

FRECKLES

By Gene Stratton-Porter

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(Continued from last week.)

SYNOPSIS.

Freckles, a homeless boy, is hired by Boss McLean to guard the expensive timber in the Lumberlot from timber thieves.

Freckles does his work faithfully, makes friends with the birds and yearns to know more about nature. He lives with Mr. and Mrs. Duncan.

He resolves to get books and educate himself. He becomes interested in a huge pair of vultures and calls his bird friends his "chickens."

Some of the trees he is guarding are worth \$1,000 each. Freckles books arrive. He receives a call from Wessner.

Wessner attempts to bribe Freckles to betray his trust, and Freckles whips him. McLean overhears them and prevents the fight.

Freckles' honesty saves a precious tree. He finds the nest of the vultures and is visited by a beautiful young girl.

She calls Freckles McLean's son. Freckles calls her "the angel" and helps the Bird Woman in taking photographs. McLean promises to adopt Freckles.

CHAPTER IX.

A FIGHT WITH BULLETS.

WHEN Freckles crossed Sleepy Snake creek and the goldfinch, waiting as ever, challenged, "See me?" he saw the dainty, swaying grace of the angel instead. What is a man to do with an angel who dismembers herself and scatters over a whole swamp, thrusting a vivid reminder upon him at every turn?

"You needn't be thinking," he said to the goldfinch, "that because I'm coming down this line alone day after day it's always to be so. Some of these days you'll be swinging on this wire, and you'll see me coming, and you'll swing, skip and flirt yourself around and chip up right spunky."

"See me?" I'll be saying "See you?" See her? You'll look, and there she'll stand. The sunshine won't look gold any more, nor the roses pink, nor the sky blue, because she'll be the pinkest, bluest, goldenst thing of all. You'll be yelling yourself hoarse with the jealousy of her. The saw bird will stretch his neck out of joint, and she'll turn the heads of all the dowers. Wherever she goes I can go back afterward and see the things she's seen, walk the path she's walked, hear the grasses whispering over all the things she's said, and if there's a place too swampy for her bits of feet, maybe—maybe she'd be putting the beautiful arms of her about me neck and letting me carry her over!"

Freckles shivered as with a chill. He sent the cudgel whirling skyward, dextrously caught it and set it spinning.

"Maybe she'll be wanting the cup me blue and brown chickens raised their babies in. If there's any feathers falling that day, why, it's from the wings of me chickens—it's sure to be, for the only angel outside the gates will be walking this timberline, and every step of the way I'll be holding; me breath and praying that she don't unfurl wings and sail off before the hungry eyes of me."

When the week was up Freckles had his room crisp and glowing with fresh living things that rivaled every tin of the rainbow. He carried bark and filled up all the muckiest places of the trail.

It was middle July. The heat of the last few days had dried up the water about and through the Lumberlot, so that it was possible to cross it on foot in almost any direction if one had any idea of direction and did not become completely lost in its rank tangle of vegetation and bushes.

The heat was doing one other thing that was bound to make Freckles, as a good Irishman, shiver. As the swale dried its inhabitants were seeking the cooler depths of the swamp. They liked neither the heat nor leaving the field mice, moles and young rabbits of their chosen location. He saw them crossing the trail every day as the heat grew intense. The rattlers were sadly forgetting their manners, for they struck on no provocation whatever and didn't even remember to rattle afterward. Daily Freckles was compelled to drive big black-snakes and blue racers from the nests of his chickens. Often the terrified squalls of the parent birds would reach him far down the line, and he would run to the rescue of the babies.

He saw the angel when the carriage turned from the corduroy into the clearing. They stopped at the west entrance to the swamp, waiting for him to precede them down the trail, as he had told them it was safest for the horse that he should do so. They followed the east line to a point opposite the big chickens' tree, and Freckles carried in the cameras and showed the Bird Woman a path he had cleared to the log.

They arranged that Freckles should drive the carriage into the east entrance in the shade and then take the horse around toward the north to a

better place he knew. Then he was to entertain the angel at his study or on the line until the Bird Woman finished her work and came to them.

Freckles trotted on air, for his dream had come true so soon. He was going down the timberline and the angel was following him. He asked to be excused for going first, because he wanted to be sure the trail was safe for her. She laughed at his fears, telling him that it was the polite thing for him to do anyway.

"Oh," said Freckles, "so you was after knowing that? Well, I didn't s'pose you did, and I was afraid you'd think me wanting in respect to be preceding you."

The astonished angel looked at him, caught the irrepressible gleam of Irish fun in his eyes, and they laughed together.

Freckles did not realize how he was talking that morning. He showed her many of the beautiful nests and eggs of the line. She could identify a number of them, but of some she was ignorant, so they made notes of the number and color of the eggs, material and construction of nest, color, size and shape of the birds and went on to look them up in the book.

At his room, when Freckles had lifted the overhanging bushes and stepped back for her to enter, his heart was all out of time and place. The angel drew a deep breath and stood staring, first at one side, then at another, then far off down the cathedral aisle. "It's just fairyland!" she cried ecstatically. Then she turned and stared at Freckles exactly as she had at his handiwork.

"What are you planning to be?" she asked slowly.

"Whatever Mr. McLean wants me to," he replied.

"What do you do most?" she asked.

"Watch me lines."

"I don't mean work."

"Oh! In me spare time I keep me room and study in me books."

"Do you work on the room or the books most?"

"On the room just what it takes to keep it up and the rest of the time on me books."

The angel eyed him sharply. "Well, maybe you are going to be a great scholar," she said, "but you don't look it. Your face isn't right for that, but it's got something big in it—something just great. I must find out what it is and then you must go to work on it. Your father is expecting you to do something. You can tell by the way he talks. You ought to begin right away. You've wasted too much time already."

Poor Freckles hung his head. He had never wasted an hour in his life. There had never been one that was his to waste.

The angel, studying him intently, read his thought in his face. "Oh, I don't mean that!" she cried, with the frank dismay of sixteen. "Of course you're not lazy! Nobody would ever think that from your looks. It's this I mean: There is something fine, strong and full of power in your face. There is something you are to do in this world, and no matter how hard you work at all these other things nor how successfully you do them it is all wasted until you find the one thing that you can do best. If you could go anywhere you please and do anything you want, what would you do?"

"I'd go to Chicago and sing in the First Episcopal choir," answered Freckles promptly.

The angel dropped back on a seat; that she had taken off and held in her fingers rolled to her feet. "There," she exclaimed vehemently, "you can see what I'm going to be. Nothing, absolutely nothing! You can sing? Of course you can sing! It is written all over you."

"Anybody with half wit could have seen he could sing without having to be told," she thought. "It's in the slenderness of his fingers and his quick, nervous touch. It is in the brightness of his hair, the fire in his eyes, the breadth of his chest, the muscles of his throat and neck, and above all, it's in every tone of his voice."

"Will you do something for me?" she asked.

"I'll do anything in the world you want me to," said Freckles largely, "and if I can't do what you want I'll go to work at once and I'll try till I can."

"Good," said the angel. "Go over there and stand before that bank and sing something—anything you think of first."

It was a children's song that he had led for the little folks at the home many times.

To fairly land we go, With a song of joy, heigh-o! In dreams we stand upon that shore And all the realm behold. We'll see the sights so grand That belong to fairly land. Its mysteries we will explore, Its beauties will unfold. Oh, tra, la, la, oh, ha, ha, ha! We're happy now as we can be. Our welcome song we will prolong and greet you with our melody. O fairly land, sweet fairly land, we love to sing—

Nothing could have given the intense sweetness and rollicking quality of Freckles' voice better scope. He forgot everything but pride in his work with the sound of his voice. He was on the chorus, and the angel was shivering in ecstasy when clip, clip, came the sharply beating feet of a swiftly ridden horse down the trail from the north. They both sprang toward the entrance.

"Freckles, Freckles!" called the voice of the Bird Woman.

They were at the trail on the instant.

"Both those revolvers loaded?" she asked.

"Yes," said Freckles.

"Is there a way you can cut across the swamp and get to the chicken tree in a few minutes and with little noise?"

"Yes."

"Then go flying," said the Bird Woman. "Give the angel a lift up behind me, and we will ride the horse back to where you left him and wait for you. I finished Little Chicken in no time and put him back. His mother



"THEN GO FLYING," SAID THE BIRD WOMAN.

came so close. I felt sure she would enter the log. The light was fine, so I set and focused the camera and covered it with branches, attached the long hose and went away of over 100 feet and hid in some bushes to wait. A short, thick man and a tall, dark one passed me so closely I could almost have reached out and touched them. They carried a big saw on their shoulders. They said they could work until about noon, and then they must lay off until you passed and then try to load and get out at night. They went on—not entirely out of sight—and began cutting a tree. Mr. McLean told me the other day that was likely to happen there, and if they get that tree down he loses his wager on you. Keep to the east and north and hustle. We'll meet you at the carriage. I am always armed. We will separate and creep up on them from different sides and give them a fusillade that will send them flying. You hurry, now!"

She gathered up the reins and started briskly down the trail. The angel, hatless and with sparkling eyes, was clinging about her waist.

Freckles worked his way with great care, dodging limbs and bushes with noiseless tread and cutting as close to where he thought the men were as he felt that he dared if he were to remain unseen. As he ran he tried to think. It was Wessner, burning for his revenge, aided by the bully of the locality, that he was going to meet.

He must follow the Bird Woman's plan and meet them at the carriage, but if they really did mean to try to help him he must not allow it. Let the angel try to handle a revolver in his defense? Never! Not for all the trees in the Lumberlot! She might shoot herself. She might forget to watch sharply and run across a snake that was not particularly well behaved that morning. Freckles permitted himself a grim smile as he went speeding on.

When he reached the carriage the Bird Woman and the angel had the horse hitched to it, the outfit packed and were calmly waiting.

"Give babe one of your revolvers, quick!" said the Bird Woman. "We will all creep up until we are in fair range. The underbrush is so thick and they are so hard at work that they will never notice us, if we don't make a noise. You will fire first, then I will pop in from my direction, and then you, baby, and shoot quite high, or else very low. We mustn't really hit them."

Freckles protested. The Bird Woman chose the middle distance, and for a last time cautioned the angel to lie down and shoot high, as she moved away.

Freckles' revolver spat fire. Lead spanged on steel. The saw handle flew from Wessner's hand and he reeled with the jar of the shock. Black Jack straightened, uttering a fearful oath. His hat was taken off by a shot from the northeast. The angel had not waited for the Bird Woman, and her shot could scarcely have been called high. At almost the same instant the third shot whistled in from the east. Black Jack sprang into the air with a yell of complete panic, for it ripped a heel from his boot.

Freckles emptied his second chamber and the dirt spattered over Wessner. Shots poured in thick and fast. Without even reaching for a weapon, both men broke for the east road in great, leaping bounds, while leaden slugs sung and hissed about them in deadly earnest.

Freckles was trimming his corners as closely as he dared, but if the angel did not really intend to hit, she was shaving the limit in a scandalous manner.

(Continued next week.)

Theory and Practice. "I am a friend of the people," said he. "The people must rule."

"But," reported a courtier, "the people are opposed to the measure you propose. They don't want it."

"They don't, eh?" said he, banging the table. "I'll show 'em. If they oppose me I'll slap a tax on the lawn mowers, and make every one of 'em sweat for it."

Filed Apples. Select six healthy, large apples. Scrape out the inside and grind up in a food chopper. Have soaked one cupful of bread. Squeeze out dry with hands. Add one-half teaspoonful salt, one-half teaspoonful cinnamon, one-half cupful sugar, yolks of two eggs, one-half cup coconut or any kind of nuts chopped fine. Mix with chopped apples and fill the apples. Bake until done. Then beat the whites of two eggs. Sweeten to taste and put some of this on each apple. Put in the oven to brown.

Nothing of the Kind. "Do you think that student has no-talgia?" "Oh, nothing so serious as that. He's just a little out of it."

Medical. No kidney ailment is unimportant. Don't overlook the slightest backache or urinary irregularity. Nature may be warning you of approaching dropsy, or fatal Bright's disease. Kidney disease is seldom fatal if treated in time but neglect saves the way for serious kidney troubles. Don't neglect a lame or aching back another day. Don't ignore dizzy spells, irregular or discolored urine, headaches, weariness or depression. Begin treating the kidneys with the reliable, time-tried remedy, Doan's Kidney Pills. For 75 years Doan's has been curing sick kidneys and curing permanently. Endorsed by Bellefonte people.

Mrs. James Corl, 361 E. Bishop St., Bellefonte, Pa., says: "A member of my family used Doan's Kidney Pills in 1907, procuring them from Green's Pharmacy Co. and a complete cure of kidney complaint was effected. At that time we publicly endorsed Doan's Kidney Pills and as there has been no recurrence of the trouble, we again give the remedy a word of praise. You are welcome to publish this statement for the benefit of other kidney sufferers."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50 cents. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States. Remember the name—Doan's—and take no other.

A Stitch in Time

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Waverly Oils. No matter what car you use, be sure of the best gasoline. The three famous Waverly Gasolines—76° Special Motor.

are best because they have no carbon deposits—the explosion is instantaneous, powerful, clean—the ignition is quick. No "artificial" gasolines used in Waverly.

Waverly Oil Works Co., Independent Refiners, PITTSBURGH, PA. Also makers of Waverly Special Auto Oil. FREE 200 Page Book—Tells All About Oil.

Medical. It's A Cure That's Sure FOR RHEUMATISM, GOUT, SCIATICA, AND LUMBAGO.

We have cured thousands with JONES BREAK-UP AND IT WILL CURE YOU Always in stock at SIDNEY KRUMRINE, Druggist, 57-25-3m. Bellefonte, Pa.

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Hood's Sarsaparilla. Terrible Suffering. ECZEMA ALL OVER OUR BABY'S BODY.

"When my baby was four months old his face broke out with eczema, and at sixteen months of age his hands and arms were in a dreadful state. The eczema spread all over his body. We had to make a mask or cloth over his face and tie up his hands. Finally we gave him Hood's Sarsaparilla and in a few months he was cured. Hood's Sarsaparilla has effected thousands of cures where a blood-purifying medicine was needed.

There is no real substitute for it. If you buy any preparation similar to it, just as good, you may be sure it is inferior, costs less to make, and yields the dealer a larger profit. Get it today in usual liquid form or chocolate tablets called Sarsatabs. 29-11

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Constitutional Amendments. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION SUBMITTED TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THEIR APPROVAL OR REJECTION.

Number One. A JOINT RESOLUTION. Proposing an amendment to article nine, section four of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the State to issue bonds to the amount of fifty millions of dollars for the improvement of the highways of the Commonwealth.

Number Two. A JOINT RESOLUTION. Proposing an amendment to section seven, article three of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so as to permit special legislation regulating labor.

Number Three. A JOINT RESOLUTION. Proposing an amendment to section three, article eight of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relating to taxation.

Number Four. A JOINT RESOLUTION. Proposing an amendment to section one of article nine of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relating to taxation.

Number Five. A JOINT RESOLUTION. Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so as to read: "All taxes shall be uniform, upon the same class of subjects, within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax, and shall be collected under general laws; but the General Assembly may, by general laws, exempt from taxation public property used for public purposes, actual places of religious worship, places of burial not used or held for private or corporate profit, and institutions of purely public charity, so as to read as follows:

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