

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. The characters in this sylvan tale are:

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

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

McLean, a member of a lamber company, who befriends Freckles. Mrs. Duncan, who gives mother love and a home to Freckles. Duncan, head teamster of Mc-

Lean'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

> CHAPTER XVIII. TAKING A PICTURE.

HAVE been thinking," said Freckles. "I believe if you will leave one of the guards on the line-say Hall-that I will begin on the swamp at the north end and lay it off in sections and try to hunt out the marked trees. I suppose they are all marked something like that first maple on the line was Wessner mentioned another good one not so far from that. He said it was best of all. I'd be having the swelled bend if I could find that. Of course I don't know a thing about the trees, but I could hunt for the marks. Jack was so good at it he could tell some of them by the mark, but all he wanted to take that we've got on to so far have just had a deep chip cut out rather low down and where the bushes were thick over it. I believe I could be finding some of them."

"Good head!" said McLean, "We will do that. You may begin as soon as you are rested. And about things you came across in the swamp. Freekles the most trifling little thing that you think the Bird Woman would want. take your wheel and go after her at any time. I'll leave two men on the line, so that you will have one on either side, and you can come and go as you please. Have you stopped to think of all we owe her, my boy?"

"Yis: and the angel-we owe her a lot, too, ' said Freckles. "I owe her me life and honor. It's lying awake nights I'll have to be trying to think how I'm ever to pay her up.'

"Well, begin with the muff," suggested McLean. "That should be fine." can's desire for a hat like the an- delight. gel's. He hesitated a little in the telling and kept sharp watch on Mc- himself, and that was the funniest Lean's face. When he saw the boss' thing of all, for he turned his head up, eyes were full of sympathy he loved down, from side to side, and drew in him anew, for, as ever, McLean was his chin with prinky little Jerks and quick to understand. Instead of dits. He would stretch his neck, laughing he said: "I guess you'll have throw up his head, turn it to one side to let me in on that too. You mustn't and smirk-actually smirk, the most be selfish, you know. I'll tell you complacent and self satisfied smirk what we'll do. Get it for Christmas, that any one ever saw on the face of a I'll be home then, and we can send a bird. It was so comical that Freckies box. You get the hat. I'll add a dress and the angel told the Bird Woman of and wrap. You get Duncan a hat It one day, and gloves. I'll send him a big overcont. and we'll put in a lot of little stuff for the bables."

"That would be away too serious for fun," said Freckles. "That would be heavenly.

A week later everything at the Limberlost was precisely as it had been before the tragedy, except the case in Freckles' room now rested on the stump of the newly felled tree. Enough of the vines were left to cover it prettily, and every vestige of the havoc of a few days before was gone. The new guards were patrolling the

Gene Stratton-Porter

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trall. Freckles was roughly laying off the swamp in sections and searching for marked trees. In that time be had angel found one deeply chipped and the chip cunningly replaced and tacked in. It promised to be quite rare, so he was jubilant. He also found so many subjects for the Bird Woman that her coming was of almost daily occurrence, and the hours he spent with her and the angel were nothing less than golden.

The Limberlost now was arrayed like the queen of Sheba in all her glory. The first frosts of autumn had trailed the purple of her garments, and in her hand was her golden scepter. Everything was at full tide. It seemed as if nothing could grow lovelier. and it was all standing still a few weeks, waiting coming destruction.

The swamp was palpitant with life. Every pair of birds that had flocked to it in the spring was now multiplied by from two to ten. The young were tame from Freckles' triparenthood. and so plump and sleek that they were quite as beautiful as their elders, even if in many cases they tacked their brilliant plumage. There were chubby little groundhogs scudding along the trail. There were cunning baby coons and opossums peeping from hollow logs and trees. Young muskrats followed their parents across the lagoons.

If you could come upon a family of foxes that had not yet disbanded and see the young playing with a wild duck's carcass that their mother had brought and note the pride and satisfaction in her eyes as she lay at one side guarding them it would be a picture not to be forgotten. Freckles never tired of studying the devotion of a fox mother to her bables.

The angel was wild about the baby rabbits and squirrels. Earlier in the season, when the young were still very small, it had so happened that at times Freckles could give into her hands one of these little ones. Then it was pure joy to stand back and watch her heaving breast, flushed cheek and shining eyes. Hers were such lovely eyes. They were forever changing. Now sparkling and darkdignantly at the abuse of any creature. She had carried several of the squirrel and bunny babies home and had the delight conservatory littered with them. Her care of them was perfect.

Brown butterfly time had come. The milkweed and other plants beloved of them, and the air was golden with the flashing satin wings of the monarch. vicercy and argynnis. They outnumbered those of any other color three

Among the birds it really seemed as if the little vellow fellows were in the preponderance. At least they were until the red winged blackbirds and hobolinks that had nested on the upland came swarming by hundreds for these inst few weeks before migration. Never was there a finer feast spread for the birds. The grasses were tilled with seeds; so, too, were weeds of every variety. Fall berries were ripe. Wild grapes and black haws were

They seemed to feel the new reign of peace and furness most of all. As for hunting, they didn't even have to bunt for themselves these days, for the bounty now being spread before Little Chicken every day was more than be could master, and he was glad to have his parents come down and feast with

He was a fine, overgrown fellow, and his wings, with quills of jetty black. gleaming with bronze, were so strong they almost lifted his body. The funny little hops, springs and sidewise bounds he gave set Freckles and the angel, hidden out in the swamp watch-Freckles told McLean of Mrs. Dun- ing him, into smothered chuckles of

Sometimes he fell to coquetting with

When she tinished her work on Little

Chicken she left them the camera all ready for use, telling them they might bide back in the bushes and watch. If Little Chicken came out and truly smirked and they could squeeze the bulb at fust the proper moment to snap him she would be more than de-

Freckles and the angel quietly curled down beside a log and with eager eyes and softest breathing patiently waited. They were becoming anxious. for the light would soon be gone and

they had so wanted to try for the picture. At last Little Chicken lifted his head, opened his beak and gaped He dozed a minute or two The angel said that was his beauty sleep. Then he lazily gaped again and stood up, stretching and yawning. He ambled leisurely down toward the gateway, and the angel said, "Now, we may have a chance, at last.'

"I do hope so," shivered Freckles, With one accord they rose to their knees and trained their eyes on the mouth of the log. The light was full and strong. Little Chicken prospected again with no results. He dressed his plumage, polished his beak, and when he felt fine and in full tollet he began to flirt with himself. Freckles' eyes snapped and his breath sucked between his elenched teeth.

"He's going to do it." whispered the

Little Chicken nodded daintily and ruffled his feathers. He gave his head sundry little sidewise jerks and rapidly shifted his point of vision. Once there was the fleeting little ghost of a

"Now! No!" snapped the angel. Freckles leaned toward the bird. Tense as a steel trap he waited. Unconsciously the hand of the angel clasped his. He scarcely knew it was there. Suddenly Little Chicken sprang beleweled her crown in flashing topaz, straight up in the air and landed with ruby and emerald. About her feet a thud. The angel started slightly, but Freckles was immovable. Then, as if in approval of his last performance, the overgrown baby wheeled until he was more than three-quarters. almost full side, toward the camera, straightened on his legs, squared his shoulders, stretched his neck full height, drew in his chin and smirked his most pronounced smirk directly in the face of the lens.

Freckles' fingers closed on the bulb convulsively, and the angel's closed on his at the instant. Then the angel heaved a great sigh of relief and lifted her hands to push back the damp. clustering hair from her face.

Hand in hand they ran for the north end of the swamp, yelling, "We got it!

The Bird Woman plunged into the swale at the mouth of Sleepy Snake creek and came wading out with a couple of cameras and dripping tri-

Moved by an impulse she never afterward regretted, she bent and laid her lips on Freckles' forehead, kissing him gently and thanking him for his many kindnesses to her in her loved work. Freckles started off walking on air, and he felt inclined to keep watching behind to see if the trail were not curling up and rolling down the line after him.

Next day Freckles saw them coming. The angel was standing, waving her hat. He sprang on his wheel and gel gave him the bit of print paper. ling with wit, now humid with sym- Freckles leaned the wheel against a pathy, now burning with the fire of | tree and took the proof with eager courage, now taking on strength of fingers. He had never before seen a color with ambition, now flashing in- study from any of his chickens. He are high in their praise of the variety.

gazing again. "Oh, me little chicken!" he cried. "Oh, me Hegant little chickouter edge of the swale was filled with en! I'd be giving all me money in the bank for you."

Then he thought of the angel's muff mind my stopping at the cabin a min can?" he asked

Freckles went burrying on ahead, and they drove up in time to see Mrs. Duncan gazing as if awestruck and to hear her bewildered "Weet, I be draw-

Freekles and the angel helped the Rird Woman to establish herself for a long stay at the mouth of Sleepy Snake creek. Then she sent them away and waited what luck would bring to her

"Looks as if some one had been cutting a flagpole," said the angel, running the toe of her shoe around a small stump, evidently cut that season. "Freckles, what would anybody cut a tree as small as that for?" "I don't know," said Freckles.

"Well, but I want to know!" said the angel. "Nobody came away in here and cut it just for fun. They've taken it away. Let's go back and see if we can see it anywhere around

She retraced her steps and began searching eagerly. Freckles did the

"There it is," he exclaimed at last. "leaning just as naturally against the trunk of that big maple."

"Yes, and leaning there has killed a patch of bark," said the angel. "See how dried up it looks."

Freckles stared at her. "Angel." he shouted. "I bet you it's a marked tree!" "Course it is!" cried the angel. "It

is one of Jack's marked trees." The clear, ringing echo of strongly swurg axes came crashing through the

Limberlost. "'Tis the gang." shouted Freckles. "They're clearing a place to make the camp. Let's go help!

"Get out your hatchet." commanded the angel. "I predict this is the most valuable tree in the swamp. You found it. I'm going to play that you're my knight. Now, you nail my colors

on it." She untied a blue bow in her halt and doubled it against the tree. The angel had called him her knight! How he loved her! She must not see his face or surely her quick eyes would read what he was fighting to hide. He did not dare lay his lips on that ribbon

Owin to the late spring we find ourselves greatly overstocked on woven wire fencing, and are making the following prices on stock on hand for SPOT CASH:

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JOHN BAUER

PLATTSMOUTH

NEBRASKA

then, but that night he would return description of the return of the re to it. When they had gone a little distance they both looked back, and the morning breeze set the bit of blue waving them a farewell.

She reached him her hand, and, like two children, they broke into a run as they came ne rer the gang. They left the swamp by the west road and followed the trail until they found the men. To the angel it seemed complete

In the shadlest spot on the west side them, of the line, close to the swamp and very close to Freckles' room, they were Crabtree, has gone to Plattscutting down bushes and clearing out mouth, where she has accepted a space for a tent for the men's sleeping quarters, another for a dining hall and a board shack for the cook. The teamsters were unloading, the horses were lost quarters.

(To Be Continued.)

Returns From Excelsior Springs. From Wednesday's Daily.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Sprieck of Stanton, Neb., who passed through raced, jolting and pounding, down the this city several weeks since en corduroy to meet them. The Bird route for Excelsior Springs, Mis- man, has moved his entire pos-Woman stopped the horse, and the an sound, returned from that place session from Mynard to Plattslast evening and were the guests mouth, and by the appearance of ness matters for a time and also of Mr. and Mrs. John McNurlin things will engage in raising over night. Mr. and Mrs. Sprieck male chickens of the yellow leg stood staring. When he lifted his medicinal propensities of the waface to them it was transfigured with ter at Excelsior Springs and feel price farmers cannot stand to passenger on the fast mail this greatly benefited by their several hold it any longer and con- afternoon, where he was called on "You see," he exclaimed, and fell to weeks' stay there. Mr. and Mrs. sequently they are cutting loose professional business. Sprieck will go from here today and the elevators are crowded to to Cullom to visit their daughter, their full capacity, with fifteen ville to visit another daughter, Albert Wetencamp's boys are and Mrs. Duncan's hat and added: Mrs. C. M. Seybert. They will also sporting a brand new buggy of Or at least all but what I'm needing visit their son, Otto Sprieck, near the Anchor Manufactuirng combad for something else. Would you Louisville, and Monday morning pany, and it is an assured fact will start for their home at Stan- they have anchored themselves ute and showing this to Mother Dun ton. While in Plattsmouth our in something that will do them

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> Signature of Chert Heltchior

MYNARD. (Special Correspondent.)

Small grain never gave a more promising prospect for a bumper

rop than at the present time. 'April showers bring May flowers." If this adage is true we will have an abundance of

Mrs. Irons, * niece of Lewis position as waitress in the Riley hotel dining room. Frank Calkin of Brookfield.

cropping leaves from the bushes, and Missouri, visited at the home of each man was doing his part toward R. L. Propst for a few days this the construction of the new Limber | week. Mr. Calkin is a halfbrother of Mrs. Propst.

Mrs. McSweeny, Omaha, visited her daughter, who teaches school in District No. 3. This is Mrs. Me-Sweeny's first visit to this part of the state, and she recommends it very highly.

Uncle Jap, our congenial mail

Corn has reached such a high Mrs. Henry Keil, thence to Louis- cars on track awaiting shipment.

old friend gave us a pleasant call. good, as well as having an up-to-

date article. Everybody intends to go to the show next Saturday, even if they have to pawn some article or other in order to get the price. It has been rumored that some parties are going to camp during the entire stay in order to take in the entire works.

DR Herman Greeder,

Graduate Vetineary Surgeon

Formerly with U. S. Department Agriculture)

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Calls Answered Promptly Phone 378 White, Plattamouth

Mike Rys visited with his family over Sunday. Mike is well known in Cass county, having worked at the trade of blacksmithing in Cass county for about twenty years. He is at the present time working in the shop of R. L. Propst.

O. P. Newbranch returned from Omaha on the morning train tovisited relatives.

D. O. Dwyer was an Omaha

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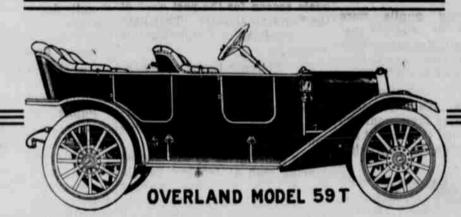
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