



PROLOGUE.

This romance of Freckles and the Angel of the Limberlost is one of the most novel, entertaining, wholesome and fascinating stories that have come from the pen of an American author in many years.

Freckles, a plucky waf who guards the Limberlost timber leases and dreams of angels.

The Swamp Angel, in whom Freckles' sweetest dream materializes.

McLean, a member of a lumber company, who befriends Freckles.

Mrs. Duncan, who gives motherly love and a home to Freckles.

Duncan, head teamster of McLean's timber gang.

The Bird Woman, who is collecting camera studies of birds for a book.

Lord and Lady O'More, who come from Ireland in quest of a lost relative.

The Man of Affairs, brusque of manner, but big of heart.

Wessner, a timber thief who wants rascality made easy.

Black Jack, a villain to whom thought of repentance comes too late.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ANGEL MATERIALIZES.

HERE had Freckles ever found and how had he transplanted such ferns? As McLean turned from them he stopped suddenly. He had reached the door of the cathedral. That which Freckles had attempted would have been patent to any one. What had been in the heart of the shy, silent boy when he had found that long, dim stretch of forest, decorated its entrance, cleared and smoothed its aisle and carpeted its altar? What veriest work of God was in these mighty living pillars and the arched dome of green? How like stained cathedral windows were the long openings between the trees, filled with rifts of blue, rays of gold and the soft emerald of leaves? Where could be found mosaics to match this aisle paved with living color and glowing lights? Was Freckles a devout Christian and did he worship here? Or was he an untaught heathen and down this vista of entrancing loveliness did he come plying and dryads, nymphs and fairies dance for him?

Who can fathom the heart of a boy? McLean had been thinking of Freckles as a creature of unswerving honesty, courage and faithfulness. Here was evidence of a heart aching for beauty, art, companionship, worship. It was writ large all over the floor, walls and furnishing of that little Limberlost clearing.

When Duncan came McLean told him the story of the fight, and they laughed until they cried. Then they started around the line in search of the tree.

Said Duncan, "Now the boy is in for some trouble." "I hope not," answered McLean. "You never in all your life saw a cur whipped so completely. He won't come back for the repetition of the chorus. We can surely find the tree. If we can't Freckles can. I will bring enough of the gang to take it out at once. That will insure peace for a time at least, and I am hoping that in a month more the whole gang can be moved here. It will soon be fall, and then, if he will go, I intend to send Freckles to my mother to be educated. With his quickness of mind and body and a few years' good help he can do anything. Why, Duncan, I'd give a hundred dollar bill if you could have been here and seen for yourself."

Locating the tree was an easy task because it was so well identified. When the rumble of the lumber wagons passing the cabin on the way to the swamp awakened Freckles next morning he sprang up and was soon following them. The tree was a giant maple and so precious that they almost dug it out by the roots.

McLean had told Freckles to ride on a section of the maple with him, but

FRECKLES

By Gene Stratton-Porter

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Now the boy begged to go into the swamp with Duncan.

"I don't see why you want to go," said McLean. "I have no business to let you out today at all."

"It's me chickens, sir," answered Freckles.

Freckles hurried into the swamp. He was some little distance behind, but he could still see the men. Before he overtook them they had turned from the west road and had entered the swamp toward the east. The underbrush was almost impenetrable. As they plunged into it a great black bird swept over their heads.

Freckles danced wildly. "It's me chickens! Oh, it's me chickens!" he shouted. "Oh, Duncan, come quick! You've found the nest of me precious chickens!"

Duncan hurried down to the mouth of a monstrous log, but Freckles was before him. He crashed through poison vines and underbrush regardless of any danger and climbed on the stump. When Duncan got there he was shouting like a wild thing.

"It's hatched!" he yelled. "Oh, me big chicken has hatched out me little chicken, and there's another egg. I can see it plain, and, oh, the funny little white baby! Duncan, can you see me little white chicken?"

Duncan could easily see it, and so could every one else. Freckles tenderly carried the hissing, blinking little thing out to the light in a leaf lined hat. The men found it sufficiently wonderful to satisfy even Freckles, who had forgotten he was ever so or stiff, and coddled over it with every bartering term of endearment he knew.

Duncan gathered up his tools. "Deal's off, boys!" he said cheerfully. "The log mauna be touched until Freckles' chaunks have finished with it. We might as well gang. Better put it back, Freckles. It's just out, and it may chill. Ye will probably hae twa the morn."

Freckles deposited the boy beside the egg. When he came back he said:



"DEAL'S OFF BOYS!" HE SAID CHEERFULLY.

"I made a big mistake not to be bringing the egg out with the baby, but I was fearing to touch it. It's shaped like a hen's egg, and it's big as a turkey's, and the beautiful blue—just splattered with big brown splotches, like me book said, precise. But you never saw such a sight as it made on the yellow of the rotten wood beside that funny leathery faced little white baby."

"Tell you what, Freckles," said one of the teamsters. "Have you ever heard of this bird woman that goes all over the country with a camera and makes pictures? She made some on my brother Jim's place last summer, and Jim's so wild about them he quits plowing and goes after her about every nest he finds. He helps her all he can to get them, and then she gives him a picture. Jim's so proud of what he has he keeps them in the Bible. He shows them to everybody that comes and brags about how he helped to take them. If you're smart you'll send for her and she'll come and make a picture just like life. If you help her she will give you one. It would be uncommon pretty to keep after your birds are gone. I dunno what they are. I never see their like before. They must be something rare. Any you fellows ever see a bird like that hereabouts?"

No one ever had. "Well," said the teamster, "failing to get this log lets me off till noon, and I'm going to town. If I was making a living taking bird pictures seems to me I'd be mighty glad for a chance to take one like that."

"Then you be sure to tell her to come," said Freckles. The next morning Freckles hurried about the trail, and on his way down the east side he slipped in to see the chickens. The mother bird was on the nest. He was afraid the other egg might just be hatching, so he did not venture to disturb her. He made the round and reached his study early. He had his lunch along and did not need to start on the second trip until



WAS IT REAL OR WOULD IT VANISH?

the middle of the afternoon. He would have long hours to work on his flower bed, improve his study and learn about his chickens.

The heat became more insistent. Noon came, and Freckles ate his dinner and settled for an hour or two on a bench with a book.

Perhaps there was a breath of sound, Freckles could never afterward remember, but for some reason he lifted his head just as the bushes parted and the face of an angel looked through. Saints, nymphs and fairies had floated down his cathedral aisle for him many times, with forms and voices of exquisite beauty.

Parting the wild roses by the entrance was beauty of which Freckles had never dreamed. Was it real or would it vanish as the other dreams had done? He took a step nearer, gazing intently. This was real flesh and blood. And it was in every way kin of the Limberlost, for no bird of its branches swung with easier grace than this dainty young thing rocked on the bit of moss on which she stood. A sapling beside her was not straighter nor rounder than her slender form. Her soft, waving hair hung about her face with the heat, and curled over her shoulders. It was all of one piece with the gold of the sun which filtered through the branches. Her eyes were just the deepest blue of the iris, her lips the reddest of the forest, and her cheeks exactly of the same satin as the wild rose petals caressing them. She was smiling on Freckles in perfect confidence, and she cried, "Oh, I'm so delighted that I've found you!"

"An' an' was you looking for me?" quavered the boy, incredulous.

"I hoped I might find you," said the angel. "You see, I didn't do as I was told, and I'm lost. The Bird Woman said I should stay in the carriage until she came back. She's been gone hours. It's a perfect Turkish bath in there, and I'm all humpy with mosquito bites. Just when I thought that I couldn't bear it another minute, along comes the biggest Papilio Ajax you ever saw. I knew how pleased she'd be, so I ran after it. It flew so slow and so low that I thought a dozen times I had it. Then all at once it went out of sight over the trees, and I couldn't find my way back to save me. I think I've walked over an hour. I have been mired to my knees. A thorn raked my arm until it is bleeding, and I'm so tired and warm."

She parted the bushes still further. Freckles saw that her little blue cotton frock clung to her, limp with perspiration. It was torn across the breast. One sleeve hung open from shoulder to elbow. A thorn had raked her arm until it was covered with blood, and the gnats and mosquitoes were clustering about it. Her feet were in lace hose and low shoes.

Freckles gasped. In the Limberlost in low shoes? He caught an armful of moss from his carpet and buried it in the ooze in front of her for a footing.

"Get out here where I can see where you are stepping. Quick, for the life of you!" he ordered.

She smiled on him indulgently.

"Why?" she inquired.

"Did anybody let you come here and not be telling you of the snakes?" urged Freckles.

"We met Mr. McLean on the corduroy and he did say something about snakes, I believe. The Bird Woman put on leather leggings, and a nice, parboiled time she must be having! Worst dose I ever had, and I'd nothing to do but sweater."

"Will you be coming out of there?" growled Freckles.

She laughed as if it were a fine joke.

"Maybe if I'd be telling you I killed a rattler curled up on that same place you're standing as long as me body and the thickness of me arm you'd be moving where I can see your footing."

He urged insistently.

"What a perfectly delightful little brogue you speak," she said. "My fa-

ther is Irish, and half ought to be enough to entitle me to do that much. 'Maybe-if I'd-be telling you,' she imitated, rounding and accenting each word carefully.

"If you was understanding the danger," he continued desperately.

"Oh, I don't think there is much!" She tilted on the morass.

"If you killed one snake here it's probably all there is near, and anyway, the Bird Woman says a rattlesnake is a gentleman and always gives warning before he strikes. I don't bear any rattling. Do you?"

"Would you be knowing it if you did?" asked Freckles almost impatiently.

How the laugh of the young thing rippled!

"Would I be knowing it?" she mocked. "Well, you should see the swamps of Michigan where they dump rattlers out of the marl dredges three and four at a time."

Freckles stood astounded. She did know. She was not in the least afraid. She was depending on a rattlesnake to live up to his share of the contract and rattle in time for her to move. The one characteristic an Irishman admires in a woman above all others is courage. Freckles worshiped anew. He changed his tactics.

"I'd be pleased to be receiving you at me front door," he said, "but as you have arrived at the back, will you come in and be seated?"

He waved toward a bench.

The angel came instantly.

"Oh, how lovely and cool!" she cried.

As she moved across his room Freckles had hard work to keep from falling on his knees, for they were very weak, and he was hard driven by an impulse to worship.

"Did you arrange this?" she asked.

"Yes," said Freckles simply.

"Some one must come with a big canvas and copy each side of it," she said. "I never saw anything so beautiful. How I wish I might stay here with you! I will, some day. If you will let me; but now, if you can spare the time, will you help me look for the carriage? If the Bird Woman comes back and finds me gone she will be almost distracted."

"Did you come in on the west road?" asked Freckles.

"I think so," she said. "The man who told the Bird Woman said that was the only place where the wires were down. We drove away in and it was dreadful—over stumps and logs, and in to the hubs. I suppose you know, though. I should have stayed in the carriage but I was so tired. I never dreamed of getting lost. I suspect I will get scolded finely. I go with the Bird Woman half the time during the summer vacations. My father says I learn a lot more than I do at school, and get it straight. I never came within a smell of getting lost before. I thought, at first, it was going to be horrid, but since I've found you, maybe it will be good fun after all."

(To Be Continued.)

LEGAL NOTICE. In the District Court of Cass County, Nebraska. Millie D. Montgomery, Plaintiff, vs. James F. Archer, Defendant.

James F. Archer, defendant, will take notice that on the 9th day of March, A. D. 1912, Millie D. Montgomery, plaintiff herein, filed her petition in the District Court of Cass County, Nebraska, against said defendant, James F. Archer, the object and prayer of said petition are, to quiet the title, in the said real estate to the west line of said quarter; thence south ten rods to the southwest corner of the said northwest quarter of the southeast quarter; thence east to the place of beginning, containing five acres; and to declare null and void and of no force and effect a certain deed of conveyance of said real estate from Abel Crabtree to James F. Archer, which deed is recorded in the deed records of Cass County, Nebraska, in book thirty-four at page 589, and to declare null and void any and all claims of said James F. Archer in and to said real estate; also alleging adverse possession of said premises for more than ten years last past, and prays for equitable relief.

You are required to answer said petition on or before the 22nd day of April, A. D. 1912.

Millie D. Montgomery, Plaintiff. C. A. Rawls, Attorney for Plaintiff. 2-11-wkly-4-wks

NOTICE OF HEARING ON REPORT AND PETITION OF GUARDIAN. Notice is hereby given that William D. Wheeler, guardian of Carl F. Vogt, insane, has filed in this Court his account of moneys received and expended up to March 1st, 1912, and also his petition for the allowance and approval of said account and such other matters as set forth in said petition. That a hearing will be had upon said report and said petition on the 6th day of April, 1912, at the hour of 10 o'clock A. M., at which time all objections, if any, will be heard and considered by the Court, and final orders entered upon all matters in said petition and report.

Witness my hand and seal of said County Court at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 18th day of March, 1912. (Seal) ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge. 2-21-2wks.

Children are more likely to contract the contagious diseases when they have colds. Whooping cough, diphtheria, scarlet fever and consumption are diseases that are often contracted when the child has a cold. That is why all medical authorities say beware of colds. For the quick cure of colds you will find nothing better than Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. It can always be depended upon and is pleasant and safe to take. For sale by F. G. Fricke & Co.

Attorney and Banker Charles S. Aldrich of Elmwood was an over night visitor in the city, having come down to attend the celebration of Judge Beeson's birthday.

Notice of Application for Liquor License. Notice is hereby given to all persons interested and to the public, that the undersigned, Andy Thomsen, has filed his petition and application in the office of the County Clerk of Cass County, Nebraska, as required by law, signed by a majority of the resident freeholders of Eight Mile Grove Precinct, setting forth that the applicant is a man of respectable character and standing and a resident of the state of Nebraska, and praying that license be issued to said Andy Thomsen for the sale of malt, spirituous and vinous liquors for the period of one year from

Advertisement for The Lion 40 motor car. Features include: 40 horse power, self-starting, full floating rear axle, big wheels, complete in every detail, \$1600. R. B. Held Motor Car Company, 1902 Farnam Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

May 17, 1912, ending May 17, 1913, in a building on lot 1, in block 4, in the village of Cedar Creek in Eight Mile Grove Precinct, in Cass County, Nebraska. ANDY THOMSEN, Applicant.

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Insurance advertisement for Farmers' Mutual Fire and Live Stock Insurance Company of Cass County, Nebraska. Includes details on policy amounts, membership fees, and contact information for J. P. Falter, Secretary.

Advertisement for Ira Bates, 8 Miles South of Plattsmouth. States he has installed a saw mill and is prepared to furnish lumber of all kinds, posts and chum wood.

Advertisement for Herman Greeder, Graduate Veterinary Surgeon. Licensed by Nebraska State Board. Calls answered promptly. Phone 378 White, Plattsmouth.

Advertisement for Robert Wikinson, Auctioneer. Located in Dunbar, Neb. Dates made at this office or the Murray State Bank. Rates reasonable.