught.

If the servants had sought to uproot the tares they would in all likelihood have done more damage than good, though this does not imply any conflict with Jesus' words as found in Matthew 5:29, 30. The seed had the same environment and in God's good time the separation should take place. So "let both grow together" until both be fully developed. Then he will say to the reapers, gather first the tares and burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn. Notice the tares did not evolve into wheat. Like begets like. Gather into bundles is the command. If we sin together, we must expect to suffer together. The wheat was ripe for full salvation, blessing and a further usefulness, while the tares were ripe only for destruction.

After teaching these parables, of which this is but one, Jesus sent the multitude away and more fully and completely taught his disciples the inner meaning of this parable. The field is the world, and if we ask we shall have the heathen for our inheritance and the uttermost part of the world as a possession (Ps. 2:8). The good seed are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons (children) of the evil one. Both the sons of the good and the sons of the bad grow from, and develop out of, seed, the sons of the kingdom from the good seed.

We must remember the three lessons we have been studying. The first concerned the nature of the seed and the soil; the second deals with the mystery of the growth and development of the kingdom, whereas this lesson has to do with the mixed.

World the Field.

As the Psalmist puts it (1:5), "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, e. g., has no standing, nbr sinners (abide) in the congregation of the righteous." It is not our place to gather the tares into bundles. God will send forth reapers (v. 30) and his reapers are the angels (v. 39). The fact is we are here warned against useless or profitless activity. Ours is to sow the right seed and then stand back and let God work. We are not even responsible for any process of separation, for God will take care of his own, and in his own time will send forth his reapers who will do what we would make sorry work of attempting to do. How often we see men zealously attempting the separation process during the propagating and developing period, only to uproot the wheat with the darnel.

Evil, we are clearly shown, will not gradually disappear from the world, but on the contrary it will grow, develop and bear along beside the wheat until "the harvest." After the harvest it will be all too clear which is good and which is bad. The language of Jesus is graphic—"cast and fling" express indignation and contempt; "furnace of fire" denotes the fierceness of the torment of punishment, and the "gnashing of teeth" and the "wailing" is a terrible picture of anguish and despair. As against this, he tells us that the righteous shall shine forth free from all cloud or shadow.



"Since You Insist, Ma'am—My Best Respects."