MICHAEL O'HALLORAN

By Gene Stratton-Porter

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Mickey pushed aside the bushes, dropped on his knees and "dug in." A second later, with a wild shriek, he rolled over and over, striking and screaming.

"Yellow jacket!" shouted Jud. "Quick, fellows, help Mickey! He's got too close a nest!"

Armed with branches they came beating the air and him; until Mickey had a fleeting thought that if the redhot needles piercing him did not kill, the boys would. Presently he found himself beside a mudhole and as the others "ouched" and "o-ohed" and bewailed their fate, and grabbed mud and plastered it on, he did the same. Jud generously offered, as he had not so many stings, to help Mickey. Soon even the adoring eyes of Peaches could not have told her idol from the mudhole. He twisted away from an approaching handful crying: "Gee, Jud! Leave a feller room to breathe! If you are going to smother me, I might as well die from bites!"

"Bites!" cried the boys while all of them laughed wildly, so wildly that Mickey flushed with shame to think he had so little appreciation of the fun calling a sting a bite, when it was explained to him.

"Well, they sure do get down to business," he chattered, chilling from the exquisite pain of a dozen yellow-jacket stings, one of which on his left eyelid was rapidly closing that important organ. He bowed a willing head for Jud's application of cold mud.

Finally they gathered up their poles and bait and again started toward the lake. The day was warm, and there was little air in the marsh, and on the swampy shore they followed. Suddenly Jud cried: "I tell you, fellows, what's the use of walking all the way around the lake? Bet the boats will be taken when we get there! Let's cut fishing and go swimming right here where there's a cool, shady place. It will be good for you, Mickey, it will cool off your stings a lot."

Mickey promptly began to unbutton, and the others did the same. Then they made their way through the swamp tangle lining the shore at the head of the lake, and tried to reach the water beside the tamaracks. Sam and Junior found solid footing, and waded toward deep water. Jud piloted Mickey to a spot he thought sufficiently treacherous, and said: "Looks good here; you go ahead Mickey, and I'll come after you."

Mickey was unaccustomed to the water. He waded in with the assurance he had seen the others use, but suddenly he cried: "Gee boys, I'm sucking right down!"

Then on his ears fell a deafening clamor. "Help! Help! Quicksands! Mickey's sinking! Help him!"

Mickey threw out his arms. He grabbed wildly; while a force, seemingly gentle but irresistible, sucked him lower and lower, and with each inch it bore him down, gripped tighter and pulled faster. When he glanced at the boys he saw panic in their faces, and he realized that he was probably lost, and they were terror-stricken. The first gulp of tepid water that strangled him in running across his gasping lips, made him think of Peaches. Struggling he threw back his head and so saw a widespreading glance of a big maple not far above him. All that was left of Mickey went into the cry: "Junior! Bend me that branch!" Junior swiftly climbed the tree, crept on the limb and swayed it till it swept the water, then Mickey laid hold; just a few twigs, and then as Junior backed, and the branch lifted higher and higher, Mickey worked, hand over hand, and finally grasped twigs that promised to stand a gentle pull.

Then Jud began to shout instructions: "Little lower, Junior! Get a better grip before you pull hard, Mickey! Maple is brittle! Easy! It will snap with you! Kind of roll yourself and turn to let the water in and loosen the sand. Now roll again! Now pull a little! You're making it! You are out to your shoulders! Back farther, Junior! Don't you fall in, or you'll both go down!"

Mickey was very quiet now. His small face was pallid with the terror of leaving Peaches forever with no provision for her safety. The grip of the sucking sand was yet pulling at his legs and body; while if the branch broke he knew what it meant; that sucking, insistent pulling, and caving away beneath his feet told him. Suddenly Mickey gave up struggling, set his teeth, and began fighting by instinct. He moved his shoulders gently, until he let the water flow in, then instead of trying to work his feet he held them rigid and flattened as he could, and with the upper part of his body still rolling, he reached higher, and kept inching up the branch as Junior backed away, until with sickening slowness he at last reached wood thick as his wrist. Then he dragged his helpless body after him to safety, where he sank in a heap to rest.

"Jud, it's a good thing I went in there first," he said. "Heavy as you are, you'd a-been at the bottom by now, if there is any bottom."

Mickey's gaze traveled slowly over his lumpy, purple frame, and then he looked closely at the others. "Why them stingers must a-give about all of it to me," he commented. "I don't see any lumps on the rest of you."

"Oh, we are used to it," scoffed Jud. "They don't show on you after you get used to them. 'Sides, most all mine are on my head, I kept 'em off with the bushes."

"So did I," chimed in Sam and Junior with one voice.

"I guess I did get a lot the worst of it," conceded Mickey. "But if they only stung your heads, it's funny you didn't know where to put your mud!"

"Well, I'll tell you," said Jud earnestly. "On your head they hurt worst of all. They hurt so blame bad, you get so wild like you don't know where you are stung, and you think till you cool off a little, you got them all over."

"Yes, I guess you do," agreed Mickey.

The boys were slowly putting on their clothing and Junior was scowling darkly. Jud edged close.

"Gosh!" he whispered. "I thought it was only a little spring! I didn't think it was a quicksand!"

"You cut out anything more!" said Junior tersely.

Jud nodded. After a while they started home, walking slowly and each one being particularly careful of and good to Mickey. When he had rested, he could see that it was only an accident; such an astounding one he forgot his bites and could talk of little else.

They made another long pause under a big tree, and Mickey felt so much better as they again started home, that Junior lagged behind, and Jud seeing, joined him. Junior asked softly: "Have any more?"

Jud nodded.

"What?" whispered Junior.

Jud told him.

"Oh that! Nothing in that! Go on!"

So they struck into the path they had followed from the swamp to the woods, when suddenly a warm, yielding coiling thing slipped under Mickey's feet. With a wild cry he leaped across the body of a big rattlesnake that had been coiled in the path. As he arose, clear cut against the light launched the ugly head and wide jaws of the rattler, then came the sickening buzz of its rattles in mad recoil for a second stroke.

"Run Mickey! Jump!" screamed Junior.

"What is it?" asked Mickey bewildered.

"Rattlesnakes! Sure death!" yelled Jud. "Run, fool!"

But Mickey stood perfectly still, and looked, not where the increasing buzz came from, but at them. They had no choice. Jud carried a heavy club; he threw himself in front of Mickey and as the second stroke came, he swung at the snake's head.

Mickey gazed at the snakes in horror.

"Ain't that a pretty small parcel to deal out sudden death in?" he asked. "And if they're laying round like that, ain't we taking an awful risk to be wading through here, this way? Gee, they're the worst sight I ever saw!"

Mickey became violently ill. He lay down for a time, while the boys waited on him, and at last when he could slowly walk toward home, they went on. Jud and Sam left them at the creek, and Junior and Mickey started up the Harding lane. Suddenly Mickey sat down in a fence corner, leaned against the rails, and closed his eyes.

"Gee!" he said. "Never felt so rotten in all my life."

"Maybe that snake grazed you."

"If it did, would it kill me?" asked Mickey dully.

"Well after the yellow-jacket poison in your blood, and being so tired and hot, you wouldn't stand the chance you'd had when we first started," said Junior. "Do you know where it came closest to you?"

"Back of my legs, I s'pose," said Mickey.

"If it had hit you, it would leave two places like needles stuck in, just the width of its head apart. I can't find anything that looks like it, thank the Lord!"

"Here, too!" said Mickey. "You see if it or the quicksands had finished me, I haven't fixed for Lily. They might 'get' her yet. If anything should happen to me, she would be left with no one to take care of her."

"Father would," offered Junior. "Mother never would let anybody take her. I know she wouldn't."

"Well I don't," said Mickey, "and here is where guessing doesn't cut any ice. I must be sure. Tonight I'll ask him. I'd like to know how it happens that sudden death has just been rampaging after me all this trip, anyway: I seemed to get it coming or going."

Junior did not hide his grin quickly enough.

"Aw-w-w-ah!" grated Mickey, suddenly tense and alert.

He sprang to his feet. So did Junior.

"All right, 'look here,'" retorted Junior. His face flamed red, then pale, and his hands gripped, while his jaw protruded in an ugly scowl. Then slowly and distinctly he quoted: 'Course I meant to put it to you stiff; I meant to 'niciate you in the ancient and honorable third degree of the country all right, so's you'd have enough to last a lifetime; but I only meant to put you up against what I'd had myself in the fields and woods: I was just going to test your ginger; I wasn't counting on the quicksand, and the live snake, finding its dead mate Jud fixed for you."

"So you were sneaking in the barn this morning, when we thought you had gone?" demanded Mickey.

Continued in The Morning Bee Tomorrow

Bad Weather

What wonderful comfort it is when you come in wet and cold to have a Radiantfire in your fireplace!

In one instant it glows with amazing heat and cheer. It will warm and dry you before you can say "Jack Robinson." All the charm of the old-fashioned fireplace without any of its inconveniences. From four to nine times the heat of any other gas fire.

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All Charge Purchases made Tuesday will be placed on the November statements, payable December 10th.

for Hallowe'en

Favors, Decorations, Masks, Snappy Mottoes, Noise Makers

Nuts, Hard Candies, Mints, Special Box Chocolates

No matter the kind of a party, whether it be for children, young people or grown people, you are sure to find just the decorations and favors for which you have been looking among those listed below.

For Hallowe'en Festivities

Jack o'Lanterns

Pumpkin faces, black cat heads with green eyes, and grewsome red-eyed skeletons.

5c 10c 15c to $1.50

Each lanter sold is provided with a candle.

Candies

Orange and black jelly beans, special, lb. 39c
Marshmallow pumpkin faces, per lb. 39c
Special orange and chocolate after-dinner mints, lb. 39c
Decorated, lb. 60c
"Orangedale," special Hallowe'en chocolates, per lb. box 74c

Party Favors

Meow Black Cats with jointed necks 10c
Becoming gypsy bandeaux, each 10c
Devils and Ghosts 15c
Serpentine and confetti for indoors and out of doors.

Main Floor

Salted Nuts

Fresh cachew nuts, special, lb. 69c
Salted almonds, special, lb. $1.00
Mixed salted nuts, special, lb. 79c
Blanched Jumbo peanuts, special, lb. 35c

Black Cat Jazz Band

Piece $1.00 and $1.50

Composed of six paper mache instruments, each of which may be purchased separately.

These instruments are an imitation, in shape, of the instruments used by any jazz band or orchestra.

They are played with the human voice by simply humming the desired melody into the mouthpiece.

Trombone Trumpet Saxophone Bassoon Clarionet Alto

In Hallowe'en colors.

Main Floor

Special Tea Room Hallowe'en Luncheon

65c

Plan to have your Hallowe'en luncheon in our Tea Room, where unique table decorations will add to the Hallowe'en spirit.

Seventh Floor

New Style "Roberta" Corset

$5.00 and Up

A new style Roberta corset for the progressive woman. A corset so designed that it accomplishes the work of old-fashioned corsetry, but gives perfect ease and freedom to the figure.

Laced in front, with self-adjusting shield, this model holds the hips and abdomen trim and straight.

Second Floor

New Hose for Women

Chiffon Hose, Pair, 99c

These are truly an exceptional value at this extremely low price. Very sheer hose with reinforced feet in black, castor, cinnamon, gun metal, African brown and gray. Regular 1.50 value.

Sports Sox Pair, $1.00

Richelieu ribbed hose with fancy tops. These are ¾-length to be worn over silk hose and are ideal for outdoor wear. A large assortment of heather mixtures. These are regularly priced up to $2.50. Sizes 9½ to 10½.

Main Floor

French Opera Pumps of Velvet

$11

Lovely new dress pumps for early fall wear. Fashioned with short vamp, round toe and high heels. This model is very flattering to the foot. Attractive cutwork designs on the vamp and sides.

Black Velvet $11
Black Satin $11
Black Patent $12
Black Matt Kid $12

Main Floor

Camels Hair Skirts

New Wrap-Around Models

$6.95

The everlasting popularity of separate skirts is due to their practicability for any number of daytime, sports or out-of-door occasions. The newest fashion development is of

Camels Hair in Darker Shades of Tan and Gray.

These comfortable wrap-around models, being made of caleshair do not wrinkle. Some of them come in plain color, others are slightly checked or plaided with color.

Third Floor

Linens -- Blankets

Waffle Table Damask

Heavy quality all-linen table damask, 64 inches in width. Attractive plaid designs in blue and white and gold and white.
Yard $1.85

Linen Huck Towels

All-linen towels 18x36 inches in size. These are fine quality and finished with neatly hemstitched ends.
Each 65c

Mercerized Table Damask

Bleached damask of excellent quality that retains its satin finish after laundering. 64 inches in width.
Yard 85c

Bed Comforts, Each, $9.95

Lamb's wool bed comforts, covered with good quality silk mull. 72x84 inches in size.

Cotton Blankets, Pair, $1.95

Tan and gray blankets with blue or pink striped borders. Large enough for full sized beds.

All-Wool Blankets

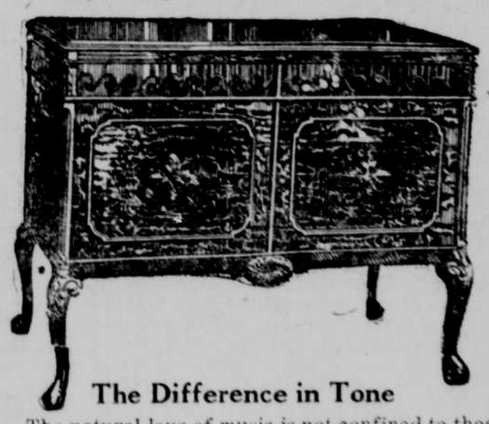
Block plaid designed blankets attractively bound in satinette binding to match predominating color. 66x80-inch size for double bed.
Pair, $9.95

Second Floor

The CHENEY

"Aristocrat of Phonographs"

May Be Bought on Our Household Club Plan



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Ask About the Christmas Club Plan

$100 to $475

Fifth Floor

All Galvanized Iron Snow Shovel, with wooden handle, $1.25