

FRECKLES

By
Gene Stratton-Porter

COPYRIGHT, 1904, BY DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & CO.

SYNOPSIS.

Freckles, a homeless boy, is hired by Boss McLean to guard the expensive timber in the Limberlost 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 Wesmer.

Wesmer attempts to bribe Freckles to betray his trust, and Freckles whips him. McLean overhears them and witnesses 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.

Freckles and the angel become very friendly. Assisted by the Bird Woman, they drive Wesmer and Black Jack, timber thieves, from the Limberlost.

McLean fears more trouble, but Freckles insists upon being the sole guard of the timber. Freckles calls upon the angel's father.

The angel receives him as her equal, and her father is kind. Mrs. Duncan has exciting adventures in the Limberlost.

The Bird Woman and the angel again visit Freckles, and Freckles falls in love with the angel. The angel kisses him.

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER XIII.

FRECKLES' BUTTERFLIES.

OUT on the trail the Bird Woman wheeled on McLean with a dumfounded look.

"Do you think the angel knew she did that?" she asked softly.

"No," said McLean. "I do not. But the poor boy knew it. Heaven help him!"

The Bird Woman stared across the gently waving swale. "I don't see how I am going to blame her," she said at last. "It's so exactly what I would have done myself."

"Say the rest," demanded McLean hoarsely. "Do him justice."

"He is a born gentleman," conceded the Bird Woman. "He took no advantage. He never even offered to touch her. Whatever that kiss meant to him, he recognized it was the loving impulse of a child under stress of strong emotion. He was fine and manly as any man ever could have been."

McLean lifted his hat. "Thank you," he said simply and parted the bushes for her to enter Freckles' room.

It was her first visit, and before she left she sent for her cameras and made studies of each side of it and of the cathedral. She was entranced with the delicate beauty of the place, and her eyes kept following Freckles as if she could not believe that it could be his conception and work.

That was a happy day. The Bird Woman had brought a lunch, and they spread it, with Freckles' dinner, on the study floor and sat about, resting and enjoying themselves. But the angel put her banjo into its case, silently gathered up her music, and no one mentioned the concert.

The Bird Woman left McLean and the angel to clear away the lunch and with Freckles examined the walls of his room and told him all she knew about his shrubs and flowers. She analyzed a cardinal flower and showed him what he had all summer wanted to know—why the bees buzzed ineffectually about it while the humming birds found in it an ever ready feast.

Some of his specimens were so rare that she was unfamiliar with them, and with the flower book between them they knelt, studying the different varieties. She wandered the length of the cathedral aisle with him, and it was at her suggestion that he lighted his altar with a row of flaming foxfire.

As Freckles came up to the cabin from his long day at the swamp he saw Mrs. Chicken sweeping away to the south and wondered where she was going. He stepped into the bright, cozy little kitchen, and as he reached down the wash basin he asked Mrs. Duncan a question.

"Mother Duncan, do kisses wash off?"

"Lord, na, Freckles!" she cried. "At least the anes ye get from people ye love dinna. They dinna stay on the outside. They strike in until they find the center of your heart and make their stopping place there, and naething can take them from ye—I doubt if even death. Na, lad, ye can be reet sure kisses dinna wash off."

Freckles set the basin down and muttered, "I needn't be afraid to be washing, then, for that one struck in."

"I wish," said Freckles at breakfast one morning, "that I had some way to be sending a message to the Bird Woman. I've something down at the swamp that I'm believing never happened before, and surely she'll be wanting it."

"What now, Freckles?" asked Mrs. Duncan.

"Why, the oddest thing you ever heard of," said Freckles. "The whole insect tribe gone on a spree. I'm supposing it's my fault, but it all happened by accident-like. You see, on the swale side of the line, right against me trail, there's one of these scrub wild crab-trees. Where the grass grows thick about it is the finest place you ever conceived of for snakes. Having women about has set me trying to clean out those fellows a bit, and yesterday I noticed that tree in passing. It struck me that it would be a good idea to be taking it out. First I thought I'd take me hatchet and cut it down, for it ain't thicker than me upper arm. Then I remembered how it was blooming in the spring and filling all the air with sweetness. The coloring of the blossoms is beautiful, and I hated to be killing it. I just cut the grass short all about it. Then I started at the ground, triumphed up the trunk near the height of me shoulder and left the top spreading. That made it look so truly ornamental that, idle like, I chipped off the rough places neat, and this morning, on me soul, it's a sight. You see, cutting off the limbs and trimming up the trunks sets the sap running. In this hot sun it ferments in a few hours. There isn't much room for more things to crowd on that tree than there are, and to get drunker isn't noways possible."

"Weel, I be drawn on!" exclaimed Mrs. Duncan. "What kind of things do ye mean, Freckles?"

"Why, just an army of black ants. Some of them are sucking away like old toppers. Some of them are setting up on their tails and hind legs, fiddling away with their fore feet and wiping their eyes. Some are rolling around on the ground, contented. There are quantities of big bluebottle flies over the bark and hanging on the grasses about, too drunk to steer a course flying, so they just buzz away like flying and all the time sitting still! The snake feeders are too full to feed anything, even more sap to themselves. There's a lot of hard backed hogs-beetles, I guess—colored like the brown, blue and black of a peacock's tail. They hang on until the legs of them are so waxy they can't stick a minute longer, and then they break away and fall to the ground. They just lay there on their backs, fably clapping air. When it wears off a bit, up they get and go crawling back for more, and they so full they bump into each other and roll over. Sometimes they can't climb the tree until they wait to sober up a little. There's a lot of big black and gold bumblebees, done for entire, stumbling over the bark and rolling on the ground. They just lay there on their backs, rocking from side to side, singing to themselves like fat, happy babies. The wild bees keep up a steady buzzing with the beating of their wings."

"The butterflies are the worst old toppers of them all. They're just a circus! You never saw the beat of the beauties! They come every color you could be naming and every shape you could be thinking up. They drink and drink until if I'm driving them away they stagger as they fly and turn somersaults in the air. If I love them alone they cling to the grasses, shivering happy-like, and I'm blest, Mother Duncan, if the best of them could be unlocking the front door with a lead pencil, even."

"I never heard of anything so surprising," said Mrs. Duncan.

"It's a rare sight to watch them, and no one ever made a picture of a thing like that before, I'm for thinking," said Freckles earnestly.

"Na," said Mrs. Duncan. "Ye can be pretty sure there didna. The Bird Woman must have word in some way if ye walk the line and I walk to town and tell her."

Freckles took his lunch and went down to the swamp. He could find no trace of anything, yet he felt a tense nervousness, as if trouble might be brooding. He came around to his room and cautiously scanned the entrance before he stepped in. Then he pushed the bushes apart with his right arm and entered, his left hand on the butt of his favorite revolver. Instantly he knew that some one had been there. He could find no trace of a clew to confirm his belief, yet so intimate was he with the spirit of the place that he knew.

He was most sure about the case. Nothing was disturbed, yet it seemed to Freckles that he could see where prying fingers had tried the lock. He stepped back of the case, carefully examining the ground all about it, and close by the tree to which it was nailed he found a deep, fresh footprint in the spongy soil—a long, narrow print, that was never made by the foot of Wesmer. The feeling rose that he was growing restive at last under the strain, he plunged boldly into the swamp and searched minutely all about his room, but he could not discover the least thing to give him further cause for alarm. Every rod he traveled he used the caution that sprang from knowledge of danger and the direction from which it would probably come. Several times he thought of sending for McLean, but for his life he could not make up his mind to do it with nothing more tangible than one footprint to justify him.

He waited until he was sure Duncan would be at home, if he were coming for the night, before he went up to supper. The first thing he saw as he crossed the swale was the big days in the yard.

There had been no one passing that day, and Duncan readily agreed to watch until Freckles rode to town. He told Duncan of the footprint and urged him to watch closely. Duncan said he might rest easy and, filling his pipe and taking a good revolver, went

down to the Limberlost.

Freckles made himself clean and neat and raced for town, but it was night and the stars were shining before he reached the home of the Bird Woman. As he neared the steps he saw that the place was swarming with young people, and the angel, with an excuse to a group that surrounded her, came scurrying up to him.

"Oh, Freckles!" she cried. "So you could get off? We were so afraid you could not. I'm as glad as I can be."

"I don't understand," said Freckles. "Were you expecting me?"

"Why, of course," exclaimed the angel. "Haven't you come to my party? Didn't you get my invitation? I sent you one."

"By mail?" asked Freckles.

"Yes," said the angel. "I had to help with the preparations, and I couldn't find time to drive out. But I wrote you a letter and told you that the Bird Woman was giving a party for me and we wanted you to come. I told them at the office to put it with Mr. Duncan's mail."

"Then that's likely where it is at



HE FOUND A DEEP, FRESH FOOTPRINT.

present," said Freckles. "Duncan only comes to town once a week and at times not that. He's home tonight for the first in a week. He's watching an hour for me until I was coming to the Bird Woman with a bit of work I thought she'd be caring to hear about. Is she where I can see her?"

The angel's face clouded.

"What a disappointment!" she cried. "I did so want all my friends to know you. Can't you stay anyway?"

Freckles glanced from his wading boots to the patent leathers of some of the angel's friends near by and smiled whimsically, but there was no danger of his ever misjudging her again.

"You know I cannot, angel," he said. "I'm afraid I do," she said ruefully. "It's too bad. But there is a thing I want for you more than to come to my party, and that is to hang on and win with your work. I think of you every day, and I just pray that those thieves are not getting ahead of you. Oh, Freckles, do watch closely!"

She was so lovely a picture as she stood before him, ardent in his cause, that Freckles could not take his eyes from her to notice what her friends were thinking. If she did not mind, why should he? Anyway, if they really were the angel's friends probably they were better accustomed to her ways than he.

"Must I go for the Bird Woman?" she pleaded.

"Indeed, you must," answered Freckles firmly.

The angel returned to say that the Bird Woman was telling a story to those inside and she could not come for a short time.

"You won't come in?" she pleaded.

"I must not," said Freckles. "I am not dressed to be among your friends."

"Then," said the angel, "we mustn't go through the house, because it would disturb the story, but I want you to come around the outside way to the conservatory and have some of my birthday lunch and get some cake to take to Mrs. Duncan and the babies."

The night was warm and the angel most beautiful and kind. A sort of triple delirium of spirit, mind and body seized upon Freckles and developed a boldness all unnatural. He slightly parted the heavy curtains that separated the conservatory from the company and looked in. He almost stopped breathing. He had read of things like that, but he had never seen them.

"Do you suppose heaven is any finer than that?" asked Freckles.

The angel burst into a laugh.

"Do you want to be laughing harder than that?" queried Freckles.

"A laugh is always good," said the angel. "A little more avoidupus won't hurt me. Go ahead."

"Well, then," said Freckles, "it's only that I feel all over as if I belonged in there. I could wear fine clothes and move over those floors and hold me own against the best of them."

"But where does my laugh come in?" demanded the angel as if she had been defrauded.

"And you ask me where the laugh comes in, looking me in the face after that?" marveled Freckles.

"I wouldn't be so foolish as to laugh at such a manifest truth as that," said the angel. "Any one that knows you even half as well as I do knows that you are never guilty of a discourtesy and you move with twice the grace of any man here. Why shouldn't you feel

as if you belonged where people are graceful and courteous?"

"On me soul," said Freckles, "you are kind to be thinking it. You are doubly kind to be saying it."

The curtains parted, and a woman came toward them. Her silks and laces trailed along the polished floors. The lights gleamed on her neck and arms and flashed from rare jewels. She was smiling brightly and until she spoke Freckles had not fully realized that it was his loved Bird Woman.

Noticing his bewilderment, she cried. "Why, Freckles, don't you know me in my war clothes?"

"I do in the uniform in which you fight the Limberlost," said Freckles.

The Bird Woman broke into a laugh. Then he told her why he had come.

(Continued next week.)

Lower Freight Rates Coming.

Pittsburgh, Pa., Sept. 12.—Of great benefit to many communities throughout Pennsylvania will be the plans which it is proposed shall be adopted for the improvement of Pittsburgh's wharves. The wharves in this city are today practically as nature made them, but the plans of the United States government to completely canalize the Ohio river has stirred the people of Pittsburgh to activity and now modern docks with up-to-date loading and unloading devices are to replace the antiquated sloping wharves. Not only are the wharves to be improved, but a belt line railroad is to be constructed for the purpose of transshipment from water to rail. And this is where the interior communities of Pennsylvania will benefit. Transportation by water is so much cheaper than by rail that when navigation is possible upon the Ohio all kinds of goods will be shipped upon that river. With proper terminal facilities at Pittsburgh shipments from many states to Pennsylvania towns will be made most of the distance by water, thus reducing the cost on commodities that would otherwise have to be shipped entirely by rail.

In order that the Pittsburgh improvement will be the best of its kind possible an engineer of the Pittsburgh Flood Commission, Kenneth C. Grant, has been sent abroad to make studies of modern docks and terminal facilities in Europe. He is to make a report this month upon which will be based a bond issue of about \$1,000,000 for the purpose of making Pittsburgh's docks adequate to handle the river freight traffic that is certain to come with the canalization of the Ohio river to Cairo.

In addition to providing modern docks, this improvement will provide for the erection of a sea wall and for certain beautification features that will make the water front attractive. The wall is to be built in connection with flood reservoirs that the Flood Commission recommends for effectually controlling the floods in the upper Ohio and in the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers. When Pittsburgh completes this big improvement it will be the first city along the Ohio river to provide up-to-date shipping facilities and the first city to take advantage of the great reduction in freight rates that will come through the use of water transportation.

—Don't read an out-of-date paper. Get all the news in the WATCHMAN.

Medical.

Good News

MANY BELLEFONTE READERS HAVE HEARD IT AND PROFITED THEREBY.

"Good news travels fast," and the thousands of bad back sufferers in Bellefonte are glad to learn that prompt relief is within their reach. Many a lame, weak and aching back is had no more, thanks to Doan's Kidney Pills. Our citizens are telling the good news of their experience with the Old Quaker Remedy. Here is an example worth reading:

William McClellan, 244 E. Lamb St. Bellefonte, Pa., says: "Doan's Kidney Pills fixed me up in good shape and consequently I think highly of them. I suffered for a long time from pain and lameness across my back and some mornings I could hardly get out of bed. My back ached constantly and the kidney secretions were irregular in passage. Hearing a great deal about Doan's Kidney Pills, I decided to try them and procured a supply from Green's Pharmacy Co. They cured me and I am now enjoying good health. My advice to anyone afflicted with kidney complaint is to take Doan's Kidney Pills. (Statement given October 21, 1911.)"

RE-ENDORSEMENT.
Mr. McClellan was interviewed on November 23, 1911 and he said: "I have taken Doan's Kidney Pills once or twice during the past two years, while suffering from backache and they have given me prompt relief. You are welcome to publish my testimonial at any time you desire."

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.

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 KRUMHOLTZ, Druggist,
57-25-3rd, Bellefonte, Pa.

Dry Goods, Etc.

LYON & COMPANY.

La Vogue Fashions

We take pleasure in announcing to the Ladies of Centre county that we are the sole agents of the well-known La Vogue COATS AND COAT SUITS.

It will also prove quite interesting to all women who are particularly in the matter of selecting their garments.



You will find in La Vogue not only pleasing, stylish models of fashionable trend, but quality, wear-giving material, neatly and exactly made by expert tailors. In fact the best in clothes Linings and Trimming effects await you in a La Vogue garment. The new fall styles in La Vogue Women's and Misses' Suits and Coats are ready for your inspection.

Lyon & Co. Bellefonte

Shoes.

Shoes.

Yeager's Shoe Store

Fitzezy

The
Ladies' Shoe

that
Cures Corns

Sold only at

Yeager's Shoe Store,

Bush Arcade Building, BELLEFONTE, PA.