

Old Quire.

The Romance of a Black Virginian.

By B. K. BENSON.

Author of "Who Goes There?" "A Friend with the Counterpane," "Barnard's Courier," etc.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FIVE HUNDRED.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?

Far, far ahead, is all the seamen know.

—Clogh.

The maneuvers of the cavalry in the Briscoe campaign, though interesting, were marked by no incident seriously affecting Squire's history after he returned to his master. Lee's army settled back beyond the Rapidan, and Meade resumed his former position in Culpeper County.

If you don't expect to guide me right, you'd better let some other man earn that money. Understand me? If you deceive me, you'd better never have been born.

Don't shut fer about dat, sah. I'll take you right what you want to go, if it's anywhar in Goochland.

Old Squire had foraged far. As night overtook him he found shelter in a black brother's cabin near Gooch's Hope Church in Spotsylvania County.

On the morning of Feb. 28, 1864, Morgan was alone in Dahlgren's tent, busy with preparation, the Colonel having been called out by the Provost-Marshal.

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What do that for the old man's protection. Dahlgren would allow Morgan to defend him. Of course, he could not expect Dahlgren to dismiss this slave—not for his loyalty to Confederates.

Second: Squire determined to do nothing, and watch his chances. He would see what his acquaintances would do. So long as this body of troops leaned away from Orange, well and good; if it should change direction and ride toward his friends, he must get away.

Third: Barney must have felt himself utterly helpless, but could he hope for? Would Squire betray him in regard to the theft of Freeman's horse? Would Squire divulge his desertion at Gettysburg?

Fourth: Squire, if he should betray him, he was lost. The morning was cold, but was not Barney's face glistening with sweat? He was at the mercy of the man he had deserted—could he hope that Squire would be merciful?

Fifth: Squire had foraged far. As night overtook him he found shelter in a black brother's cabin near Gooch's Hope Church in Spotsylvania County.

Squire's mind was now made clear, even from the speech of the troopers—the column was marching on Richmond!

In darkness, under the falling rain and snow, the column of men, led by an uncertain guide, was marching on Richmond!

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