THE VALLEY of the GIANTS

By PETER B. KYNE

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NO QUARTER.

Synopsis—Pioneer in the California redwood region, John Cardigan, at forty-seven, is the leading citizen of Sequoia, owner of mills, ships and many acres of timber, a widower after three years of married life, and father of two-year-old Bryce Cardigan. At fourteen Bryce makes the acquaintance of Shirley Sumner, a visitor at Sequoia and his junior by a few years. Together they visit the Valley of the Giants, sacred to John Cardigan and himself as the burial place of Bryce's mother, and part with mutual regret. While Bryce is at college John Cardigan meets with heavy business losses and for the first time views the future with uncertainty. After graduation from college, and a trip abroad, Bryce Cardigan comes home on the train he meets Shirley Sumner, on her way to Sequoia to make her home there with her uncle, Colonel Pennington. Bryce learns that his father's eyesight has failed and that Colonel Pennington is seeking to take advantage of the old man's business misfortunes. John Cardigan is desparing, but Bryce is full of fight. Bryce finds a burl redwood felled across his mother's grave. He goes to dinner at Pennington's on Shirley's invitation and finds the dining room paneled with burl from the tree. Bryce and Pennington declare war, though Shirley does not know it. Bryce beats Jules Rondeau, Pennington's fighting logging boss, and forces him to confess that Pennington ordered the burl tree cut. Pennington butts into the fight and gets hurt. Bryce starts off a gang of Pennington's lumberjacks. Shirley, who sees it all, tells Bryce it must be "goodby." Bryce renews acquaintance with Moira McTavish, daughter of his drunken woods-boss. Bryce saves the life of Shirley and her uncle when a logging train runs away.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

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At the sound of Bryce's voice Shirley raised her head, whirled and looked up at him. She held his handkerchief over his gory face that the sight might not distress her; he could have whooped with delight at the joy that flashed through her wet lids.

"Well, since you insist," he replied, and he slid down the bank.

"Bryce Cardigan," she commanded sternly, "come down here this instant."

"I'm not a pretty sight, Shirley. Better let me go about my business."

She stamped her foot. "Come here!"

"How did you get up there and what do you mean by hiding there spying on me, you—you—oh, you!"

"Cuss a little, if it will help any," he suggested. "I had to get out of your way—out of sight—and up there was the best place. I was on the roof of the caboose when it toppled over, so all I had to do was step ashore and sit down."

"Then why didn't you stay there?" she demanded furiously.

"You wouldn't let me," he answered demurely. "And when I saw you weeping because I was supposed to be with the angels, I couldn't help coughing to let you know I was still hanging around, ornery as a hook agent."

"How did you ruin your face, Mr. Cardigan?"

"Tried to take a cast of the front end of the caboose in my classic countenance—that's all."

"But you were riding the top log on the last truck—I—"

"Certainly, but I wasn't hayseed enough to stay there until we struck this curve. I knew exactly what was going to happen, so I climbed down to

"Well, Since You Insist."

the bumper of the caboose, uncoupled it from the truck, climbed up on the roof, and managed to get the old thing under control with the hand-brake; then I skeddaddled up into the brush because I knew you were inside, and—" By the way, Colonel Pennington, here is your axe, which I borrowed this afternoon. Much obliged for its use. The last up-train is probably waiting on the siding at Freshwater to pass the late lamented; consequently a walk of about a mile will bring you a means of transportation back to Sequoia. Walk leisurely—you have lots of time. As for myself, I'm in a hurry, and my room is more greatly to be desired than my company, so I'll start now."

He lifted his hat, turned, and walked briskly down the ruined track.

Shirley made a little gesture of dissent, half opened her lips to call him back, thought better of it, and let him go. When he was out of sight, it dawned on her that he had risked his life — — —