

Despite the popular notion concerning the runaway negro, he never got very far from civilization in his wanderings.

The swamp was to him merely a retreat. His smokehouse was elsewhere. When Isam glided away, leaving the major pleasantly engaged, he followed bog paths with unerring instinct and recalled landmarks with surprising accuracy. But where he was going and what for are matters that can wait. The major must not be left alone.

Isam had not been long gone before the fisherman began to suffer from the perversity of the piscatorial god. The stream and redoubt ceased to bite. The colony had been exhausted or driven away, and in its place settled a tribe of shining cats. These began to give the major occupation. His float would go under handsomely. There would be a strong pull, and resisting steadily a catfish would break into view.

The major stood this persecution, it may be, for 15 minutes, then the patience of the fisherman was exhausted. As the hour wore away, I regret to say that the swearing became almost continuous, and the major reached what is generally termed a "state of mind."

Isam was approaching the camp when the language of the fisher attracted his attention.

"Oomhoo," he said, stopping to listen. "Sum'n dun gone wron wid Mass Craffud."

Creeping to the edge of the brake, he beheld his companion engaged in his unequal conflict with the fate that at times overtakes all fishers. Isam ducked back and held his sides.

"Ef dere's any'n go'n ter upshot dat kind er man quick, hit's cats. Des liss'n now!"

The negro peeped out again. The major was lashing the water with an unfortunate victim, then he saw the irate fisherman drop a huge cat upon the bank and with the paddle dash into pieces, and again grind another beneath his heel and end by kicking the remains far into the stream.

Isam reveled in this display of passion until wearied out and then prepared to make his presence known. Going back a hundred yards into the canebrake, he shouldered his well stuffed sack and lifted his voice in song:

"Sum folks say nigg'r won't steal. I caught one in my co'nfel."

He was cheerfully giving expression to this suggestive refrain when he broke in upon the scene and pretended to stumble over a gasping cat. Down came his bag.

"Dere, now, ef I cood pick'd de ve'y fish I wanted fur ter mek dat chow'd'r, hit 'nd er been dis same cat." Isam's teeth shone, and his eyes glistened. As he looked about and saw the other unwelcome captives he threw up his hands.

"Where you catch 'm, Mass Craffud?"

"Right here," said the major, regarding him suspiciously, "and I haven't been catching anything else for an hour."

"Den don' yer stop now. You des go rite 'long ketchin' 'em, en we go'n ter hav' er chow'd'r fum 'way back. 'Spec' we'll want 'bout six more big ones. How long es hit bin sence you had a catfish chow'd'r, Mass Craffud?"

The major's passion was vanishing.

"About 20 years, I reckon, Isam."

"Well, den, hit ain' go'n ter be 20 years 'fo' you git erunner. I'm go'n ter git ev'n wi' dese hyah big mooms en bout er minit. Lor, Lor! Es I wuz cummin long back I kep a-sayin, 'Now Mass Craffud ain' go'n ter ketch nuthin but brim er yallerbelly wat ain' good fer chow'd'r meat, en all dis co'n en yinguns gott'er be eat des dry, en, bless goodness! hyah's de chow'd'r dun haf made en lyn reddey.' And Isam began to shake his own prizes from the bag.

"Where did you get that corn?" The major fixed his eye sternly upon the nonchalant babler.

"Dis co'n," said Isam, shucking an ear. "es w'at dey calls 'vol'ntery co'n. Hit es co'n w'at cum up fum las year seed w'at de river en de bog scatter. En dese yinguns es uv de wile kine w'at es always up en er-doin.'" The major made no reply, but fixing a new flathead on his hook cast it far into the stream.

Above a blazing fire Isam soon had his kettle swinging, and within its depths sputtered great chunks of fish as they rose and sank in a lake of green corn and onions. With the earnestness of a wizard preparing his strange con-



Preparing the chowder. Ootions he hung over the boiling mixture, adding here a pinch of pepper and there a dash of salt. As he stirred the savory mess he sang a cheerful plantation ditty. The dusk of evening had fallen, and the red light of the flames brought out his figure in bold relief. He seemed a veritable genius of the swamp, and lured from his sport by the cheerful picture and the odor of the meal the major cast his line down and strode into the lighted circle.

CHAPTER V.

To other pens must be left the record of the runaways' everyday life. These pages would not hold the true chronicle

of this novel expedition. Here only is space enough to deal with the prominent features and string them upon a particled thread. Day after day the fishermen plied their rods. Day after day the kettle, and the skillet, and the coals gave forth their dainties. Fish fries decked the table one day, a split rabbit, snared in the canebrake, broiled to a turn, served for the next. Even a tender shant yielded up his innocent young life, and chowders came thick and fast.

But Isam was no longer the chief factor in the daily sins committed. Painful as the truth may seem, it must be told. The portly major became accessory before the fact as well as after. And worse, he became actively participes criminis. He learned to creep in to the spreading field of "voluntary corn"—which, by the way, invaded the swamp lands and rose in columns of surprising regularity—and to load a bag with the juicy ears. He renewed his early skill and crawled behind snake fences to abstract dew christened water melons. In short, he gave way to savagery; for the time being civilization knew him not.

No especial time for breaking camp had been set, but the time was approaching, and the signs were evident. The whisky had long since vanished and the tobacco was threatening to follow the whisky, when an event occurred which left a tradition that old folks in middle Georgia yet tell with tear dimmed eyes and straining sides.

The worthy pair had been foraging for dinner and were returning heavily laden. The major bore a sack of corn, and Isam led the way with three water melons. Unless the reader has attempted to carry three watermelons, he will never know the labor that Isam had imposed upon himself. The two had just reached the edge of the canebrake, beyond which lay the camp, and were entering the narrow path when a magnificent buck came sweeping through and collided with Isam with such force and suddenness as to crush and spatter his watermelons into a pitiful ruin and throw the negro violently to the ground. Instantly the frightened man seized the threatening antlers and held on, yelling lustily for help. The deer made several ineffectual efforts to free himself, during which he dragged the negro right and left without difficulty, but finding escape impossible turned fiercely upon his unwilling captor and tried to drive the terrible horns through his writhing body.

"O Lor, O Lor!" screamed Isam. "O Lor, Mass Craffud, cum help me tu'n dis buck loos'!"

The laugh died away from Major Worthington's lips. None knew better than he the danger into which Isam had plunged. Not a stick, brush, stone or weapon of any description was at hand, except his small pocketknife. Hastily opening that, he rushed upon the deer. Isam's eyes were bursting from their sockets and appealed piteously for the help his stentorian voice was frantically imploring until the woods rang with his agony. Major Worthington caught the nearest antler with his left hand and made a fierce lunge at the animal's throat. But the knife's point was missing, and only a trifling wound was inflicted. The next instant the deer met the new attack with a rush that carried Isam with it and thrust the major to the ground, the knife falling out of reach. Seeing this, the negro let go his hold, rolled out of the way, and with a mighty effort literally ran upon the top of a branching haw bush, where he lay spread out like a bat and moaning piteously.

"Stick ter 'im, Mass Craffud, stick ter 'im! Wo', deer; wo', deer! Stick ter 'im, Mass Craffud!"

And the major stuck. Retaining his presence of mind, he threw his left arm over the deer's neck, and still holding with his right the antler looked about for Isam, who had so mysteriously disappeared. Something like the hold he had had more than once in boyhood and served him well in school combats. But he had never tried to hold a full grown buck, and so he somewhat anxiously searched the scene for the valiant negro. The first words he heard distinctly were:

"Stick ter 'im, Mass Craffud, stick ter 'im! Hit's better fur one ter die den bofe! Hole 'im, Mass Craffud, hele 'im! Wo', deer; wo', deer! Stick ter 'im, Mass Craffud! Steddy! Look out fur es bo'n! Wo', deer! Steddy, Mass Craffud!"

By this time the struggles of the beast had again ceased, and wearied from his double encounter he stood with his head pulled down to the ground half astride the desperate man, who was holding on for life. Whether Major Worthington was frightened or not it is hard to say, probably he was, but there was no doubt about his being angry when he saw Isam spread out in the haw bush and heard his address. His face was livid with rage, and foam and sweat mingled upon it. As soon as he caught his breath he burst forth with:

"You infernal black rascal, why don't you come—down out of that—buns and help—me!" Isam's face was pitiful in its expression. His teeth chattered, and he fairly shook the bush with trembling.

"Don't, Mass Craffud, don't. You ain got no time ter cuss now. Lif up yo' voice en pray! Lor, Lor, ef ev'r man had er call ter pray, you dun got it now."

For one instant it looked as if the major would abandon his attempt to hold the deer and turn his attention to the bush, but he did not have an opportunity to carry out such a resolution. Revived by his moment's rest, the buck made another effort for freedom and revenge. He dragged his corpulent captor in a circle, he rolled him on the sod, he fell over him, pounded him and stamped, but without relief. The desperate man clung to his hold with a grip that could not be broken. It was the grip of death. Indeed it was now a question of life or death.

Wearied down at last, the deer gave himself and victim another breathing spell, and the major continued:

"If ever—I get loose from this—brute

en shek 'im ov'r de flames, but don't let 'im drap!"

"Isam!"

The word came upward in tones of thunder. Even Isam was obliged to regard it. He did so from force of habit.

"Yessir."

Then he sobbed forth, "O Lor, Lor, I t'ot we wuz dun home ag'in." "No, sir," said the major sternly, "we are not at home, and I'll never get there. I am going to die."

Isam gave a yell that ought to have been heard a mile away.

"Oh, don't let 'im die. Skeer 'im, skeer 'im, Lor, but don't let 'im die!"

"Yes," continued the major, "I am going to die, but let tell you something, Isam. I have been looking into this beast's eyes until I recognize him."

A sound came from the haw bush like the hiss of a snake, as the negro with ashen face and beaded brow gasped out an unintelligible word. The right chord had been touched at last. "You remember Dr. Sam?" Isam's only reply was a moan that betrayed an agony too deep for expression. "Well, this is Dr. Sam. He got loose the other day when the plug fell out, and he and I will never give you another hour of peace as long as you live!"

The sentence was never finished. With a shriek that was blood curdling in its intensity of fear and horror, the negro came crashing down through the bush with his hands full of leaves, straight upon the deer.

This was the crisis.

The frightened animal made one desperate plunge, taking the startled major by surprise, and the next instant found himself free. He did not remain upon the scene or he would have beheld the terrified negro get upon his feet, run round in a frenzy of terror and close his last circle at the foot of the bush, up which he scurried again like a squirrel, old as he was. The major lay flat upon his back, after trying in vain to rise.

Then the reaction came. He fixed his eye upon the negro above and laughed until the tears washed the dirt from his face, and Isam, holding his head up so that his vision could encompass the narrow horizon, said slowly and impressively:

"Mass Craffud, ef de Lord hadn't 'sist'd on Isam cum'n down ter run dat deer off, 'spec' by dis time you'd been er-flopp'n yo' wings up yander, er else sput'n on er grindin' on down yander."

And from his elevated perch Isam indicated the two extremes of eternity with an eloquent sweep of his hand.

But the major had small time for laughter or recrimination. In the distance there rang out faintly the full mouthed cry of a hound. Isam heard it. For him it was at once a welcome and a stimulating sound. Gliding to the ground, he helped the wearied major to his feet and started on the run for the boat, crying:

"Run, Mass Craffud—wors'n deer's cummin. Hit's dem folks w'at know about dat corn en watermilluns, en yer can't 'splain nuthin ter er houn dog."

Broken down as he was, the major realized that there was wisdom in the negro's words and followed as best he could. The camp traps were thrown into the boat, and the little bark was launched. A minute later the form of a great, thirsty looking hound, the runaway's betenore, appeared on the scene.

But the hunters who came after found naught beyond the signs of a camp, if they found anything, and soon followed the hound, which had regained the trail of the buck and yelping passed into the distance. The boat had long since passed the bend.

How Isam ever settled his difficulty needs no explanation. But it may interest the reader to know that one day he bore a message and a check that settled the corn and melon debt, and they tell it in middle Georgia that every year thereafter, until the war cloud broke over the land, whenever the catalpa worn crept upon the leaf, two runaways fled from Woodhaven and dwelt in the swamps, "loos en free."

THE END.

French Stilt Walkers.

The majority of the people in the western portion of the French province of Gascony walk on stilts. That is a district known as the Landes, with a sea line bounding the French side of the bay of Biscay and extending at its greatest breadth about 60 miles back into the country. The Landes form one of the wildest and strangest parts of France, and the inhabitants are fully as strange and uncultivated as the black pine forests, the dreary swamps and the far spreading deserts of fine white sand which they inhabit. Most of them are shepherds, and they elevate themselves on stilts five feet high in order to be above the marshes and the sand blasts. These stilt walkers present strange and uncouth figures as they progress over the wilderness of country in attendance on their flocks, sometimes at the rate of six or seven miles an hour. They rest by the aid of a third wooden support, pursuing meanwhile their everlasting occupation of knitting.

In appearance the Landes shepherd looks like an uncouth mass of dirty wool. On his body he wears a fleecy like a rude paletot; his thighs and legs on the outside are protected by greaves of the same material and his feet incased in sabots and coarse woolen socks. In some parts of Malaysia the natives walk almost habitually on stilts. Nature and necessity have brought about this result, as excessive inundations of river and sea often submerge the whole surface of the land in many places.

An Artful Scheme.

"I'm not going to ask for money, mum," said Rhodside, "nor for food, though I'm faint with hunger, and I ain't eat anything for two days, but for the sake of a poor man who's in hard luck won't you please, mum, allow me the use of a piece of soap and a towel for a few minutes?"

It was about an hour later that Rhodside finished a sumptuous meal and set forth with a 50 cent piece in his hand.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

FEMALE SUFFRAGE AS VIEWED BY SOME NOTED CANADIAN DAMES.

Now He Appreciates It—A Sacer Resented. Practical Hints in Economy—Riding Man Fashion—White Stockings—Stiffly Starched Skirts.

It is instructive to read the objections to female suffrage made by Canadian women in our esteemed contemporary, The Coin du Feu of Montreal, for the reason that they are just the kind of objections to it that used to be made in this country 20 or 30 years ago. Mme. Chapleau says that women ought to reign in the home, while men ought to attend to the government. Mme. Marchand says that women have not the opportunity of studying complicated political questions, and so must seek to gain an influence like that of the women of the gospels. Mme. Desjardins has no other ambition than the happiness of her family, and willingly leaves the franchise to her husband. Mme. Dandurand believes that women are most free when the public business is transacted by men. Miss Cowan does not desire that women shall have the privilege of voting, as even men abuse that privilege. Other Canadians who were interviewed on the subject by The Coin du Feu said that women should keep away from the noise of politics, and that the family circle should be saved from political pollution, and that womanly virtues would be lowered in politics, and that the ideal of womanhood is apart from politics, and that women ought to be content with their lot as the angels of the home. Lady Aberdeen said that "in her capacity as wife of the governor general of Canada" she preferred to refrain from expressing any opinion on the question.

Yes, these Canadian objections to woman suffrage are just like the American objections to it that used to be urged years ago. All of them are very familiar to everybody in this country who has taken any interest in the debate on the subject. Yet the cause of woman suffrage has advanced in many of the states and has gained a complete victory in at least two of the progressive states of the abounding west. We are not aware that womanhood has ceased to flourish on account of that success.—New York Sun.

Now He Appreciates It.

On a recent afternoon a young pianist, who is considered a musical genius by his friends, was introduced to a handsome woman by one of the teachers at Steinway hall. The teacher had to leave the room for a time, and the lady asked her new acquaintance if he would play something for her. The young man sat down at the piano and played several pieces. The lady listened with a critical air, and when he had concluded, thanked him very heartily.

"Now," she added, "won't you please play something of your own composition?"

He complied, rendering a pretty song which he had composed not long before. The lady expressed herself very much pleased again, and said:

"If you will transpose that, I will sing it at my song recital in Boston."

The young man bowed politely, but, being unwilling to commit himself to a comparative stranger, said nothing. A silence ensued that would have been embarrassing had it not been fortunately interrupted by the return of the teacher. The lady had some business to transact with him, and the pianist was relieved. When she turned to leave, she shook hands with him heartily and again expressed her gratification at having heard him play. When she was gone, the pianist turned to his friend and asked carelessly:

"Who is that lady?"

"Why, I told you. That is Mrs. Story."

"Yes, I know, but who is Mrs. Story?"

"Good heavens, man! Don't you know that Emma Eames is Mrs. Story in private life?"

The pianist now appreciates the compliments he received.—New York Letter.

A Sneezer Resented.

What the writer evidently considered a knockdown argument was published lately at the expense of women voting when, as was sneeringly asserted, more than one girl had been questioned as to the term of office of a member of the legislature, for instance, and could not tell how long it lasted. The author of this stinging satire seemed to forget that there are women and women as well as men and men. Moreover, it is not so very strange that a question which does not bear upon them, while they are not voters, should be pushed aside by other matters that do come in contact with their daily lives.

One woman who has, from lifelong connection with a newspaper office, become pretty well acquainted with politics, is astonished, on her part, by the profound ignorance of the average man. Yet she does not, on that account, believe that none of them should be allowed to vote. Those of us who questioned our brothers and husbands and lovers, a few months ago, at the beginning of the silver talk, as to what it all was about, were not very greatly enlightened, were we? The fact is that, outside these whose bread and butter it is, and outside the repeating a catchword or two in a wise way, there is not one man—or woman—in a hundred who knows what his or her party principles are or should be. But this is of course between us women!—New York Mail and Express.

Practical Hints.

Many must practice economy every day, but this year there is more urgent need than ever. The simplest way to make over a dress for house wear, if you have any sort of a full skirt, is to cut the basque off, allowing only an inch or so below the waistline, and

gather the skirt to this. Rip off all superfluous trimming, arrange the neck surplus fashion with a bit of lace or embroidery basted on, and you will have a neat dress. Another way is to gather a full width to the back of the basque, cut the front yoke fashion and make a full loose front which can be confined by a ribbon. With most made overs this will require piecing, but if done near the waistline the ribbon will conceal it. A ruffle of different material will seem to lengthen the skirt. Both these can be worn without corsets, and are very easy if there is any fullness in the skirt.

When a basque has done good service, rip it apart and make an under-waist out of the lining. This will serve to keep the underclothes clean while doing housework. The lining of skirts can be utilized by making into aprons. They are a great saving, as they are easily washed, require no starching and not much ironing. Stockings that are past repair can be roughly sewed together and make acceptable scrub cloths. If you cannot use things your self, do not keep them to look at, but give them to some one less fortunate.—Minneapolis Housekeeper.

Riding Man Fashion.

The popularity of bicycle riding among women has made it more possible for women to accept the idea of riding en cavalier, an idea which is being put in actual practice in the west. In other words, cross saddle riding with divided skirts has gained a certain amount of recognition in a number of localities. It has been found that ladies look well, ride more safely and get better exercise in the new way. The practice of side saddle riding is attributed to the vagary of a queen who was too deformed to use the cross saddle. There has been a vague idea that any other method would be injurious. As a matter of fact, the practice of using the side saddle has been adopted because it adapts itself to modern dress, and because without a special dress no other method would be suitable. But cross saddle riding is the safer way, it permits of a better and freer use of the limbs and makes the exercise more effective. All this will not make women adopt it, however. A large number of lady riders take the exercise to avoid the unpleasant effects of too much fat. Side saddle riding does not make fat women thin, however, but if anything enlarges the hips. Cross saddle riding is more effective, because a wider range of muscles can be used and harder riding indulged in.—New York Medical Record.

White Stockings.

Next to the threatened return of the crinoline, the revival which is making the most sensation in fashionable circles is the return of white stockings. For months past there have been various prophecies and not a few announcements of the coming of this revival. But for various reasons, and possibly the good sense of women, with the extra expense of white stockings, which must be changed more frequently than colored ones, the coming has been postponed. Dark hosiery has had a long span of life, and a remarkable one, when it is remembered that in former times only servants wore colored stockings. It was not until the end of the last century that a lady of fashion endeavored to introduce black stockings into vogue, and she did not succeed. Even now there are many dainty and elegant ladies in France who never wear colored stockings, but leave them to their servants. Without doubt black and colored stockings will be worn for walking out of doors all through the winter months, but by next summer those near the throne announce that white stockings will be universally worn "where money is no object" and laundry bills are beneath consideration.—Fashion Journal.

Stiffly Starched Skirts.

A swell dressmaker confessed recently that the reason why some of the flaring skirts hung out around the bottom with such a graceful flare was because of a flexible steel a quarter of an inch in width which runs through the hem. Some of the latest silk petticoats have two of these wires run through the folds, one at the hem and another a few inches above. Evening skirts are now made with heavy flounces stiffly starched in the old fashion, and more than one skirt is worn. Some of the new white starched skirts have three overlapping flounces reaching from the belt to the hem in the back, and one full flounce extending all the way around the skirt to the knees. All these flounces are stiffened, but not to the point of rattling, and help to hold out the light skirts of the evening gown. Indeed it is claimed that the starched white skirt for daytime wear will soon take the place of the silk petticoats that have been popular during the past few years, because those colored skirts have been copied in cheap material, and besides there is something in the freshness of a starched skirt dainty and luxurious.—New York Correspondent.

An Invertebrate Smoker.

Ever and anon crops up in print the question of women smoking. London Truth has just published a story from Paris, by that most reputable of correspondents, Mrs. Crawford, to the effect that in continental Europe, although the cigarette has not quite found its way with after dinner coffee into the drawing room, it soon will. "At all the houses setting up to style it is served at intimate dinners and small and lively dinners. Nobody is shocked at ladies smoking, not merely one cigarette apiece, but two or three. A minister of Queen Christina told me that that highly respectable and respected royal lady is an inveterate and a veteran smoker."

Home Ideas.

A beautiful table cover for a very dainty apartment is of cream white cashmere, with an artistic border of