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The Strange Case of Mary Page

(Continued from Tuesday's Banner.)

It was a strange scene that he drew for them in his deep, quiet voice—a scene so unreal that it was incredible to most of those present that it could all have happened not so very many miles from the court-room where they now sat—a scene with the dark, snowy road and the silent woods for its setting, with the flying sleigh speeding almost noiseless over the slippery road. Langdon, his face white and set with fatigue and anxiety holding the tugging reins in one hand while the other arm held close the half-conscious form of Mary, her bandaged head ghastly above the enveloping blankets, while over them towered the grim figure of the great Scotchman, his shot-gun to his shoulder, his big body swaying with the speed of the flying sleigh.

"I waited till they came oop too close," he finished, a deep note throbbing in his voice, "and then I did for a fire w' the second shot. The auto nigh upset w' the force of the explosion, and they all jumpit out. And that was the last we saw of them."

"Did you remain at Dr. Jamison's house when you reached there?" "No. For when I had seen the pair lassie taken away by the kind gentle wife of the doctor, and I knew she were safe, I kepit thinkin' of how fast the men had gone fra the house that night, and I says to Mr. Langdon, 'I will jes' take a run back to the town, I'm thinkin', and make sure there's na harm comin' to Dan Page through this night's work.' And Mr. Langdon says, quick like, 'What do you mean?' So I told him and the doctor, and Mr. Langdon was all fer comin' w' me, but the doctor wouldn't let him. 'Dinna fash yersel', I said, when I saw the doctor was right. 'I'll gae fast, and if there is need for you I'll come richt back.' And the doctor said, 'You're all worn out, Philip. You've got to have some rest. Be sensible!' So I went back alone."

"At what hour did you reach the home of Miss Page?" "I dinna ken the exact hour, but it were about daylight, and I cude see quite a ways ahead of me."

"Will you tell us, please, what you saw when you approached the Page house?" "Slowly one great hand clinched itself into a knotted fist, and the muscles of his jaw tightened, and across those who sat between the gray eyes of the Scotchman and the rear-dimmed eyes of Mrs. Page met in a mute communion of terrible memories. Then, slowly, with a new tone of suppressed excitement lending a thrill to his voice he said:

"When I got nigh enough to see the house, I cude see a great black splotch in front of it, that I made out to be men. Then I cude hear shouts: 'Come out, Dan Page, we've summat to say to you!' So I dinna drive right oop to the place. I stoppit in the road and crept through the wood at the back and, hiding under the hedge, got oop to the rear. Then I wrote on a wee scrap of paper, 'I've news of Mary—and I come to bring help.' Then I tappit on a window, till I saw Mrs. Page peerin' out—and I held up the paper."

"After a minute or so she unlatched the back door and I slippit in. 'Oh, Mr. MacPherson,' says the puir lady, cryin', 'is my girl safe?' And I says, 'Safe and sound asleep.' And she says, 'Thank God.' Then I heard another voice sayin', 'Annie, Annie—who is it? Don't let them get me—oh, my God, don't let them get me!' And I saw that Dan Page was hidin' behind her, clingin' to her skirts like a scared bairn. His face were all drawn and twistit like, and his mouth was glibberin', and he kept cryin', 'I was drunk—I was drunk! You tell them, Annie—You tell them!' At that she says like one speakin' to a child, 'There, there, Dan—you're safe!' And then there came an awfu' cry from outside: 'Come out, Dan Page—or ye'll smoke ye out like the beast that ye are!' At that Mrs. Page began to sob and says, 'Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do! They will na talk to me—and they'll burn our house, they'll burn our house! Oh, if Philip were only here!'"

"'Dinna greet,' I said, 'I'll get him, but he mu' na time. Let Dan Page go upstairs and talk to them from a window.' 'Oh, Dan,' says the puir lady, 'Dan—will you do that? Tell them you didn't mean to hurt Mary—or me.' 'No, no,' he whimpered, 'I can't, I can't!' But I grabbit him by the arm and pulled him to his feet. 'Be a man, I cried, and I shookit him. 'Be a man and get you upstairs.' 'You'd be safe in the cupola, Dan,' says Mrs. Page. 'I'll stay with you—and this kind man will go for Philip.' But he kept sayin', 'No, no,' and I could hear the others bangin' at the door and I dared not stay, so I slippit oop the way I came and went off for Mr. Langdon."

Mrs. Page, whose anxiety to be near Mary had kept her from returning to the witness room, shuddered at the memories that MacPherson was conjuring up out of the past. The softness which time has lent the tragedy of that chill winter morning was stripped off, exposing the old horrible wound, and she could feel again those groping fingers, icy cold, clutching at her as she strove to drag Dan Page up stairs towards the cupola.

She could hear his voice, now thick with drink, now athrill with terrible fear—as he pleaded with her to hide him and to save him. She had been mercifully numb with the horror of it then, consumed only with the desire

BENNINGTON BRIEFS

News of the Town and Village Told Briefly for Busy Readers

Meeting of the G. A. R. Saturday at 3 p. m.

Saturday only—Best quality Shoe polish, 7 cents box or bottle at Hart's.

A social dance will be held at Summit Hall, Pownal Center Friday night. All are cordially invited.

Mrs. S. A. Patterson has gone to Westfield, Mass., where she will be the guest of her brother for a week.

Trout flies 10c a doz. A nice banjo \$5, fishing tackle and musical goods very low to close out. Goldsmith's, Adv.

Edward and Harry Rugg of Lapeer, Mich., are spending a few days in town called here by the death of their father.

The Woman's Missionary society of the Baptist church will meet with Mrs. Annette Hollister and Mrs. Harry Bloss on Grandview street, Friday afternoon, April 14 at 3 o'clock.

THREE PLOTTERS EXECUTED

El Paso Prisoners Reveal Details of Felix Diaz Conspiracy.

El Paso, Texas, April 11.—Three leaders of the Diaz plot to seize Juarez and overthrow the Carranza garrison there last Sunday, were executed by the firing squad in Juarez early today.

COLONEL AT FARMINGTON

Connecticut Republicans Probably Unpledged, but Leaning to Root.

Farmington, Conn., April 11.—Colonel Roosevelt arrived in Connecticut just as the Republican State Convention was about to convene and in the midst of a controversy over his candidacy.

A prominent Republican leader said tonight that the delegates to the national convention would go unpledged, but would have a distinct leaning to the candidacy of Elihu Root, but with little support for Justice Hughes. In the event of Root's withdrawal and the appearance of a Roosevelt boom that promised to swing the convention the delegates, he said, might be counted upon as Roosevelt men.

to hold those men at bay long enough for MacPherson to bring help, and it was that desire which gave her the strength to drag the heavy bulk of her husband up the two flights of stairs into the little cupola at the top.

She could feel again the sting of the cold dawn wind against her face as she stepped out on the platform of roign boards and dropped the inert figure of her husband at her feet.

Then with all the eloquence of her great fear she had pleaded with the mob below to go away. They had seemed all eyes flitting on a great pool of brightness against the snow as she looked down, but later she could see the grim mouths below the eyes and knew that her pleas were falling on deaf ears.

Finally one who seemed to be the ringleader had stepped forward and cried:

"Where is your husband? It is he that we want to talk to!" And she had led and said, "He is sleeping."

They muttered ominously at that and again the ringleader spoke: "We have no quarrel with you, Mrs. Page, but our demand which strikes his daughter and drives her insane shall stay in this town—Dan Page has got to go."

"He'll be well," she promised wildly. "I'll take him away today. He didn't mean to hurt us—he didn't know what he was doing— But he'll go away—oh, I promise that." And again the grim voice answered her:

"He'll go, but WE'LL see him off. Let him stand up like a man and talk to us!"

At that they all took up the shout for Page, and he, rising on his face on the boards, moaned and groined to the God he had long forgotten, to save him.

How long she talked and urged and wept and pleaded Mrs. Page herself did not remember, but somehow she had held them—still flustered—still ominous—till she down the road she saw a small spark that she knew was an approaching sleigh with two figures in it.

At sight of it she had forgotten everything except an infinite relief, and crying in her joy had sped down stairs, leaving Dan Page still huddled in the windy cupola.

If she hadn't—she shuddered, and caught her breath in a smothered sob, and for a moment the court-room hung in a haze before her and the voice of MacPherson speaking on the witness-stand receded to a vast distance and seemed to be again the murmuring voices of that angry mob. But she fought back the impending faintness and the rising tears, and as one bracing himself against the impact of some great weight, she straightened her slender shoulders to meet without flinching the story of that morning's tragedy.

"When Mr. Langdon and I drove oop," MacPherson was saying, "the men were still there, and Mr. Langdon stood oop in the sleigh and made a speech to them urging them to go home quietly. 'Miss Page is safe in the hands of a good doctor,' he said, 'and you will only make a bad matter worse if you attempt to carry out this plan of whipping Dan Page out of town. I'll see to it that he leaves the community, but if you drive him out this way, it's going to mean disgrace to the town and to Mary Page, too. Do you suppose she could bear the thought of her father's having been publicly whipped?' Well, shouted one of the men, 'tis not beath' her the way he has done it— Drive' her and—the brist'! And the crowd began to murmur again. Then Mr. Langdon told them that the drink was like a ragin' beast inside

Our Card, 1871 CHARLES G. COLE, PROPRIETOR OF THE BAZAR AND 99c STORE, CHANDLER BUILDING BENNINGTON, VT. MAIN STREET, ALSO DEALER IN TOYS, FANCY GOODS, GAMES, TEA AND COFFEE, READY-MADE CLOTHING, GENTS' FURNISHING GOODS, HOSIERY, &c. JEWELRY AND PLATED WARE Dealer in Goods that Satisfy Since 1871 Our Card, 1916 CHAS. G. COLE OUTFITTER The only difference between us in 1871 and 1916, a period of 45 years, is the fact that we now specialize in one thing. Our principles have not changed one bit. We aimed then, as we do now, to give you good merchandise at reasonable prices. CHAS. G. COLE

Mr. Page, that he knew nought of what he did; that he probably didn't remember anything—that he really loved his wife and his girl. And while he was talkin' one of the men gave a cry and pointit oop, and there in the cupola stood Dan Page—wild like the daft, clingin' to the rail, and he cried out: 'What he says is God's truth. I love my wife and girl as much as you men love yours— It's whiskey that hurt them—not me. I've been a slave in the grip of a fiend all my life. I've tried—my God, me, I've tried—to keep away from it—but it gets me. The sight of it—the smell of it—the taste of it—is ever in my mind. I drink because I must, and drink more to drown the memory of it! I've lived in hell for years, and no horsewhipping could punish me—as does the knowledge of this night's work.' Then suddenly he burst out cryin'—sobbin' like a child, while the men stood starin' oop at him. Then he flung out his arm and said, 'Phillip—take care of them—be careful of Pollock—I'm going to take myself out of the community—now!' And at that he leapt oop onto the rail and jumped."



"Was Mr. Page killed instantly?"

Only Mrs. Page sat erect and unmoved, but her eyes were pools of agony too deep for expression. "Was Mr. Page killed instantly?" "Yes, he was dead when we pickit him oop, and the men spread their coats over him and carried him to the house."

Langdon smiled a little. "It's not what I know, but what I want you to tell the court, Mr. MacPherson; so will you please tell them, as succinctly as possible, what occurred upon your return to the residence of Dr. Jamison?" "It were the guide wife of the doctor that met us, and toldit us that the doctor had Miss Page in his laboratory making some tests about the brain." "The doctor had already said that he had been making some special tests for the brain," Langdon's voice rasped sharply through the room. "Did he make the results of those tests known in your presence?" "He said, 'She is sane now, and these tests will relieve her, but I would advise you to have Dr. Foster, the alienist, make an examination. She has still much to suffer, and—this thing will come back!— You'll have to take good care of her and guard her, Phillip.'"

ECHOES FROM MANCHESTER CENTER

Manchester Center Happenings Always Interest Our Readers.

After reading of so many people in our town who have been cured by Doan's Kidney Pills, the question naturally arises: "Is this medicine equally successful in nearby places?"

The generous statement of this Manchester Center resident leaves no room for doubt on this point. James Kennedy, Manchester Center, Vt., says: "For years my back and kidneys bothered me and the trouble became so bad at times that I could hardly stoop or straighten. Mornings when I first got up, my back was lame and stiff and pains extended from my kidneys into my loins and hips. The kidney secretions were unnatural and I was really in bad shape when I began using Doan's Kidney Pills. They helped me at once and it was not long before they had fixed me up in good shape. My back was strengthened, the pains were removed and my health was restored. Whenever I have felt in need of a kidney medicine since, I have taken a few doses of Doan's Kidney Pills and have received benefit."

Price 50c, at all dealers. Don't simply ask for a kidney remedy—get Doan's Kidney Pills—the same that Mr. Kennedy had. Foster-Milburn, Co., Props., Buffalo, N. Y.

Pills Best For Liver.

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