

Plantation Pageants by Joel Chandler Harris

(Copyright, 1899, by Joel Chandler Harris)

PART XI.

Cawky, the Crow.

After the fox hunt Buster John felt that he had recovered some lost ground, as the saying is. Up to that time he had been somewhat handicapped by the experience of Sweetest Susan. You will remember that it was Sweetest Susan who discovered the Grandmother of the Dolls. This was a very important discovery, too, for it led to the acquaintance of little Mr. Trimblefinger and to the queer adventures of the children in the country next door to the world. More than that, Sweetest Susan had been kidnapped by the crazy man. It was natural, therefore, that Buster John should feel "put out," as he expressed it, by these events. But his talk with Mr. Bobb had led to the manufacture of the wonderful bubble, and now he had witnessed a real fox hunt, perhaps the most interesting one that ever occurred in all that part of the country.



HE PURSUED THE CAT ABOUT.

The long time the story of the fox hunt was the only piece of oral literature the children had to discuss, but there was always something new to be said of Hodo, or the sorrel horse, or Joe Maxwell. Sweetest Susan hardly knew whether to feel sorry for Old Scar-Face or not. Sometimes she was inclined to regret his taking off, but when she remembered the screams of the poor little rabbit she was willing to believe that the old fox had received his deserts. As for Drusilla, she had not a spark of sympathy for Old Scar-Face. "I'm glad they caught 'im," she said. "Do dogs don't 'im do like he done de yuther creetur. An' 'pon top er dat, he sot up dar an' grin an' brag 'bout how he gwine ter outdo um. I hear ol' folks say dat dem what de mos' braggin' is de mos' no' count. I'm glad dey got 'im. He had plenty time ter go 'way; he des hung 'round here kaze he b'lieve dey ain't no dog kin outdo 'im."

One day Buster John, walking with his mother through the lot, burst out laughing at something the Muscovy drake said to the big white gander. He laughed so long that he was obliged to carry him back to the house, and proceeded to dose him with hot and bitter drinks. He made matters worse by telling her what the drake had said to the gander, for she was then sure he was "flicky" in the head, and so he had to go to bed, though the sun was shining a warm invitation. He never made a similar mistake, nor did Sweetest Susan after this terrible warning.

Drusilla finally consented to make one of the party, but she was particular to lay down the conditions under which she would give the youngsters the pleasure of her company. She held up her left hand with the fingers wide apart, and she named the conditions she would register them by pulling the fingers together with her right hand. "You all say you want me ter go dar what dat ol' man live at? I tell you right now I ain't achin' ter go dar, kase I don't like de way he look out'n de eye; he chuck full er rank venom. But ef I does go, I ain't gwine ter follow after you in no foolishness. 'Ef you sit away wid go an' sit in um. 'Ef you want jump in springs an' pon an' dream yonder some'er else, go ahead an' do it. But don't ax me ter do it, kase if you does you'll have a great tale to tell Miss Rachel, an' she'll gi' mammy de wink, an' mammy 'll gi' me a frailin' Well, I'll take de frailin' 'I'd rather be beat ter death on top er de ground dan ter git flew'd wid in a bubble er drowned in dat ar Fimblethinger country."

These were the terms of the contract to which Buster John and Sweetest Susan were compelled to give their assent before Drusilla would consent to go. "All dat," explained Drusilla, "don't hinder you all fun gwine whar you choose ter go. 'Ef you want git in bubbles an' gi' flew'd away wid, go an' sit in um. 'Ef you want jump in springs an' pon an' dream yonder some'er else, go ahead an' do it. But don't ax me ter do it, kase if you does you'll have a great tale to tell Miss Rachel, an' she'll gi' mammy de wink, an' mammy 'll gi' me a frailin' Well, I'll take de frailin' 'I'd rather be beat ter death on top er de ground dan ter git flew'd wid in a bubble er drowned in dat ar Fimblethinger country."

The children faithfully promised that, no matter what happened or what they did, they wouldn't ask Drusilla to join them, and she wouldn't complain about her to their mother. This seemed to lift a heavy load from Drusilla's mind. She breathed freely and became even cheerful. The journey to Mr. Bobb's house was in all respects a repetition of the former one—Johnny Bapter driving the two-seated spring wagon and singing stately, an when they arrived at their destination, Miss Elvry was standing at the door with a smile of welcome. Little Billy Biscuit had grown considerably. He had larger ideas, too. He was no longer a child in a man, but a little fellow tied the fence, and then turned on his side answering all the purposes of a fence in this case. The bridle was a length or two of basting thread, and though it seemed to be a frail substitute for a halter, it must have been strong, for it served to hold this restive horse, which was making tremendous efforts to gain its freedom, paving the ground and kicking out its heels at a terrible rate.

The earnestness of Little Billy Biscuit was comical to see, and Sweetest Susan thought he was the finest spectacle she had ever witnessed. She wanted to hug the child then and there; but Miss Elvry shook her head. "I would upset him for the rest of the day," she explained. "Ef you want to please him, just say, 'Whoo, there.' 'Ef you want to be mad at him, you've got to believe in his make-believe. You wouldn't believe it, honey, but that child ain't half as much trouble as a grown person. Why, when you want him to be still all you've got to do is to tie him with some sewin' thread 'round his neck, an' he'll be as good as dead, an' he'll be as good as dead."

The children entered at once into the spirit of the affair. At a word Sweetest Susan and Buster John became horses, and Drusilla was suddenly at the head of the Arabian Nights could have accomplished it. No waving of wands nor incantation was necessary. This drama of the horses was all very well for a little while, but the older children being used to more variety, soon grew tired of it, and it was not long before they succeeded in coaxing Little Billy Biscuit out of doors. Just as they went into the yard, Miss Elvry suddenly remembered that she had forgotten to feed the hen with the young chickens that had just been "taken off," so she mixed some cornmeal and water in a tin pan, and began to call the hen.

The call was answered from overhead in the most unexpected manner. A crow, cawing and cawing, began to circle around Miss Elvry's head, and presently lit in the pan of dough. "O, get away from here!" Miss Elvry cried impatiently; "you're allers stickin' yourself wher you ain't wanted."

She pushed the crow from the pan, but he flew back with many cawks and not until Miss Elvry had given him a good share of dough, did he cease his fluttering. She dropped a wad of the food on the ground, and this the crow proceeded to devour, talking to himself all the while. Miss Elvry went to another part of the yard, hunting for the young chickens, but the children stood still and watched the crow. "Ain't I done tol' you dey wuz conjer-people?" whispered Drusilla. "Why you can't git in a mile er no crow less'n you been rubbin' sein dere folks. Now min' what I tell you; dis crow sh' be s'atan; you may follow after 'im ef you want, but I ain't gwine ter let 'im out'n my tracks."

carefully, uttering a crowsy grumble all the time. The solemn way in which he went about this was very amusing to the children. Buster John laughed so loudly that the crow stopped and looked at him sideways, speaking for the first time so the children could understand him. "Cackity! What's all the fuss about?" Then he went on eating the dough. "What is your name?" asked Buster John. "Cawky! Cawky! Cawky!"

"Well, Cawky, where did you come from?" "Anywhere around here, ik-ek," Miss Elvry came up at this moment, and, without knowing it, interrupted the conversation. "One year the crows built in that pine thicket down yander. He must 'a' fell from the nest, for one day I found him stretched out on the ground more dead than alive. I fetched him home an' nursed him till he could take keer of himself. He goes off an' comes back an' he's fatter than any chicken on the place. He pays for his keep, too, for he's our crow trap. I'll tell you about it before you go."

"Kuk-akity; how quick she talks! What did she say?" "That you are her crow trap," said Sweetest Susan. "Ak-trap, trap-ak," chuckled Cawky. "What is a trap?" "Something that catches things," explained Buster John. "Ek-ek-ak-ak!" laughed the crow without smiling. "I know! In the corn row! Cackity! It's funny! Said one old crow to another old crow, 'What makes people do us so? For, you know, since we were born, it's been our trade to pull up corn.' Cack-ak, caw!"

There was something very quaint about Cawky as he walked back and forth, chuckling, laughing and apparently trying to "show off" before strangers. He did it all so solemnly that it became comical, and the children were so much amused that they laughed till the tears came in their eyes—



THEY BORE HER SLOWLY TO EARTH.

that is, they all laughed except Drusilla, who firmly believed that the crow was a bird of evil. "Why do you like to catch your cousin?" asked Buster John. "Cackity! Because-ek! they are my cousins, ek-ek!"

"Maybe you've already caught some of your brothers and sisters," said Sweetest Susan, using what Buster John called her Sunday school voice. "Ek! I hope so! I want-ek to catch my daddy and my mammy. Cackity! Did't they push me from the nest and leave me on the ground in the rain and cold? Ek! I remember! And when I went back among them didn't they drive me away? Cackity! They said I smelt like man. I've paid them well, and I'll pay them better, Ek-ek-ek!"

In the distance Buster John saw a chicken hawk circling around. "Get under the house, Cawky; yonder comes a hawk." "Ek-cackity! A hawk!" He rose in the air and flew to the top of a neighboring pine and sat there waiting. The hawk came nearer and nearer, circling on motionless pinions, a picture of wild beauty. Suddenly Cawky rose in the air, and began to circle, too.

"Ker-rak-ker-rak!" This was the war cry of Cawky's brethren. Talon or three repeated at intervals, it meant a hawk. Repeated a dozen times with no interval it meant that an owl had been discovered asleep in the woods.

The hawk made a lusty effort to escape, and would have succeeded if Cawky had been without allies, but in every direction crows were seen rising in the air—some ahead of the hawk, some behind her, and some on each side. Rising and circling, she suddenly swooped and struck at Cawky, but missed him by a hair's breadth, as she came down with a rush and a swoosh. It was a fierce, but foolish move. Before the hawk could recover herself the whole colony of crows was upon her, and they began a battle royal, which could have but one result. The hawk was fierce and desperate, her talons were sharp and her beak was strong. The crows had no talons, but their beaks were numerous. More than one was committed to flight away as the result of a moment's contact with the hawk, and the boldest among them found a place on the hawk's back, out of reach of beak and talons, and bore her slowly to earth, where in the course of a few moments she was held upright. The children ran forward as hard as they could when they saw the hawk falling, but she was dead when they reached the scene, and Cawky was strutting around her, chuckling and talking to himself, ready to strike her with his strong beak if she showed any sign of life.

There was nothing to do but to carry the hawk to the house as a trophy, and show her to Miss Elvry, who expressed great satisfaction, and gave it as her firm and unalterable opinion that it was the very same hawk that had been snatching her young chickens right from under her nose for two seasons past. No doubt Miss Elvry was right, for the hawk was very large and fat. By that time Johnny Bapter had returned from his errand to Harmony Grove. He called the children and they clustered into the wagon, and by dinner time they were safe at home. PRATTLE OF THE YOUNGSTERS. "Willie, I hate to whip you. It hurts me more than it does you." "Let me do it, then. She can't pound hard 'nough to hurt me ner her either."

GET A FREE SAMPLE —OF— MORROW'S KID=NE=OIDS

AND GET WELL — THEY ARE A GUARANTEED CURE FOR ALL KIDNEY TROUBLES.

The manufacturer of Kid-ne-oids has such absolute faith in the efficiency of this wonderful remedy that he has arranged to give every sufferer from kidney trouble a sample of KID-NE-OIDS ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE.

YOU HAVE KIDNEY TROUBLE! If you suffer from pains in the side. If your bones ache. If your vision is impaired. If you have loss of appetite. If your hands or feet swell. If you have pains in the back.

Get a Sample of MORROW'S KID-NE-OIDS and GET WELL!

5,000 SAMPLES GIVEN AWAY!

Only ONE SAMPLE to each applicant will be given away to all who call between 9 a. m. and 9 p. m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20TH

Out of town residents may secure a free sample by writing us inclosing a 2 cent stamp.

MEYERS-DILLON DRUG COMPANY, Omaha, Nebraska, S. E. COR. 16TH AND FARNAM STREETS. TEL. 150.

Cawky seemed to enjoy it, too. But he subsided when Miss Elvry brought out the broom, and went stalking back to the children as solemnly as an old-time preacher. "Why do you like to catch your cousin?" asked Buster John. "Cackity! Because-ek! they are my cousins, ek-ek!"

"Maybe you've already caught some of your brothers and sisters," said Sweetest Susan, using what Buster John called her Sunday school voice. "Ek! I hope so! I want-ek to catch my daddy and my mammy. Cackity! Did't they push me from the nest and leave me on the ground in the rain and cold? Ek! I remember! And when I went back among them didn't they drive me away? Cackity! They said I smelt like man. I've paid them well, and I'll pay them better, Ek-ek-ek!"

In the distance Buster John saw a chicken hawk circling around. "Get under the house, Cawky; yonder comes a hawk." "Ek-cackity! A hawk!" He rose in the air and flew to the top of a neighboring pine and sat there waiting. The hawk came nearer and nearer, circling on motionless pinions, a picture of wild beauty. Suddenly Cawky rose in the air, and began to circle, too.

"Ker-rak-ker-rak!" This was the war cry of Cawky's brethren. Talon or three repeated at intervals, it meant a hawk. Repeated a dozen times with no interval it meant that an owl had been discovered asleep in the woods.

The hawk made a lusty effort to escape, and would have succeeded if Cawky had been without allies, but in every direction crows were seen rising in the air—some ahead of the hawk, some behind her, and some on each side. Rising and circling, she suddenly swooped and struck at Cawky, but missed him by a hair's breadth, as she came down with a rush and a swoosh. It was a fierce, but foolish move. Before the hawk could recover herself the whole colony of crows was upon her, and they began a battle royal, which could have but one result. The hawk was fierce and desperate, her talons were sharp and her beak was strong. The crows had no talons, but their beaks were numerous. More than one was committed to flight away as the result of a moment's contact with the hawk, and the boldest among them found a place on the hawk's back, out of reach of beak and talons, and bore her slowly to earth, where in the course of a few moments she was held upright. The children ran forward as hard as they could when they saw the hawk falling, but she was dead when they reached the scene, and Cawky was strutting around her, chuckling and talking to himself, ready to strike her with his strong beak if she showed any sign of life.

There was nothing to do but to carry the hawk to the house as a trophy, and show her to Miss Elvry, who expressed great satisfaction, and gave it as her firm and unalterable opinion that it was the very same hawk that had been snatching her young chickens right from under her nose for two seasons past. No doubt Miss Elvry was right, for the hawk was very large and fat. By that time Johnny Bapter had returned from his errand to Harmony Grove. He called the children and they clustered into the wagon, and by dinner time they were safe at home. PRATTLE OF THE YOUNGSTERS. "Willie, I hate to whip you. It hurts me more than it does you." "Let me do it, then. She can't pound hard 'nough to hurt me ner her either."



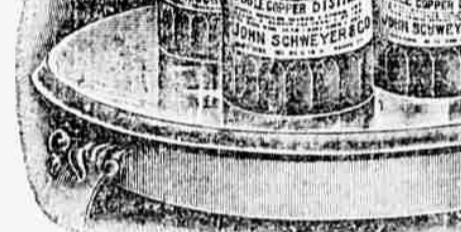
Goods shipped in plain package with contents, and if not correctly satisfactory send them back at our expense and we will refund your money at once.

4 FULL QUARTS WHISKEY

We are the only distillers in America shipping Pennsylvania Pure Rye to consumers direct. Bear this in mind.

SCHWEYER'S PURE 8 YEAR OLD PENNSYLVANIA RYE WHISKEY \$3.60 EXPRESS PREPAID

The prime old whiskey prescribed for medicinal and general use.



We save you the middlemen's profits, and besides guarantee you absolutely pure whiskey without adulteration. JOHN SCHWEYER & CO., DISTILLERS, Address all orders to Warehouse K, 609, 611, 613 W. 12th St., Chicago.

Whiskey bearing the name of "Schweyer" is proof sufficient that it is the best that the distillery can produce. No man ever drank more delicious goods. Money can hardly buy its equal.

This is the famous Pennsylvania whiskey, which for 27 years has been distilled under the personal supervision of Mr. John Schweyer, himself. Schweyer's Pennsylvania Rye is double copper distilled and aged in wood—is never less than 8 years old and most of it is ten and twelve years old, when it leaves the distillery. This whiskey is now offered direct to the consumer from our distillery at the low price of \$3.60 for four full quarts, that cannot be bought elsewhere for less than \$6.00.

We also offer our SEVEN YEAR OLD CABINET PENNSYLVANIA RYE at \$3.00 EXPRESS PREPAID

\$3.00 for four full quarts. This is the finest 7 year old rye ever distilled and cannot be duplicated for less than \$5.00.

Orders for Ariz., Colo., Cal., Idaho, Mont., Nev., Mex., Ore., Utah, Wash., Wyo., must call for 20 cents freight prepaid, or write us for particulars before remitting. We refer to any Commercial Agency, Express Company or Bank in the United States.

\$100.00 in Gold Free.

A E E G I K L M N O O O P R R W Y Y

BRAINS COUNT

We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any one who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy. We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any one who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy. We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any one who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy.

\$100.00 in Gold Free.

A E E F W A R P U Z Z L E.

H I L M O R S S S T T

We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any person who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy. We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any person who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy. We will give \$100.00 in Gold to any person who will arrange the known ships of the United States Navy.

LADIES' FRIEND

TURKISH T. & P. PILLS brings monthly menstruation sure to the lady. Never disappoint you. It's best. 2 boxes will help any case. By mail. Dr. Williams' Drug Store, 16th & Farnam, Omaha, Neb.

QUALITY TALKS. A glass or two of Blatz THE STAR BEER tells of ITS QUALITY in a language, of its own, most convincing. Highest Awards at Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, 1898. VAL BLATZ BREWING CO., MILWAUKEE, U.S.A. OMAHA BRANCH: 1412 DOUGLAS STREET. Telephone 1081.