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BOY LIFE ON THE WATER

BY F. R. GOULDING.

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BY

REV. F. R. GOULDING

AUTHOR OF "THE YOUNG MAROONERS," "MAROONER'S ISLAND," ETC.

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

ROBERT AND HAROLD; OR, THE YOUNG MAROONERS.

MAROONER'S ISLAND.

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BOY LIFE ON THE WATER.

CHAPTER I.

Was it a Dream or a Reality?

MY mother and I live together. She is eighty years old, and I am fifty-six. She is a miracle of health and strength, at her time of life, while I am broken with disease and exposure.

My children are all away from home, taking care of themselves, except my youngest child, Annette, just turned eighteen, who stays at home, she says, "to take care of father." But how long she will stay is very questionable, for there have been some suspicious visitings about the house of late, and some animated talks in a low voice

and happy tone. I expect, before long, to be asked a very important question.

To do Annette justice, she has taken the best care of me she could, and she would have done better had it not been for my good mother, who is quite as young as I am, in health and spirits, and almost as young, she says, as Annette herself; and who insists that, as she had the first care of me fifty-six years ago, she shall be allowed the care of me yet.

It is amusing to hear mother talk sometimes of "these *young people*, only sixty or seventy years old," who complain of the infirmities of age. She says that they are only reaping the reward of living too fast when they were young, and that they have no right to complain of the consequences. She holds, with a considerable show of reason, and of Scripture too, that if people were to begin early to live in reference to old age, most of them might expect to be comparatively young and strong when they arrive at ninety or a hundred years. As for "Anna, the prophetess," described by Saint Luke as "of great age, ... a widow

of fourscore and four years," mother rather wonders at the language used by the sacred writer, "for," says she, "I am not far from that age myself, yet I do not feel old."

We are very happy together—mother, Annette, and I—quite as much so as can be expected where there is such a disparity of age; but, no doubt, the reason is that we love one another, and make due allowance for each other's differences of opinion and habit.

One evening, about a year since, while mother sat by the fireside knitting, and Annette was busy making a pretty game-bag for somebody who was fond of the gun, and I was reading to them both an interestimg article on "The Wonders of a Piece of Chalk," it occurred to me all at once to ask my mother a question. So laying down the book, and gazing for a moment in the fire to gather up my thoughts, I said:—

"Mother, there comes into my mind, every once in a while, the recollection of scenes which I cannot possibly locate. I cannot even determine whether they are realities. I wish you would help

me, if you can. They seem to me too vivid and life-like for dreams; and yet, if they are realities, they must have occurred in my very early childhood, for they seem to extend as far back into the shadowy past as those 'old chalk-beds' we have just been reading about."

"Well, do let us have them," returned my mother, rather impatiently; for, like most other old people, she lived much in the past, and she was impatient to hear what I had to say that dated so far back.

"To give you Scene the First, then," said I, "there is in front of our door a broad sheet of salt water, at the foot of a high bluff, down whose side is a steep, narrow pathway cut through the firm sand. At the water-side, a Spanish fisherman (I know he is Spanish by his complexion and general appearance) is baling out his canoe with a paddle, preparatory to going a-fishing, and near by is his little son, about my own age, who is going with him. The boy's language sounds strange to me; for, although he uses English, he speaks of going 'up *stars* and down *stars*,' and I

correct him by saying that he means 'up *stairs* and down *stairs*.' Soon the water is baled out, the nets and lines are put in, and the boat paddles away."

My mother almost laughed. "Have you anything more to add to the picture?" she asked.

"Not to that one," I replied; but I will present you now with Scene Number Two. Near our house—at least I judge so, by the kind of *home-feeling* with which I regard it—is the residence of a pleasant-faced old gentleman whom I call 'grandpa.' In the rear of his house is an unfinished piazza, on the joists of which congregate about ten or a dozen pigeons, which fly down at his call, and, while most of them alight on the floor to eat the corn scattered at his feet, one, named Tom, will perch on his shoulder, or eat from his hand."

"Well and truly described!" exclaimed my mother, now laughing aloud. "Have you any more to add?"

"Not to Scene Second," I answered; "but there is another scene which, I think, belongs to this group, because it always comes up in the same connection, and seems lost in the same dim dis-

tance. You and my father and myself are in a gig drawn by a large iron-gray horse. We are on our way to church, along a very sandy road. Pine-trees and dwarf palmettoes are all around us. Presently we come to a road turning square off from the one we are in, and the horse refuses to pass it. He stops, backs, and finally rears. My father gets out, pats him gently on the neck and shoulders, and leads him past the road, saying:

"'Come along, old fellow, there is no service there to-day.'

"Then he enters the gig, and says to you:

"'Gray seems to know as well as we when Sunday comes,' and you and he are much amused."

My mother's almost merry voice now softened to a subdued and plaintive tone, and I think a tear must have gathered in her eye, for she hastily took off her spectacles, and wiped her glasses and her eyes, as she replied:

"Your pictures, my son, carry me back to the happiest period of my life. They are scenes from your early childhood. I recognize them all as occurring at a place known to us then as Sapelo,

or Sapelo Main. The Spanish fisherman you describe was named Hernandez. He fished for us, and kept his boat moored at our landing. For some years previous he had been living in the backwoods, and it was there that his little boy acquired his peculiar pronunciation. The old gentleman with the pigeons was not your grandfather, but a Colonel Thompson, from the Bahamas. He took a great fancy to you, and used to decoy you often to his house. Do you recollect anything of the *chiggers* and the *paroquets* that we have always associated with him?"

I paused and reflected awhile before replying, for I had a distinct recollection of birds flashing from tree to tree with the glitter of emeralds and rubies, and also a dim remembrance of how a chigger feels in the foot;* but these I had set

* These troublesome little insects, common enough in tropical regions, burrow in the sand, waiting for the coming of some unfortunate person without shoes, when they quickly bury themselves in the skin about the toes, and begin to lay their eggs. The sack, in which the chigger and its eggs are enveloped, produces an intolerable itching, and must be picked out unbroken, or the eggs will be scattered and hatched in the flesh, and cause a wide and sometimes dangerous inflammation.

down in my mind certainly as dreams. My mother went on:

"You used to run into the house very often, saying, 'Pick it out! there's a chigger in my foot!' These chiggers were brought from the Bahamas by Colonel Thompson's negroes. For a few years they troubled us very much, but at last a cold winter killed them all off. As for the paroquets, I know not how they were connected with Colonel Thompson, except that they came in great numbers about the time of his arrival, and they made our woods shine with their brilliant plumage of red and green.

"That other circumstance, about the horse," and here my mother's voice trembled a little, "occurred just as you describe, and was so remarkable that we often mentioned it. The road which we wished to keep was one that your father travelled every day of the week, in going to his business, and the road which the horse insisted so violently upon taking was that which your father took on *Sundays* in going to an academy where was a meeting which he regularly attended.

At the time you speak of, there was a special service in town, where we were going, and none at the academy; but the horse did not know that, and seemed to think that your father was going to violate the Sabbath by attending to his ordinary business—at least so we interpreted his dumb language.*

"What surprises me, however," continued my mother, "is that you should remember these things so well, or even remember them at all, when you could not have been, at the time, more than two and a half or three years old."

These reminiscences so deeply interested me, that a few weeks afterward I left my mountain home and made a visit to Sapelo Main, where I had not been since childhood. There I found an old negro, who had been in my father's employ. Under his guidance, I surveyed the river, the bluff, the landing, the sites of the old-time houses, and everything connected with my early days. A flood of recollections swept over me—my child-life at the Bluff, my early boy-life at

* The incidents and scenery described above are not fictions.

home, and at different schools, and my later boy-life in the woods—and as I saw how the hand of Providence had led me so safely and kindly through the many perils of my varied and adventurous life, I could not help kneeling down right there in the thick undergrowth of the river bank and thanking God for all my experiences. This was the first result of my visit, and the second was a resolution that I would beguile the tedious hours of present sickness and of undesired leisure by recording these scenes as faithfully as possible for the benefit of those who call me Grandfather, and for the other readers of these pages, who, if not grandchildren in the flesh, may be so in the spirit.

This is the way in which these stories come to be written.

CHAPTER II.

The Bluff—Race for Life—Quash and the Alligator.

I WAS born in the year 1810, on the seaboard of Georgia, at a place known then as Sapelo, or Sapelo Main, to distinguish it from a neighbouring island and river of the same name, and subsequently by the more definite title of Baisden's Bluff.

My father was a prosperous cotton and rice merchant in Darien, commanding an extensive custom among the planters who cultivated the rich islands and deltas of the Altamaha River.

Sapelo, or the Bluff, was a favourite summer residence for all families of wealth occupying unhealthy places on the neighbouring coast, and especially for the business-men of Darien. From November to May our family occupied a house

in town, convenient to my father's business; but during the summer and early fall, when steaming vapours from the rice-fields and river-bottoms stole upon the night air, threatening death to all white persons within their influence, the family resided at Sapelo, twelve miles distant; and between these two points my father would ride back and forth every day.

I have travelled much in my day, but in no part of the world have I known more delightful summer breezes than we used to enjoy at the dear old bluff; and almost the same may be said of its water. Embosomed in a shady ravine, near us was a cool spring, known as the "Dripping Spring," which not only refreshed us with delicious draughts, but also gratified our ears with the incessant tinkle of waters falling in a concealed cave. At the foot of a bold bluff, in front of my father's door, and down a sheer descent of thirty feet, there gushed from amid the sand-rocks a spring of crystal water, which, though sulphurous in odour, so gained upon the taste of those who used it that they never ceased

to prefer it above all other waters. To this day, when I read in the Bible the story of David longing for a drink from the well at Bethlehem, I think of our delightful old spring at Baisden's Bluff.

Sitting in our piazza and looking seaward, the eye rested upon an immense level of tall green grass, full eight miles wide, interrupted here and there with hammocks of dark cedars, and with broad flashing reaches of the river. Twice every month this immense level of grass was covered by the spring tides, and at the full of the moon, in September, it appeared as one unbroken sheet of water, sometimes angry, but generally placid as the surface of a lake.

In this marsh, or over it, various birds of large size were to be seen; and from amid the thick grass, at every rising tide, came the merry cackle of marsh-hens; while from the river itself were to be heard, with the incoming of summer tides, the flutter of countless fish, the heavy splash of the sturgeon, and the business-like puf-f-ff of the porpoise.

One of my greatest delights, when a child—and in that respect I am as much a child now as ever, and hope always to continue so—was to stand where I could watch these tokens of life in the water, and rejoice in the universal joy of river and marsh.

The summit of the bluff was crowned with a thick growth of evergreens, consisting principally of live-oak, cedar, and myrtle, from the intervals of which, for nearly a mile, there peeped out the snow-white houses of the residents. Among these houses, thus visible, was the academy building, where most of the young folks from the neighbouring islands and plantations received their education. Of this building, there is scarcely a relic left. In the terrible hurricane of September 14th, 1824, the earth below it was undermined by the surf, and the site is now marked by a chasm.

I recollect a scene of fearful interest in connection with one of the boys of this academy. In a pretty cove of the river, walled from sight by evergreens, was a shore of clean sand sloping

gradually into the stream. This was a favourite bathing-place, and a prettier could scarcely be found. But the parents and guardians were reluctant to allow the young folks free access to it, because there was a horrible story of a boy having been caught there and devoured by a shark. Another cause of dread was from alligators, which infested the river in large numbers, and were occasionally very saucy.

These dangers were, however, laughed at by the boys. As for the alligators, nothing afforded them more sport than to find one of these cowardly creatures in the neighbourhood of their swimming-ground—they would drive it into open water, surround it with a cordon of swimmers, and amuse themselves with it, until they were weary. The alligator, on finding itself surrounded, would immediately try to escape by swimming first to one side then to another of the ring, having nothing visible above water but the dark tips of its eyes and nose, and the boy whom it approached had only to dash water on it, when it would turn tail and try some other

point. This was dangerous-looking sport, and was probably dangerous in fact; for there was no telling how soon an alligator of more courage than the rest might avenge the dishonour put upon its race by seizing and destroying some one of its tormentors.

I recollect, one day, when I was quite a little boy, standing upon the shore, watching the movements of a sturdy swimmer, who was leisurely returning from an excursion up the river, when, of a sudden, I saw an uncommonly large alligator glide from the marsh and swim rapidly after him. Supposing that the amount of fun would correspond to its size, and having not a thought of danger, I called to a large boy, and said:

"See yonder, a big alligator behind Jimmy Johnson!"

The boy was immediately alarmed, and hallooed:

"Jimmy, take care! There's an alligator after you!"

But Jimmy swam leisurely on, replying:

"Well, let him come!"

The boy was astonished, and for a moment silent, but remembering that Jimmy was notorious as a practical joker, and that it would be natural for him to judge of other people by himself, he cried more earnestly than before:

"There's a big alligator close behind you. You had better look!"

Still Jimmy swam unconcernedly along, replying:

"Yes! and, if you were to look far enough, no doubt you could see one behind you too!"

At this moment, however, several other boys came up, who united their voices so imperatively, that Jimmy gave a look behind, and began to swim with all his might for shore. The alligator was only a few yards behind him, and we expected every moment to see it disappear for the purpose of drawing him under and drowning him, according to its habit in such cases. With a loud and agonizing cry, "Boys, help me!" he swam on; when finding that he was soon to be

overtaken, he dived out of sight. The moment he disappeared, the alligator dived too.

"That is the last of poor Jimmy!" exclaimed one of the crowd, which now began to gather; and as we looked we shuddered, to see the water break a few yards ahead, as if there were a struggle below its surface. Soon the water broke again a few yards nearer to us, and Jimmy himself appeared, dashing the brine from his eyes and mouth, and swimming frantically for shore.

When the alligator appeared, a quarter of a minute later, it had lost considerable distance. We were surprised at this, for these creatures are as much at home below water as above it, and we could account for it only by conjecturing that the river being too muddy to allow it to see its prey, it had dived to the bottom and searched around there, while Jimmy had barely skimmed beneath the surface.

The chase was now renewed. Jimmy shot through the water as he had never swum before, calling to us to help him; and we shouted and

threw sticks and clods of mud to scare the creature off; but it was not one of the cowardly kind, and was too intent upon the prey before it to be deterred by shouts or clods. On it came, with all speed, and would soon have overtaken the struggling boy, when at a signal from us he dived again. In the meantime, several had pushed off in a canoe, and by a vigorous use of the one paddle they found in it, and of their hats and caps used in place of paddles, they reached poor Jimmy just as he was failing from exhaustion, after having successfully dived three times out of the alligator's reach. When he had sufficiently recovered strength and spirits to talk—and this did not take him long, for he was a very buoyant fellow—he told us that of all fast thinking he had done in his life, the fastest was when he was under water, expecting every moment to feel the alligator's teeth upon his legs.

"And I tell you what, boys!" he added, with a very serious air, "I shall never forget the *praying* I did then, too. It seemed to me that all the wicked things I had ever done came rushing into

my mind; and they came so fast and thick that I felt as if I were the wickedest fellow that ever lived."

Some one asked him if, with all his quick thoughts, he could devise no other plan than diving to escape from the alligator.

"Oh, yes!" he replied, "I thought of several. One of them was a plan adopted by a negro boy, not long since, who, on being suddenly seized by an alligator and drawn under water, threw himself around, stuck a thumb in each of the creatures eyes, and *gouged* with all his might. This was a kind of fighting the alligator was not used to; so he let the boy go, and swam away. I intended, if that fellow had caught me, to try a little gouging, but I preferred to keep out of reach as long as I could."

Another adventure with an alligator, in that same neighbourhood and about that time, occurs to me; and though it was far less serious in its character, I record it because it comes in regular course of memory.

In a social visit made by my mother and a

friend to a lady, a few miles distant from the Bluff, they took me with them in the carriage. Our way led through the piney woods, where the undergrowth was so kept down by frequent fires, that we could leave the beaten track at almost any point, and drive at fair speed for a considerable distance between the forest-trees. There was, however, one part of our road crossed by a small run of water, that was bordered with a thicket so dense, that, for a hundred yards or so, on either side, it was scarcely possible for a pig to pass; and the road was so narrow that the bushes rubbed against our wheels. After we had passed about one-third of the distance, we heard from our negro driver a peremptory "Whoa!" to the horses, and then an expressive "Eh! eh!" intended for himself and for us.

"What's the matter, Quash?" asked my mother.

"One big alligator, ma'am, right 'cross de road," he replied.

We looked forward, and saw an uncommonly large specimen of its kind, lying at right angles

to our road, its head resting on one rut, its body on another, and its tail concealed far out in the bushes. It was at least twelve feet long, perhaps more.

What to do, was a question rather difficult to answer by a company consisting of two ladies, and a little boy, five or six years old; for Quash, although a man in years, and in his business of carriage-driver, was no more of a hero than the rest of us, and it was very plain that, unless the monster obstructing our way could be persuaded to remove, we could not pass without running over it.

An alligator on land, however, is a very impotent thing. It possesses enormous strength in its tail, with which it can strike down and throw into its jaws any animal, not exceeding its own weight, which may come within its sweep; but, outside of that dangerous circle, it is one of the most helpless of brutes. It has no means of attack; and as for defence, it must rely solely upon its hideous looks and its impenetrable armour of skin and scales.

"Quash," said my mother, who was well acquainted with these peculiarities, "go and see if you cannot make it move."

Quash looked at the alligator, then at his horses, and said:

"Missis, old Tom begin to sharpen he yuhs a'ready at de smell; ef I go leab 'um, he will run 'way."

"Then take out the horses and let me hold them," said my mother, in a quiet, resolute way.

Quash knew her well enough to know that, if he did not do what was expected she would undertake it herself. He therefore plucked up courage and made a beginning. Loosing the horses from the carriage, and tying them securely to a tree, he obtained a stout pole about ten feet in length, marched up to the alligator, and making a long arm, punched it in the side. No sooner had the pole touched the rough scales than it was knocked out of his hands. Quash gave a half scream of terror, and, with rueful face, ran back to the carriage.

"You silly fellow," said my mother laughing heartily, "why did you go to its side?"

"Yes, missis," he answered, "I onderstan' now; I furgit befo'."

He recovered his pole, went behind the alligator, and gave it a shove. The only effect produced was a hiss, like that uttered by a sea-turtle, or by a sitting goose, when disturbed upon her nest. Quash beat it over the tail and back, then over the head—but all in vain. An alligator, in such cases, drops right down in its tracks, and suffers itself to be battered to death without attempting to move an inch.

"Can you not start a fire?" my mother asked again, and added, "if you can make ever so small a blaze under its tail, it will move off fast enough."

Quash had now recovered from his fright, and his eyes and white teeth began to shine with pleasure at the prospect of fun.

"I got flint and steel, missis, and a piece o' punk, too," he answered. He bustled about, collected some dry grass and leaves, and, by

means of his long pole, shoved them under the alligator's hind legs and tail, preparatory to setting them afire. But as he passed near its head, we observed him stop and peep into its face, then give a merry "Eh! eh!" and return to us laughing.

"Missis," said he, "de alligator bline as a bat—yes, missis, bline as *two* bat. Somebody bin shoot out bote he eye. We kin git along now beyout bu'n um."

The poor blind creature was thus spared the torture by fire. Quash widened the road at its head by cutting or breaking down some of the bushes; then led the horses by, to show them there was no danger; finally, harnessing them up, and getting us all in the carriage, he drove slowly past, making the wheels roll heavily upon the creature's snout, and bringing from it a prolonged and indignant "Th-th-th!"

When our visit was ended, we returned home another way.

CHAPTER III.

Sickness on the Coast—Preparing to Travel—Equipments—"Old Big-Foot"—Wild Turkeys—First Night in the Woods.

THE two preceding chapters record my recollections of fifty years ago. Oh, how far back that seems! The dim blue of distance is around it. It appears to reach almost to the days of Adam!

And is it possible that fifty years have passed since then? I can scarcely believe it; for when I was a child, that length of time looked like a small eternity, yet the incidents I have described are fresh as yesterday. Ah! I understand it now. It is because "when I was a child, I thought as a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child;" but childhood is mistaken in its estimate of time. Fifty years is not much, except in a child's conception. It looks large, because life

itself is so little. And it looks large only when it is *coming;* after it has passed, it crumples in the grasp, like a dried leaf, to almost nothing.

The year 1817 was long remembered upon our seaboard for its unhealthiness. In many neighbourhoods there were not left well people enough to wait upon the sick.

Baisden's Bluff suffered as little probably as any other place on the coast-belt; yet every member of our own family was seriously sick, and one was carried to the grave. My father, born and bred in England, and unaccustomed to our fierce diseases, so disrelished this rough handling that he resolved never again to expose himself or family to a similar experience. He had prospered in business; he was able at any time to retire comfortably from its cares, and he resolved to do so.

Before the spring of the following year, had quite ended—it was in the month of May—he left Darien and the Bluff, with his whole family, on a tour of travel to the hill-country of the interior. He had no definite plan, except to see

the country, enjoy health, and look out some place of future abode.

Although an earnestly pious man, and ready at all times to do what a layman might to advance the cause of religion, there was no one who enjoyed more keenly than he the wild sports of wood and water. He was a capital shot, and a first-rate angler. With these tastes, it may be conjectured that his equipments for four or five months' vacation from labour would correspond.

Our company consisted of ten persons, viz., my father and mother and their four children; a Mr. Jamieson (my father's retainer, companion, shadow), and three servants, Quash, the carriage-driver, Scipio, a boy of sixteen, and my mother's waiting-maid. To accommodate these, there were a close carriage, a light carry-all with movable top, and a large two-horse waggon loaded with tent-equipage. Trotting beside us were two dogs: Medor, a staunch pointer, that understood how to raise wild turkeys, as well as to point smaller game; and Selkirk, an intelligent cur, trained to still-hunt deer, and even to trail a

panther or a bear. There were four guns aboard, a rifle and two double-barrels, one for birds and the other for deer, besides a single-barrel for Scipio, and several fishing-rods, in joints, with tackle to suit.

The tour was delightful, and full of variety; though I recollect little of it, except such incidents as might impress the mind of a child.

On the third day out from Savannah, while we were noticing the coarse and almost gravelly sand thrown up by the wheels, so different from that to which we had been accustomed, a man, on foot, suddenly emerged from a side-path. He carried a rifle, was followed by a dog, wore a 'coon-skin cap, and was clad in garments of deer leather. His easy gait, weather-beaten look, and independent air, all indicated the hunter. His dog and ours, on coming together, with tails erect, first gave a growl, then stood side by side, with bristling back, and soon after engaged in a fight, from which it was difficult to part them. As soon as all was quiet, my father asked the man if the hunting and fishing of that neighbour-

hood were good, remarking that he had just seen fresh deer-tracks crossing the road.

"Whar?" asked the hunter, with a sudden movement to go, without having answered the question.

"About half a mile below," my father replied; "and there must have been an uncommonly large buck in company, if there is any truth in the size of a track."

"Oh, ef ole Big-Foot is thar, I needn't go!" the man rejoined, grounding his roughly stocked piece, and grasping it for support near the muzzle.

"Why not?" my father inquired. "Old Big-Foot, as you call him, seems to me worth getting."

"He's all that, and more too!" the other replied; "but thur's no gittin' 'im. He's such a fellow for gittin' into people's fields and gittin' out agin without gittin' hurt, that many people believe he's bewitched. More 'n a dozen planters hev offered a dollar to whoever will bring ole Big-Foot's huffs; and he's been shot

at a hundred times, with rifle and smooth-bore, and ball and buckshot, and even with silver; but thur's been no gettin' 'im yet; and I don't believe thur'll be any gittin' 'im tell his time comes. Oh, no, stranger, I am not gwine to waste my time and bullets on ole Big-Foot."

"But are there not plenty of deer in the neighbourhood, besides him?" my father asked.

"Plenty a leetle furder up whar you're agwine," the countryman replied; "but in these yuh diggins, thur's not much to shoot at 'cept turkeys."

"And how as to fishing?" my father inquired.

"Fishin' is out o' my line," responded the other; "but I've heern say that thur's plenty of pearch and cats, and other sorts o' fish in a creek you'll cross about ten miles away. I know thur's plenty o' deer and turkeys in the low grounds."

Half an hour afterwards, while Mr. Jamieson, in the little waggon, accompanied by the two dogs, was lagging behind to keep out of the dust, and my father, on old gray, was riding, gun in hand,

beside the carriage, talking with my mother, we heard Quash say:

"Eh, eh! dem yuh ain't *tame* tukkey!" Then he called suddenly to my father: "Mossa! Mossa!"

With the first sound of his voice, we looked out, and saw a gang of wild turkeys, about twenty in number, standing by the roadside, within six feet of the carriage, watching the unusual procession. So long as their attention was occupied with the motions of the horses and wheels, they kept their places with perfect unconcern; but the moment Quash's voice was heard, there came, from some bushes near at hand, a significant "Twit! twit!" and immediately the whole gang rose upon the wing, and, headed by a magnificent gobbler, flew to some tall trees, one or two hundred yards away.

"I'll try to have that fellow!" said my father, looking with longing eyes at the gobbler. He sounded a shrill whistle, which brought Medor bounding toward him; and then a well-known hunter's signal, which made Mr. Jamieson come trotting up at a rapid pace.

"Jamieson," said my father, "the woods are alive with turkeys. Drive with your waggon under those trees where they are. They will not fly. There is no surer way of getting near wild turkeys than in a waggon, for they will fix their eyes upon *it*, and never notice you. Perhaps we can both get a shot. I will take Medor, and ride farther around. When you are ready to shoot, let me know by a whistle; I will do the same."

They dashed into the woods, and in course of ten minutes we heard two guns in quick succession; then, shortly afterwards, saw my father returning with the gobbler hanging at his saddle-bow, and Jamieson came crashing through the bushes, showing a fine hen lying in the waggon.

"This gobbler weighs full twenty-five pounds," said my father, "and, no doubt, the hen weighs fourteen or more."

"I think we shall have to stop going to public houses now, and begin our tent-life," said my mother.

My father's eyes actually glistened at the words.

"How glad I am to hear you say so!" he returned. "The truth is, I had the same thought, but was not willing to trouble you with the cares of tent-life until driven to it by necessity."

"Do you think you are the only one expecting to enjoy it?" asked my mother, with a laugh. "If so, you are mistaken. I am ready to begin to-day."

The weather was fine. When we arrived at the "creek" described by the countryman, "ten miles away," we found a bold rivulet with every indication of good fishing. On a beautifully rounded knoll, within a stone's throw of its waters, was a cluster of oak and hickory, and at convenient distance waved a luxuriant grove of pines, affording an abundant supply of straw-like herbage for beds, and light-wood knots for fire and torches. Everything around invited us to try our new mode of life, and no one in the company was disposed to say nay.

Our tents, for there were two of them, were soon pitched. The horses were haltered at a convenient feeding-place; a fire of dry twigs

crackled, blazed, and shrunk to cinders; water was brought from the stream, not cool, but sweet; coffee was prepared, bread baked, ham fried, and the livers and gizzards of the turkeys cooked, by special request, for us children; a plentiful supply of pine-straw was heaped in the tents, for the double purpose of carpet by day and of under-mattress by night; and long before dark we had dined, and looked about us, and were now well provided for sleep, whenever we chose to lie down.

That first night in the woods—how well I remember it! better, far, than any other of that same summer, or than the many of later day in forest, prairie, or military camp.

We had no chairs nor tables, but sat on carriage-cushions, boxes, and billets of wood; and when a table was needed, we used a keg-head, or the top of a trunk, or something else equivalent.

The soft moonlight of the evening, and the bright twinkle of the stars through our leafy canopy, kept us long awake. The older folks

chatted at the tent door, and we children ran wild with delight in playing within the illuminated circle of our brilliant camp-fire. At last the excitement wore off; and one of the little ones came to our mother's lap to rest, and then all persons were called together to close the evening. A hymn, known to the servants as well as to ourselves, was given out, and their rich voices chimed in with our own in singing it. Then my father opened a small pocket Bible, and while we all sat around the door of the larger tent, and the red light of the resinous fire illumined the green arches overhead, he read a chapter suited to our circumstances, and then we bowed in prayer. Our worship that night seemed to be enjoyed by us all. I recollect that, when we came to say "Our Father who art in heaven," the voices of us children sounded as loud and distinct as those of our parents, as if conscious that under the big heavens and in the wild woods we were all children together.

CHAPTER IV.

Hunting for Bait—Fishing—A Piney-woods Church, Congregation, Preacher, and Sermon.

BETWEEN midnight and morning we were aroused by the violent barking of our dogs. My father and Mr. Jamieson sallied forth, guns in hand, to see what was the matter. On their return, they reported two eyes shining in a distant thicket, and that the two dogs continued growling, with bristling backs, but refused to go in pursuit. The intruder was probably a panther.

At breakfast next morning, we children were favoured with another dainty which we always relished, and for which, I confess, my taste has not yet been lost—it was what we knew as *cooter eggs*. Not long after leaving the countryman, the day before, our carriage-wheel cracked through

something in the road that sounded like the breaking of a hard, dry gourd. We immediately looked out, and saw an unfortunate terrapin, of very large size, lying between the wheels, with its shell so much broken as to disclose a quantity of snow-white eggs. Quash recognized the sound as soon as it reached his ears, and, with an enthusiastic cry of "Soup! soup!" stopped his horses, leaped from the carriage, and bore the rich prize to the baggage-waggon.

At daybreak, the whole camp was in motion, for the same happy excitement, which had delayed our retiring to rest the evening before, hastened our rising in the morning. Scipio hurried through his duties as house-servant, and set out to look for fish-bait, inviting me to join him. First, he rolled over some old decayed logs, and being able to find only a few crickets, he went to the farther margin of the stream, and finding there many little piles of egg-shaped pellets of earth, he dug under them with a sharpened stick, and soon obtained several dozen of the marsh red-worm.

Just then he spied a large wasp-nest hanging in a brier-bush. He went to it, and, to my surprise, took it with his naked hand. I asked him if he were not afraid the wasps would sting him.

"Oh, no," he replied; "de was' too sca'ed o' me. But befo' I put my han' to de nes', I do so" (he thrust his hand into his bosom, and rubbed it under the arm-pit): "De was' smell dat," he added, "and fly right 'way."

I have known the experiment tried oftentimes since, with unfailing success—the wasps fly away as if in terror.

"I think we got bait 'nuff, now," said he, examining the cells of the nest, which were full of white grubs—a delicious morsel to most fresh-water fish.

But Scipio's exploits as a bait-hunter did not end there. On our way back he discovered a fallen pine, the bark of which was just beginning to separate from the wood. Underlying the bark were great numbers of white worms with flat heads, of which he gathered a handful, and then stopped, saying:

"Leave some fuh nex' time."

On reaching the camp, we found the family at breakfast. Quite an array of hooks and lines lay spread upon an open newspaper, and the rods to which they were to be attached were leaning against a neighbouring tree. While Scipio was engaged in obtaining the bait, my father and Mr. Jamieson had selected several good fishing-places, and had trimmed the banks to facilitate the play of the rods; then they had returned and made ready the fishing-tackle.

I was surprised to see that my father and Mr. Jamieson, on going to the water-side, shortened their rods, put on what we call "fly-hooks," and united with me and Scipio in trying for minnows. Accustomed, as I was, to salt-water fishing, where the bait used for every variety of fish is shrimp, I could not conjecture the purpose of this small work until informed that the minnows were to serve as bait for larger fish. Fast as they were caught, the little things were thrown into a bucket of water, and were finally carried off by the seniors to try for trout, while Scipio and I

were instructed to continue where we were, but to change our hooks to a larger size and fish for perch and bream. While we were thus engaged, my mother joined us. She was also fond of the sport, and proved herself a right good angler, for she put more fish into the basket than any one of the company. In the course of two or three hours we returned to the tent with a basket of fluttering fish. They were small, it is true, few of them exceeding the length and breadth of a man's hand, but I remember to this day their rich colouring of red, yellow, and brown, and their no less rich flavour when they came from the frying-pan. The trout-fishers were not successful.

Next day, my father took Selkirk, and went on a still hunt for deer. Mr. Jamieson, with Medor, went in another direction to hunt turkeys; while my mother and sister and I, accompanied by Scipio, renewed our successful fishing.

We continued at this place three days, much to the enjoyment of the whole company, living principally upon the spoil taken from woods and water,

and we could, with equal pleasure, have remained much longer; but on the fourth day there appeared signs of unpleasant weather, and we renewed the journey before our tent-life had begun to lose the charm of novelty.

The last day of our stay was Sunday, and my father, hearing from a passer-by that there was to be "preaching" at a country church four or five miles distant, resolved to attend it. He left Mr. Jamieson and Scipio in charge of the encampment, and took the rest of us in the carriage to the meeting.

The "church," so called, we found to be a miserable little house, built of unhewn logs, and roofed with clap-boards, roughly rived, and kept in place by poles laid as weights across each tier. The seats, without backs, were made of logs split in two, hewed smooth on the upper side, and supported by legs driven into large auger-holes near the ends. The narrow, box-like pulpit was raised about three feet above the floor, and reached by a short stairway of blocks. Behind it was a square hole cut in the wall, for the purpose of admitting

light. The pulpit, the window-shutter, and a door on each side of the house, were the only parts of the building which could boast of being made of stuff sawn, planed, and put together with iron nails. The window was ignorant of glass, and the floor was constructed, like the seats, of split logs, hewn tolerably level, and kept in place by their own weight. Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden, scarcely offered their worship in a less artificial temple.

On our arrival, we found about fifty people assembled, and in the surrounding grove we saw twenty or more shaggy-coated nags, tied by the bridle to swinging limbs of trees. Near the church were several large stumps, cut level at top and into steps on the side, for the convenience of the female riders, while the number of pillions visible behind the saddles showed that most of the horses had carried double.

The "preacher" did not make his appearance until we had been there nearly an hour, and my father had thus the opportunity of divers little talks with the people, who gathered round him

in eager groups whenever his voice was heard. He learned that some of them had walked six or seven miles to attend that service, and many had walked three or four; that this was the only place of worship within a scope of fifteen miles, and the appointment for meeting was monthly; that in the time intervening there were no religious meetings or observances whatever, and, of course, no Sabbath-schools for the young. Indeed, few of the people could read, and their vacant Sabbaths were commonly devoted to social visitings, or to looking after their wild stock, and by some to hunting or fishing.

My father took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded, to throw out as many useful hints as possible on the subject of personal religion and family worship, and of bringing up their children aright, and to distribute among them a few religious tracts and little books, and even copies of the New Testament, reading from each a passage or two as he gave them away.

In the midst of this work, some one announced the "preacher" near at hand. My father ob-

served that the people hastily hid their little books and tracts on his approach, as if unwilling that he should see them. He was a swarthy, thickset man, with intensely black hair and shaggy eyebrows, and exhibited in his manner much more the aspect of a wolf than of a gospel lamb. The unexpected addition made to his audience that day, by our family, was evidently an annoyance to him, and it was noticeable that the greatest offence he seemed to conceive was at the distribution among his people of religious books and Testaments.

"*He* believed," he said, "in the *preaching* of the gospel, and in nothing else. He didn't read nothing in his Bible about tracts or Sunday-schools, or missionary doings, or any of them new-fangled ways of trying to convert people. And he didn't believe in preaching from *larnin'* either, but in preaching from the *Sperrit*. As for himself and his *bretheren*, they always *tuck* the first text that got into their heads *arter* they got into the pulpit, and then they spoke the first things that come up when they opened their

mouths. That's what he believed in—*preachin' from the Sperrit.*"

This was said in a loud and angry tone just before going into the house. In the service that ensued he had no Bible, nor even a New Testament. His people said he never carried one. The only book we saw him use was what he called his *hyme* book, from which he repeated, as if from memory, a very long *hyme;* and then, in queer nasal chant, "parcelled" out the lines to be sung by the congregation.

The "sarment" that he perpetrated was so remarkable a production, that, child though I was, it has left to this day its impress deep enough for me to repeat the text and its interpretation. The words of the text were: "Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." These words are in the fifth chapter and 39th verse of the Acts of the Apostles, and they constitute a part of the sage advice given by Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, to his brethren the Jewish rulers, concerning the Apostles of Christ, whom they were about to punish. "Let them

alone," said he; "if this new sect of Nazarenes be of man, it will come to naught, as others have done to your knowledge; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it. Let them alone, *lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.*" This was the text and its connection.

I do not remember how the "preacher" managed to quote it, or whether he gave its plan and connection; but I do remember that he talked for more than an hour, and that his great aim was to show *in what way men might* HAPPILY FIGHT AGAINST GOD.*

My father and mother seemed sad all the rest of that day, and quoted several times the words, "Blind leaders of the blind."

* The reader must not suppose that, in the above sketch, the author has drawn upon his imagination. It is *sober fact*, not fancy. The text and its interpretation he heard with his own ears. The preacher, with no book but his "*hyme* book," is a verity, vouched for on the same testimony. And as for the *building*, it was unfortunately not the only one of its kind in those parts, and it is possible, a traveller there may find that, after a lapse of fifty years, the tooth of time has failed to gnaw them all away. Oh, the heathenish influences under which multitudes of our poor have been brought up! Do not such demand our pity and our kindly efforts for their enlightenment?

CHAPTER V.

The Five Belts—First Glimpse of the Blue Ridge—The Morning Bath—Wild Duck Pillau.

TRAVELLING thus by easy stages, and stopping to encamp wherever there was sufficient promise of pleasure to be enjoyed or of good to be done, and sometimes going out of our way for these purposes, our general progress was slow. We were three weeks in reaching Athens, Georgia.

This was the first point of rest in the plan of travel. "As the crow flies," Athens is about one hundred and eighty miles north-west from Savannah, and about the same distance and direction from Darien, although these places upon the seaboard are fifty or sixty miles apart.

In travelling this route, the variations of soil,

surface, and production are such as to arrest the attention even of a child.

The immediate seaboard is a dead level of very fine sand, in which the only rock to be seen is an occasional sandstone, loosely cemented with iron, and the chief productions are rice and sea-island cotton. All through this belt, the eye feasts upon evergreen forests of pine, interspersed with wide-spreading live-oaks, gracefully draped with moss, and in the wet bottoms with princely magnolias, and, next the sea, with tall feathery palmettoes, that remind one of the tropics. Between these trees and the earth is a wilderness of rich shrubbery—beautiful cassenas, fragrant myrtles, scarlet-berried hollies, dark green cedars and savins, and modest gall-berries, all evergreens, like the trees just mentioned.

Forty miles from the sea, the soil changes to a coarse sand, covered with forests of long-leaf pine and of a small rough oak, known as the black-jack, and carpeted with wire-grass, so called from its lean, tough, wire-like leaf. Here the principal product is cattle, and the quality of their milk and

flesh may be inferred from the herbage on which they feed. In this unpropitious belt reside a lean, tough, wiry population, harmonizing with their grass and cattle, and known over the whole State as the wire-grass or piney-woods people.

About forty miles higher up, the soil changes again. The sand begins occasionally to be intermixed with clay, and overlies a stratum of shells possessing every degree of hardness, from the soft and crumbly marl, to the flinty buhr-stone, from which the best of mill-stones may be made. This region is known as that of the "rotten limestone." The water is miserably-tasted, but the soil is rich, and the forests combine largely the varied growth of the seaboard, the midland, and the mountains.

About forty miles still higher up, say at the cities of Augusta, Macon, and Columbus, the soil changes again. Here begin the red clays, underlying which are stratified rocks, which obstruct the rivers, and make those cities the heads of navigation. Above this line, the country is richly diversified with hills, which are covered with heavy growths of oak and hickory, indicative of a produc-

tive soil, while the streams are all turbid from the intermixture of clay.

This last belt includes Athens, far beyond which begin the mountain limestones and the marbles; and beyond these, in the western part of the State, are dark outcroppings of stone-coal.

I do not give these facts as having been all gathered during my childhood. But my attention was attracted to them then, and I learned to know them better afterwards. These five belts traverse the State from north-east to south-west, running almost parallel with the coast line, and more or less mark the neighbouring States also.

Of Athens, at that time, I scarcely remember more than the name. One thing only impresses me: that we boarded with an old lady of whom my father and mother spoke very highly, but in whose neighbourhood I could find no playmates; and that when the news of another journey was announced, it was music to my ears.

In this second trip, however, our company was not so large as it had been before—my mother and all the children, except myself, were left at

Athens. My father, Mr. Jamieson, and myself, by turns riding in the carryall or bestriding Old Gray, and accompanied by Scipio, who drove the baggage-waggon, left Athens on a tour into Tennessee and Kentucky. We took what was then known as the Federal Road, which led us through the heart of the Cherokee country.

The road was exceedingly rough, and the rivers without bridges. I recollect pitying the poor horses as they strained up the long ascents, and then being terrified as we tried to hold them back in descending the hills equally steep on the other side.

We had not travelled more than half a day before my father stopped the carryall on the top of a high hill, and said to me:

"Look yonder, Johnnie! There is something you never saw before."

"What!" said I; "clouds?" for I saw only what seemed to be bluish-looking clouds, of rather solid appearance, rising beyond the distant hills.

"Those are not clouds," replied my father; "they are mountain-tops."

"Are mountains blue?" I asked.

"Not when you are near them," he answered; "they are then gray or green, as they happen to be covered with rocks or with trees. But at a distance everything takes a bluish tinge. Did you never notice that trees which are blue at a distance, are green when you come near? Those mountains are forty or fifty miles away."

That night we encamped at a place called the Poplar Spring. I remember it on account of a hearty laugh we had at Mr. Jamieson's expense. Like the rest of us, he had suffered severely from sickness the autumn preceding, and had not yet recovered his strength. He thought that his best plan for recruiting in this healthy region would be by a free use of cold water. When we stopped that evening to encamp, he had looked out a place of concealment in the bushes, and there had provided a bucket of cold water. The next morning, soon after daylight, he went to this place, and poured the water over his head and down his body. The shock was very great. He gave a loud "Boo!" then threw over his shoulders an old

plaid cloak, and started off on a run to warm his blood. Our dogs, on hearing his Boo! and seeing a person in unusual costume running full speed from camp, took him, no doubt, for a thief, and dashed off in pursuit. The first thing Mr. Jamieson knew, Medôr was pulling at his cloak, and Selkirk biting his legs. He kicked and hallooed to them most lustily, but it was not until after a pretty long fight and a good deal of coaxing that he could persuade the dogs to believe he was no thief, but their own home friend. The next time he had occasion to take a similar bath, he called the dogs and made them witness the operation. I learned, then, what I have often noticed since, that, although dogs will ordinarily scent out a friend under any disguise, they will often fail to do so in a time of excitement, especially if treated as foes.

Another incident occurred about the same time, in which Mr. Jamieson and the dogs figured again. Some one had killed a wild duck. It was very fat, and seemed to promise a delicious dish, if well prepared. Mr. Jamieson, who had long

been disgusted with what he termed the "hog and hominy diet" of the up-country, and who longed for some of his favourite seaboard dishes, proposed to use the duck in making a pillau.*

"I never cooked one," said he to my father, "but I know how it is done, and have no doubt I can do it."

At our midday rest he took charge of the duck, and of the materials necessary for his pillau. Dinner was served on a log. We handed our tin plates to him to be helped, and then waited a few moments on him. I observed my father taste some grains of the rice, then start with surprise, and look straight down into his plate, while his eye twinkled and his face became red, as if he were trying to smother a laugh. I tasted too, and found that the duck was intolerably fishy. My father and I exchanged looks, and he shook his head at me, as much as to say, "Keep still."

Mr. Jamieson was so deeply interested in his

* This is a rich preparation of rice, fowl, pepper, etc., boiled together. We obtain the name, as well as the plan of the dish, from the Turks.

favourite dish, and so eager to enjoy it, that he had not observed our changes of countenance. He helped himself bountifully to the smoking dainty, spread a little of it on one side of his plate to cool, eyed it with manifest desire, then put a good mouthful of it into his lips. We saw him make one or two efforts to swallow, then rise hastily from his seat uttering something very emphatic, but which was so obstructed by rice and disgust that we could make out only a prolonged "Ogh-h!" and hurrying to the nearest bushes to relieve himself of his intolerable mouthful. While he was gone, my father laughed until the tears came into his eyes, but he tried hard to refrain after Mr. Jamieson's return, when he quietly said to him:

"Pity that so fat a duck should be so fishy! We had better make our next pillau of something else."

"Scipio!" said Mr. Jamieson, in a voice of thunder.

Scipio came.

"Take away this pillau, and give it to the dogs!"

Scipio took the offending dish and carried it off. I observed him slyly give it a smell, when his head jerked back, as if with a half spasm, and his lips uttered an expressive, "Ki-ee, mossa!"

He put it on a stump to cool, and called the dogs. Poor fellows! it was almost pitiable, as well as laughable, to witness their disappointment. They came running to the call, delighted with the large share allotted to them; put their noses to it, looked at us with a very doubtful expression, then raised their heads and *howled*. They did not touch a mouthful.

Through all that long journey, and amid all the rough fare of the Indian country and the mountains, Mr. Jamieson never, after that, uttered the word "pillau."

CHAPTER VI.

The Frontier—Saw-nee—Ka-nee-kah—Van's Ferry.

IN the course of two or three days, we came to a river, which was crossed by means of a ferry-boat, the first I had ever seen. It was a broad, shallow, flat-bottomed thing, with double floor, built of very thick planks, having space enough for a large waggon and team, and making one think of an ordinary plank-bridge turned bottom upwards. A rope of twisted hide was stretched across the river and fastened to a tree on each side. The flat was pulled across by means of this rope.

The river was very beautiful, its waters clear as crystal, and overhung to their very edge by luxuriant trees and vines, growing in the rich banks, so different from the muddy rivers of tidewater, flanked with wet marshes or miry

swamps. A short distance above the ferry, the river was double; for there the waters of two rivers unite in their sparkling race to the Gulf of Mexico. The Chestatee above the junction and the Chattahoochee below it, formed the boundary at that time between the ill-starred Cherokees and the white people of the State of Georgia.

Near the ferry, and in sight of numerous smokes from Indian houses on the other side of the river, was a large trading-post. This was abundantly supplied with knives, hatchets, axes, gunpowder, lead, looking-glasses, beads, and gaudy calicoes of red, yellow, and blue, conspicuously festooned to attract the attention of Indian purchasers. Little *money* was received or expected in payment; the goods were exchanged for showy mocassins, dried venison, bear meat, cane baskets, and skins of all sorts, from those of the bear and panther, and the rich peltries of the beaver and otter, down to those of the mink, and even of the squirrel.

Before we could cross the river and pass into

the Indian country, it was necessary that a permit should be obtained from the Agent appointed by the President of the United States for the protection of his "red children." To my father's great disappointment, however, he learned, upon arriving at the river, that the Agent was absent, and that he would not probably return for days—how many, no one could tell.

This disappointment was trying. In his early days, in England, he had conceived a deep and almost romantic interest in the wild men of America, and it had been one of the most pleasant dreams, not only of his boy-life, but of his early manhood, to visit their country, and to look upon them in their own wild homes. That dream was on the point of being realized; he was at the very threshold of their territory; he could see from the river bank the smoke of their homes; and now, at this very point, to be baulked, demanded of him more evenness of mind than he was able always to exercise. But he was a man of sound philosophy, and one of his rules of life was, not merely to bear everything patiently, but

to *turn whatever happened to good account.* He tried that rule in the present case, and was satisfied, so he afterwards said, that his interests had been served by his detention. He certainly made thereby some valuable acquaintances, and also obtained some valuable hints that were better gained then than later.

No sooner was it decided that we must sojourn on the river bank than my father went to the trader, whose name was Scupper, and who, next to the Agent, was the most important man at the post, showed him a letter of general introduction, and made known to him his intentions. The moment the trader recognized the distinguished name signed to the letter, he became all alive to my father's wishes.

"There is one piece of advice I would give you," said he; "keep a close watch upon everything you have that can be stolen. This is the wildest part of the State. The red man has scarcely gone out, and most of the white men who have come in are of unsettled character."

"I have two good dogs and plenty of guns," my father replied. "Will not these be enough?"

"Enough, perhaps, for the first night," was the answer, "especially if your dogs are tied up. But I suppose you know that there are certain *smells* which dogs will follow to a great distance. If yours should be decoyed away, there's no calculating what may happen to them, or to you, before they return."

"Thieves in this neighbourhood must be uncommonly well trained," observed my father, with a smile.

"So well trained," returned the other, "that if a man is not wider awake than some I have known, he might even have his horse stolen from under him without his knowing it."

My father laughed, and inquired:

"Are these thieves white men or red?"

"Sometimes of one colour, sometimes of the other," Mr. Scupper replied. "But I must say that when the white man gives himself up to these doings, he generally makes the greater rascal of the two."

"What would you advise me to do?" asked my father.

"Put yourself and goods under the watch of a trustworthy Indian," returned the trader. "Pay him well, and, if possible, make him responsible to his chief. *Indians seldom steal from each other,* and they are so quick-eared and quick-eyed that few white men can steal from them. But when you have got the best one that can be had, my advice, so long as you are on the frontier, is, Watch, and watch *him,* too."

"You do not give a stranger much encouragement to feel at ease here," said my father, with a half-amused, half-troubled expression of countenance. "Can you commend me to any one whom I may put into service to-night?"

"I cannot," was the answer. "There are Indians enough on this side the river to-day; some of them as faithful as can be found, but unfortunately, they are all drunk—every man, woman, and child of them—except the watchman of each company, who never drinks until some

one else is able to take his place. I will, however, be on the lookout for you."

This conversation took place about the middle of the day, and it had scarcely ended before the trader's clerk said:

"There is old Saw-nee* coming, now!"

"Saw-nee is the very man you want," said Mr. Scupper; "not because you could engage *him* as watchman, for he is too old, and too rich, to give himself to such work, and more than that, he is a *chief*. But he can select one for you, and whoever he appoints will serve you faithfully, for to an Indian the chief's word is law."

We looked toward the river and saw a person coming, whom no one who had ever seen a truthful picture of our aborigines would for a moment take to be any other than an Indian chief of the olden time. He was full sixty years of age; his long hair, white as snow, and flowing to his shoulders, was in strong contrast with

* This name is not the same with Sawnee, the Scottish contraction for Saunders and Alexander, but a Cherokee name, and, like most other words of the language, pronounced full upon the last syllable: Saw-NEE, Che-RO-KEE.

the dark copper of his complexion, while his stately walk showed that he duly estimated the dignity both of his age and his office. On his head was a turban of bright red, adorned with feathers of the eagle, hawk, crane, and even of the barn-door fowl. His clothing consisted of hunting-shirt, leggings, and moccasins of dressed deerskin, all fringed and highly ornamented. Over one shoulder, and under the other, was a scarf, from the folds of which projected the feathered ends of arrows belonging to a bow swung at his back; while in his hand he bore a rifle, and his powder-horn and shot-pouch hung at his side. A thong of deerskin passed around his neck, and displayed conspicuously upon his breast a broad silver medal, of which he seemed to be quite proud, and which we subsequently learned had been awarded to him by General Andrew Jackson for gallant conduct at the battle of Horse-Shoe Bend, where he had swum the river, cut loose the enemies' boats, and thus aided materially to gain the day.

On his coming up to the store, the trader exchanged with him a few words in Cherokee, which caused him to fasten his eyes upon my father with a look as keen as an eagle's. Apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, and with the trader's representations, he approached and said, in attempted English:

"My people too much big drunk to watch. Let alone one sleep; drunk all gone, and watchman plenty."

In the course of the conversation ensuing, my father informed him of his English birth; of his having heard, across the water, when he was a boy, the fame of the red man of America, and of his having come, not for the purposes of trade, but to rove among the people, and to see them as they are.

At this announcement Saw-nee looked a little doubtful. We learned afterward that he had had so much to do with unprincipled white men as to be suspicious of every profession of friendly interest. He answered:

"Cherokee too wild. No house; no bed; no

table; no chair; no bread. Unaika* tired before two sleeps."

My father pointed to his tent, pitched under a tree, and to his waggons beside it:

"Yonder," said he, "is my house. It travels wherever I go. My bed is in it. I carry my bread in my waggon, and my meat too. All I want is to see the people."

A word in Cherokee from the trader to the chief, and a look from the chief into the traveller's open face, caused an instantaneous change. Saw-nee seemed to be convinced of the stranger's sincerity, and from that moment he was his friend. He grasped his hand, and said, with unhesitating cordiality:

"Come! Come! Welcome! Saw-nee glad see you. People glad see you. Come Saw-nee house."

My father was about to accept the invitation as freely as it was given, when a significant smile and look from the trader made him hesitate. He, therefore, contented himself with thanking Saw-nee for his invitation, and saying:

* White man.

"I will certainly do so, if I can."

As soon as possible he sought an interview with Mr. Scupper, who remarked:

"Your answer is all right. I was afraid you were going to bind yourself too close for comfort. You will see some rare sights at Saw-nee's, and, in fact, all through the nation."

Late in the afternoon, a messenger came from the old chief, who had gone into the surrounding forest to look after his drunken people. This man was about thirty years of age, and of very pleasant aspect, having his complexion and features softened by the admixture in his veins of white man's blood. He came to my father, and said:

"Me, Ka-nee-ka. Saw-nee ɛen' me, watch."

My father and Mr. Jamieson closely scrutinized his face, to ascertain whether he had been partaking in the excesses of the others, but saw no indication of it. Indeed, the Indian seemed to understand the look of inquiry, for, he added, without a word having been spoken:

"Me no drunk—no drunk; just come over river."

It was scarcely possible to look him in the eye, and listen to his soft voice expressing itself in broken English, without taking him to be an honest man, and this impression was confirmed by the trader, who said, with marked emphasis:

"Ka-nee-ka is one of the few red men of whom I can say that I never heard of his being drunk, or of his being charged with wrong-doing. He is one of the best men of the nation."

With this assurance he was duly installed in the office of watchman, and so satisfactory were his services, and so well agreed were both parties in the case, that he continued with us until compelled to leave and return home.

CHAPTER VII.

First Experience of a Ferry—First Impressions of Indian Life.

LATE Sunday evening the Agent returned, and early next morning the permit to pass the river was obtained.

I shall never forget my first experience of a ferry—the steep descent down the sandy river bank —the yielding of the flat to the pressure of the entering train—the cautious stepping of Old Gray upon the loose planks of the floor—the shying and snorting of the waggon-horses when they found themselves passing from the firm earth toward the deep and dangerous-looking water—the pricking-up of their ears, and the constant watch they kept upon the strange movements, sounds, and sensations—and my own confused feeling when the bank seemed so mysteriously to slide away from the ferry-boat, and the trees and

skies overhead to move around, as the flat swung down with the current, and then passed sidling from shore to shore. But we made the passage in safety. The heavy chain at the forward end was drawn, clanking, ashore, and wound several times around a short stake driven firmly into the bank; one by one we all passed out; the ferriage dues were paid; the horses strained up the steep and sandy bank, and, having reached its level summit, we were all ready once more for travelling.

In crossing that river a great change had passed upon our relations to society: we were now in the red man's country, and under his rule, except so long as we kept within the limits of the Federal road; that, indeed, was a thread-like extension of white man's territory, and protected by white man's law, but beyond it, on either side, all was Indian. We had taken our farewell of houses and fields, as we had been accustomed to see them, and had entered the grand old forest, and among the rock-laden hills, untouched by the hand of labour, except where at rare intervals the blue

smoke curled from the roof of some rude lodge scarcely exceeding in its dimensions, or in its architecture, the playhouse of a child.

Some of the dwellings we saw that day, and many that we saw afterwards, belonging to the poorer class, consisted simply of a roof resting on the ground, and made of long pieces of bark, stripped from growing trees, flattened and leaned against a ridge-pole. Most of the better houses were made of straight poles or small logs, about twelve feet long, notched into each other at the corners, so as to lie very close, making a wall about as high as a man's shoulders, and surmounted by a roof of bark, or of split boards. These better houses were usually associated with a small patch of cleared ground, an acre or less, planted with corn and beans. I recollect hearing my father and Mr. Jamieson remark that they never saw an Indian house on poor ground, and they accounted for it by the fact that the selection was always made by the women, or with an eye to them, for on them devolved the drudgery of cultivating all the ground that was planted.

Rough as the white man's dwellings were on the other side of the river, they were *lordly* in comparison with the usual abodes of the Indians; and, child though I was, I could not help inquiring, mentally: If such the difference, when the white man of the frontier is roughened by contact with the Indian, and when the Indian of the frontier is improved by contact with the whites, how desperately rough must have been that mode of life before the improvement!

One or two hours' travel along the Federal highway brought us to a point where a narrow pony-path, or Indian trail, diverged from the main road and led through the wild woods. This, Ka-nee-ka informed us, was the way to Saw-nee's house.

Mr. Jamieson looked at the path, untouched as yet by wheels, then looked at our carryall and waggon, and appeared troubled. He thought, as no doubt many others would who never saw an Indian forest in Indian times, that it would be impossible to travel through it on wheels, tangled as it must be with vines and thickets. But this

was a mistake. While the Cherokees lived here, and for years afterward, *there was no undergrowth* —it was kept down by yearly fires. The growth of the low grounds, which the fires could not reach, on account of their dampness, was dense enough; but in the uplands a deer or man could be discerned in any direction full half a mile away.

After pursuing this trail a short distance, Mr. Jamieson was amused, and almost provoked, at the fact that for several miles he could not find a switch with which to whip off the deer-flies that swarmed with bloody intent around the ears of the horses. With the exceptions of having to cut a few logs from our path, and to bridge an occasional gully, or to level a rough ravine, we met with little obstruction. These wild, open woods, so different from our thickety forests, were truly beautiful.

We came at last to a small mountain, near whose base flowed a pretty little stream, in a bend of which lived Saw-nee. We could see from the comb of a hill, at the distance of a mile, the

smoke of several fires, and a nearer approach revealed a field of about ten acres, with a neat log-cabin in each corner, while other houses of similar character appeared in different parts of the forest.

"Saw-nee's little town, I suppose?" said my father, interrogatively, to Ka-nee-ka.

"Saw-nee town," affirmatively replied the other. "Yonder," he continued, pointing to a pole-house among the trees, "Saw-nee brother, Waw-leh. Yonder, yonder," pointing now to the cabins at the corners of the field, "Saw-nee wife!"

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Jamieson, "does his wife live in four houses?"

Ka-nee-ka's eyes twinkled with an amused look, as he replied, counting his fingers:

"One house, one wife; two house, two wife; tree house, tree wife; fo' house, fo' wife. Saw-nee rich. Saw-nee got big field; got *fo' wife;* got *hundred pony!*"

Mr. Scupper's allusion to the "rare sights" we should probably witness began now to be ex-

plained. It was, indeed, a rare sight to persons, fresh as we were from a Christian country, to look upon an establishment in which a man could show *four lawful wives*, each living in her own house, and in her own corner of a ten-acre field. The fact thus suddenly revealed prepared us for anything else that might appear.

Mr. Jamieson was highly amused at this discovery about Saw-nee's wives, and began directly to speculate upon the consequences:

"Don't they have some big quarrels sometimes?" he inquired of Ka-nee-ka.

"Don't dare," Ka-nee-ka replied. "Too 'fraid Saw-nee."

We halted on the shadowy brow of a hill overlooking the stream, and despatched our guide, Ka-nee-ka, to announce to the old chief our arrival, and to inquire of him whether it would suit his convenience for us to encamp at the spot where we had halted. This message brought him striding rapidly to meet us. His dark Indian face was lighted up with pleasure, and his hand was cordially extended, as he exclaimed:

"Welcome! welcome! Come now to Saw-nee house."

"Let me first pitch my *tent*," answered my father. "Is this spot as good as any other for my camp?"

"Good!" he answered, with a disappointed look; "but Saw-nee house good too; *big* too. Come to house. I too much glad to see you."

Indians are proverbially hospitable. They manifest a real delight in being able to share with their accepted guests whatever they have; but their guests must be careful not to offend them by any slight, or by want of proper regard. Saw-nee's face indicated strong and unrestrained passions, and he was so fully set on receiving and entertaining us that, without skilful management, there was evident danger of displeasing him. But my father was a man of tact, and his answer was ready.

"Saw-nee's house is big and good, no doubt, and I shall be too much glad to go to it," he said; "but I want to have *my own* house, too, where

I can welcome Saw-nee and his people when they come to see me. I love to feel free."

The gathering cloud dispersed from the chief's brow, and a pleasant light flashed from his dark eyes. His visitor had pleaded a love of freedom, and a desire to reciprocate attentions. The plea went straight to his Indian heart, and he replied:

"Good, good! Make camp; then come. My house yonder."

He pointed to one somewhat larger than the others, though, like them, consisting of but one room.

CHAPTER VIII.

Visit in Form—Conversation—Novel Measure for Heat and Cold—Indian Woman—Cooking—Ponies—The Rat Hunt.

KA-NEE-KA'S services as a go-between were invaluable. He was quick in discerning the temper of both parties, and skilful in warding off unpleasant collisions. His general intelligence was far greater than Saw-nee's, and though not a chief by office, he was one by influence, and he promised to be one in the course of time by consent of the people.

It was by his advice that my father and Mr. Jamieson, soon after dinner, put on their most showy clothing, directing me to do the same, and went to make a visit at the house pointed out. Ka-nee-ka informed us that this was the house of Saw-nee's oldest wife, and that it was the custom, in all honours and attentions shown, that each

wife should share regularly according to her succession in age.

We found the chief seated on a log, under the shade of a tree by his house-door, smoking a long-stemmed pipe. Near him were two chairs, with bottoms of raw deer-skin, hair-side up, and a queer little stool, made of woven cane, was set for me. The pipe was immediately offered to the guests, who each took a whiff in token of sociality, but who declined taking more on the plea that it was not their time of day to smoke.

I noticed that, as we sat there, a crevice between the logs of the house glistened with a row of keen black eyes, watching our movements. Scarcely had I noticed them, however, before they all disappeared, and I saw them no more.

When Saw-nee's pipe ceased to give smoke, a dark-skinned girl of sixteen years of age—the very picture of the old chief—came with a cane basket full of luscious-looking red plums, placed them on the ground beside him, and, without a word spoken to him, or a look directed

to us, she received his pipe and bore it back to the house.

"A very good plum," said Mr. Jamieson, appearing to enjoy greatly the contents of the basket.

"Good plum," responded Saw-nee.

"They grow wild, do they not?" asked Mr. Jamieson.

"Grow wild," was Saw-nee's reply.

"Where I live the people call them the Tennessee plum," remarked my father.

"Tennessee plum!" assented the other.

Such was the character of the conversation extended through an hour, and touching on various subjects. There was one reply of the old chief, however, a little longer than the others, which so highly amused my father that he and Mr. Jamieson had a hearty laugh over it when they returned to the tent. The mention of the name Tennessee drew from us the remark that we were going on a visit to the State of that name, and from Saw-nee the remark that he had often been there, and that on the other side

of the mountains the winters were colder than on the Georgia side. My father, curious to know, as I afterwards heard him say, what kind of measure would be applied to heat and cold by an Indian ignorant of the thermometer, asked him:

"How much colder?"

Saw-nee paused a moment, and, to my father's surprise, grunted out,

"Ugh! Suppose about one blanket!"

That evening an Indian came to our camp, bearing upon his shoulder a quarter of fat, young beef, as a present from the chief. Scipio, according to our custom at home, enclosed it in a tight bag to protect it from the encroachments of the flesh-fly, and drew it high up into a tree by means of a cord thrown over a limb, from which it was lowered at will, and for days furnished us with delightful steaks.

When Saw-nee came in the morning to see us, he was highly pleased with this device. He said that most of his people cared nothing for the touch of the flesh-fly, but that he himself could

not bear it, and that the only protection he had practised was to hang his meat in the smoke of his chimney.

After enjoying a pipe in our canvas "wigwam," he invited us to go and see his ponies, of which he said he owned one hundred, and that some of them had been kept from the cane-brake that morning to give us the opportunity of seeing them.

Our way to the pony-pen led us by that corner of the field occupied by his youngest wife. She had evidently received no warning of our approach, and was, therefore, not prepared to see company, for her calico dress was let down farther from her shoulders, and drawn up higher toward her knees than suited the decorum of a chief's wife; yet she was not in the least abashed, but went on with her work the same as if no stranger, nor even her husband, were nigh. She was surrounded by a crowd of children, who, the moment they saw us, scampered into the house and peeped eagerly at us through holes in the wall. Most of them were attired in the full suit of copper colour

which nature had given them; though some of the older wore additionally, about the middle, a piece of tattered calico, or of deer-skin. Her occupation at the time was cooking. A hot fire of dry wood had been made in a shallow trench, producing a quantity of coals and embers. Over this heated pit was a kind of scaffold of green poles, laid with their ends resting on the sides, and on this scaffold sat, in solemn silence, the head of the beef slaughtered the day before. The skin had been removed, but the horns still pointed fiercely upward, and united with the scorched eyes, dripping cheeks and broiling nose, to produce a savage-looking picture.

Saw-nee's ponies were not remarkable for size, sleekness, or superfluous fat, but they were in fair working order, and were thoroughly broken, he said, to all kinds of service customary among his people. His own favourite pony, for instance, a jet black, with shaggy mane and tail, dished face, and great breadth between the eyes, and having an exceedingly vicious look, would not only come running to his call, and follow him

like a dog, remain at one place, when so ordered, until permitted to leave, stand still as a stump while he fired from its back, and perform other acts of a like character, but it would guard whatever articles were committed to its care, and was trained to walk a log across a miry morass or a turbulent stream, with the steadiness of a goat. The credit of this training was due to Saw-nee's brother, Wah-leh, who lived in the woods hard by, and who was noted both as a horseman and a hunter.

As most of these ponies were reared for market, my father requested to be shown some that might be suitable for children. This request caused my heart to jump almost into my throat, for I had long been ambitious to own a pony, and now my desire was about to be gratified. Saw-nee, however, replied:

"Can't show now; can't *now*. Show nex' time."

The result of the application was that, ere we left the neighbourhood, two ponies, very small, very neat, very gentle, were selected and com-

mitted to Wah-leh's care, with the understanding that they should be trained in a particular manner, and be ready for delivery at a certain price when we passed that way on our return in the fall.

The next few days were spent in hunting and fishing, which I was not able to witness on account of sickness. One scene, however, I recollect at Saw-nee's, which afforded me much amusement. This was a *rat hunt.*

For an Indian of moderate wealth Saw-nee was a big farmer: he planted *ten acres of rich land.* His crib groaned with the weight of two or three hundred bushels of corn. But he was in the same proportion annoyed by rats. All the nibblers of the neighbourhood seemed to have congregated at that well-filled crib, burrowing among the unshucked ears, burrowing under the corn-house, burrowing in the surrounding earth, and even making their nests in the surrounding trees. They destroyed more corn than the ponies ate, and Saw-nee was compelled to declare war against them. Collecting a few friends,

he had dug in to the holes outside the crib, and followed them as far as they led, killing such numbers of his tiny foes as for days to feast all the children of the neighbourhood with roasted rats. But this assault upon the outworks only compelled those which escaped to seek refuge in the mass of the corn itself, and for a while Saw-nee was puzzled to know what to do next. He applied to a wise old Rain-maker, or Conjurer, of the neighbourhood, who advised him to the following plan, which he adopted, and which was ready for testing while we were there: He obtained a nicely hollowed log about a foot in diameter, which he buried deep under the corn in his crib, with a piece of wood lying at each end ready to be used as a stopper. The log had been in its place about three weeks before our coming, in which time the rats had greatly enjoyed its security, making it their romping-place by night, and their place of refuge and of sleep by day. But the time had now arrived when its treacherous character was to be proved to their terrible experience.

Saw-nee, accompanied by several others, went into the crib and made a great commotion among the shucks, particularly at the sides and bottom of the room, for the purpose of driving the rats to seek refuge in the deceitful hollow. This being done, the log was closed at both ends by the stoppers provided, and borne to an open piece of ground. As it was on its way, we noticed a grim smile on Saw-nee's face, and heard him say:

"I hear 'em! Got 'em now!"

Our dogs, as well as those of the Indians, were present, and seemed greatly to enjoy the fun. The log was as full as it could be packed with rats of all ages and sizes, from those just entering upon active life to the great-grandfathers, gray with years and robberies. Poor creatures! they appeared fully to comprehend the desperateness of their situation, for they clung tenaciously to their refuge, until compelled by various devices to leap out and seek safety in flight. But so numerous were the besiegers, both human and brute, that scarcely

one of them escaped. Each person made his own pile of dead bodies, and when we came to inquire into the sum total, we counted as many as sixty-three.

The log was then replaced and covered as before, and every three or four weeks afterward was carried out and treated in the same way. Saw-nee informed us on our return in the fall that he had never captured as many as at the first time, but never less than twenty; and that, in consequence, he had now so many less to feed—that his ponies were growing fat. It is certain that my own dear little pony, which I named Saw-nee, and my sister's pony, obtained at the same time, were much fatter and sleeker than they were when we first saw them.

CHAPTER IX.

The Woodruff Brothers—Steamship *Savannah*—The wide, wide Sea—Sensation at Liverpool.

OUR summer's tour in 1818 was full of incidents and variety, as the description, just given, of our first few days' experience will show. But I was at that time only a child of eight years of age, and though I perfectly remember many things that would no doubt interest the young reader, I prefer to keep them back until I come to describe another visit made to the nation some years afterwards.

In the year 1819, our family affairs took a new, and, to me, a very pleasant turn, giving a more rosy tinge to all my after boyhood. My father then acquired a new son, about my own age, and I gained a brother after my own heart, who was my faithful companion in most of the

rough scenes of early life. It happened in this way:

As stated in a preceding chapter, my father had resolved to retire from the cares of business to the quiet of the country. Before doing so, however, it was necessary that the Atlantic should be crossed, for the house of John Woodruff & Brother, of Darien, Georgia, was but the counterpart of James Woodruff & Brother, of Liverpool, England, and these two were but the several parts of a virtual house of "The Woodruff Brothers," occupying both sides of the Atlantic. Ere making so important a change as retiring from business, it was necessary that the partners should meet and confer together. The duty of making the voyage devolved rightfully and not unwillingly upon him who called for it.

In those days, when men depended wholly upon sails for a passage between the Continents, and when the ocean-currents of wind and water were only beginning to be studied, trips to Europe were not so frequent as they are now; nor, as a rule, so quickly made. In this case,

my father took advantage of an opportunity afforded him by the *first steamship that ever crossed the ocean*—THE SAVANNAH; so named in honour of the city whose enterprising merchants devised and executed the experiment.

Writing, as I do, nearly fifty years after the event, and looking upon the world-wide revolution introduced by ocean-steaming, it seems to me passing strange that a fact so important to the human race, and so creditable to its originators as this experiment, should remain to this day so little known.

The *Savannah* was provided and equipped for the purpose of testing the possibility of navigating the ocean by steam. She was small, of only three hundred tons burden, beautifully proportioned, being of that sharp-bowed and fast-sailing variety then just coming into use, but now so generally known as clipper-built. Her paddle-wheels were so geared that they could be easily lifted from the water and shipped upon deck. Her fuel was wood, for coal had not yet come into general use as a generator of steam. She sailed

from New York for Savannah March 28th, 1819, and was seven days on her passage. Being then fully prepared for the experiment, she steamed out of the port of Savannah on the 10th of April following, under the command of Captain Moses Rodgers, and steamed into the port of Liverpool twenty-two days afterward, having used her sails but seven days during the voyage.

On leaving Liverpool she went to Russia, and at St. Petersburg was visited by the Czar in person, who expressed great interest in the experiment, and, as a mark of his favour, presented Captain Rodgers with a pair of iron chairs, one of which is still—or was before the war—to be seen in the city of Savannah.

Her return trip across the ocean was made also in twenty-two days from port to port. The experiment, therefore, was a perfect success. Being however, too small for available purpose, with so bulky a fuel as wood, her boiler was taken out, and she was used for several years as a sailing packet between Savannah and New York. She was finally wrecked on the northern shore of Long

Island, where her remains continued to be visible until a few years since, and may possibly be visible yet. So much for the *history* of the case.*

In this voyage I also was passenger, I scarcely know why. Perhaps my father desired to carry a part of his home with him for company; perhaps it was by medical advice, in view of my still feeble health; perhaps it was the ordering of Him who "sees the end from the beginning," and who was preparing even then to "temper the wind to a shorn lamb," whom He foresaw beyond the sea.

The voyage was very pleasant and exciting. I can never forget, were I to live to the age of Methuselah, the breathless feeling with which I looked from the vessel's deck, the morning after we left port, and saw nothing but water and sky. I have been upon mountain-tops, where the level country round, far as the eye could reach, seemed

* The author takes this occasion to say that the above historical statement coincides with the recollection of one of the prime movers of the enterprise, and also with the published accounts as gathered from the *Savannah Republican* paper of 1819.

to rise like the sides of a basin, until earth and sky met together in the distance. The sweep of vision in such cases far exceeds all that is possible at sea. And I have been upon mountain-tops, too, so far separated from all earthly objects that there was nothing to reflect the voice—the sound was chopped off at the lips, and the report of a gun had no echo or reverberation. But there is no breadth of vision which so oppresses you with a feeling of vastness as a sight of the shoreless ocean: no solitude is equal to it. The only objects visible, besides the rolling clouds above, and the rolling waves beneath, were adventurous gulls and Mother Carey's chickens, whose ceaseless, slow movement of the wings impressed with a painful sense of *ever-weariness*, or an occasional shark following close in our wake and looking at us on deck with its great hungry eyes, evidently wishing that some of us would fall overboard, or a huge turtle lying lazily asleep upon the surging water, and suddenly aroused by the sound, never before heard, of plashing wheels.

We had several gales during the voyage, which

unmercifully tossed our little craft, and made everybody on board sick, except the seamen and myself. By unusual exception, caused perhaps by my state of health, I was spared the ordinary fate of landsmen, and was able to enjoy the sea, storms and all. I remember that while my father and others would seek a place amidships, where there was the least of sickening motion, I would go to the stern, where there was the most, and there enjoy the sensations of rising and falling in a long swing, as the vessel climbed and plunged amid the quartering waves.

True, there were times when my heart almost died within me as the ship sank, sidling, into a deep trough of the sea, and I could measure the crest of the next wave bursting into a foam far above the level of my head, and threatening to bury us beneath its brine. But I was soon taught, by our invariably rising upon the threatening billow, that our tight little vessel was buoyant as a cork, and that if she were so unfortunate as to be buried for a moment by over-dashing waves, she must, like a cork, rise again to the

surface. We, however, shipped no seas, nor did a drop of salt water reach our decks, except what came there as spray, or was thrown there for the purpose of cleansing.

There was one occasion, however, when we came near having water enough on deck to bury us a thousand fathoms deep. From morning to midday the wind had been freshening, until it became almost a gale, raising a heavy sea, and carrying us at a rate that made the waters boom. I was seated on deck, near the companion-way, enjoying myself as usual with the never-palling changes of sea and sky, when the captain's voice came so sharp and quick as to make me start:

"All hands upon deck!"

The men, already on deck, sprang to their several posts, and the others from below came hurrying to join them; but before they could obey orders—indeed, before they could *receive* them, for the captain's voice was so interrupted that I heard only the broken sentences—

"Stand ready to . . . ! . . . haul the . . . and let her pay off!"

—I say, before they could obey orders, and before these orders reached their ears, I was pitched headlong from my seat and rolled along the deck, until brought up against a small stanchion, which I gripped and clung to for dear life. In the meantime there was the greatest commotion all around—the shouts of officers, the flapping of canvas, the snapping of cordage, the roar of wind. When I had sufficiently recovered myself to look around, I saw our beautiful vessel rearing upward like a horse about to leap a fence, with her bows in the air and her stern buried to the very bulwarks. She had been taken violently aback by a squall that came without warning right in her teeth, and, catching her wide-spread sails, had nearly backed us down to the bottom of the sea. Fortunately, our courses had not been made fast, or nothing could have saved us. As it was, a sign of command from the captain (for words were of no avail), followed by a heavy strain of two men at the helm, and then our well-trimmed vessel paid off before the wind with a

gracefulness that made the captain's eyes shine with delight.

By this time my father came hurrying on deck to see what had become of me. I saw him holding fast to the companion-way and trying to speak, but though his mouth opened wide and his lips moved, not a word reached my ear, at the distance of only fifteen feet. He then signed to me to hold fast, and after a moment's absence in the cabin reappeared with a small, strong halliard, which he fastened to the doorway; then tying one end around his waist, he crept along the deck until he grasped and drew me back with him to the cabin.

This adventure was by far the most serious that befell us; but there is another I remember, which impressed me quite as deeply with a sense of beauty as this did of danger. It was near sunset. A shower had crossed our track, and was still falling to the eastward where we were sailing; but, astern, the western sky was all blazing with light. The clouds around the almost setting sun were gorgeously illuminated,

while along the ocean surface its broad, bright disk was reflected in a path of dazzling light that stretched apparently from near the sun itself to a few cable-lengths of the vessel. My father and one or two others were enjoying this scene of beauty at the stern, when we heard the captain call, with peculiar emphasis:

"Come all and see! We are *sailing under a rainbow!*"

The rays of the sun had been caught by the drops of rain falling to the eastward and refracted into the most perfect and most brilliant bow I ever saw. We also pointed out to him what we had just seen, and to the eyes of all it seemed as if the Savannah was leaving a wake of glory behind her, and was sailing under an arch of glory above! Viewed as an omen, no one could ask for more.

One useful expedient I recollect gaining in the course of this voyage, which I have made use of many a time since. The weather had turned warm; there was no ice abroad—it was before the days of ice; and our drinking-water

had become almost nauseous. The captain took several tin cans, bottle-shaped, holding each about a gallon of water, swathed them with two or three thicknesses of porous cloth, kept them moist, and hung them in the breeze. The rapid evaporation from the cloth so greatly reduced the temperature of the inclosed water that no one would have asked for ice, even if we had had it aboard.

The nearer we approached the British coast the greater amount of shipping we saw, and when at last we neared Liverpool, the surface of the sea was dotted with sailing craft of every size and employment. Very noticeable among them was a cutter that seemed at first to be coming toward us with all possible spread of canvas, but which afterward shortened sail, and finally turned back toward port.

When we reached the city it was curious to see the immense crowd of people assembled on the quay. We afterward learned that the watchman of the port had signalled to the authorities that there was a ship on fire at sea, and in con-

sequence the cutter which we saw had been ordered out to our relief. Soon afterward the watchman reported that the *vessel* was not on fire, but only her *mast;* finally, that she was making headway against the wind, without sails, and with her mast on fire. And great was the surprise and admiration of all when the mysterious vessel entered the harbour "under bare poles, belching forth smoke and fire, yet uninjured!"*

* *Savannah Republican*, 1819.

CHAPTER X.

My Uncle's Family—Lorenzo—Great Calamity—The Offer.

AMONG the persons standing upon the quay was my uncle James. Superadded to the motives influencing the mass of the people who watched the approach of a vessel marked by the American flag and an apparently burning mast, he was moved by the hope of meeting a long-absent brother, who (as he had been informed by a recent letter) might "be expected to come by some unusual mode of navigation." We had scarcely made fast to the wharf before he was aboard, and it quickened the blood in my own boyish veins to see how like two boys these men could be in their expressions of love for each other. I began then to suspect what I have had occasion long since to know, that, notwithstanding

all their dignity and importance, men and women are but children grown.

Warned by the unusual indications reported by the watchman of the port, my uncle had hurried home from his counting-room to inform his wife of his suspicions, and to prepare for our reception. A carriage was waiting for us at the wharf, and in less than half an hour after reaching land we were at his hospitable mansion, and enjoying the attentions of his warm-hearted wife. She was one of those transparent characters whose genial, loving souls are always peeping out of their eyes. I loved her from the first, and during the whole of my stay she made me feel so much at home by her motherly tenderness that for the time I almost forgot my other home beyond the watery waste.

The four children of the family — two boys and two girls—combined, in a remarkable degree, the unlikenesses of both parents. They strongly reminded me of a brood of chickens I had seen just before leaving home — hybrids between the ordinary yard-fowl and the guinea-

hen—so closely resembling both breeds that it was hard to tell which nature predominated.

My cousin Lorenzo, the oldest of the group, was a bright-faced boy, three months my junior in time, but thrice three months my senior in a knowledge of the world and its ways. This was probably the result, not of any special aptitude on his part nor of any special defect on mine, for we seemed to be fair matches for each other, but of one being brought up in a city and the other in the country. For I have noticed that while country-reared boys acquire their knowledge of the world by slow, and sometimes costly degrees, those who live in the city enjoy a sort of floating capital of knowledge that comes to them apparently by contact.

Lorenzo strongly resembled his father in manly independence and quiet daring, yet he partook quite as largely, in proportion, of his mother's gentle manner and loving spirit. He and I were very unlike in temper, habits, and personal appearance; nevertheless there was such a congruity even in our unlikeness, that we seemed

made for each other. At any rate, we *took to each other* like twin brothers, and so close became the intimacy that soon our thoughts, feelings, and expectations became almost blended into one.

In the course of a few weeks the two brothers had arranged their business, and were ready to announce a dissolution of partnership in the fall. My father now proposed to visit London, and to take me with him. But to this I demurred; for I was so happy with my uncle and cousins, that I greatly preferred to stay with them.

"London is the greatest city in the world," my father urged, persuasively; "and I should like to have you able to say that you had been there."

"I don't want to see any city bigger than Savannah, at home, and Liverpool, here," I sturdily replied.

"Then there is the *King* to be seen too, with his crown of gold," my father urged. "Only think of that! the King of England, and——"

"I don't care so much for the King of England

as I care for my cousin Lorenzo," I replied, in that spirit of American irreverence toward royalty which made my uncle and aunt open their eyes as if I had been guilty of a species of profanity.

The issue of the conference was that my father left me at Liverpool, while he took shipping (this was before the days of railroads) for the great city of London. But he did not succeed in seeing the King, nor in doing anything else that he proposed; for scarcely had he reached the city before he received intelligence of a calamity that completely turned the current of his thoughts, and modified all his future—my dear uncle met with an accident which caused his death. He had gone with a customer to examine some choice cotton lying in a room not intended for a warehouse; the floor of this room had given way, and he was precipitated under a crushing weight of cotton bales and tobacco hogsheads.

This dreadful disaster brought my father from London by return packet. He was chief

mourner at the funeral; and so sincere was his brotherly grief that the crape remained about his heart long after it had disappeared from his person.

But the misfortune did not end here. Contrary to all his previous practice, my uncle James had recently been tempted into a cotton speculation, the issue of which remained uncertain until after his death. On winding up his affairs, my father discovered to his astonishment, and to his kind sister's dismay, that she and her children had been reduced to a state of comparative penury. He saved for her all that he could from the wreck, and succeeded by judicious and untiring diligence in establishing her finally in a neat little cottage near the city, and in securing for her and her children an income of about £200 a year. This income, however, was so inadequate to the growing necessities of the family, that he resolved to increase it by continuing the business of the firm for several years longer; and in the meantime he made her an offer. Observing the warm attachment between Lorenzo and myself,

and the need there was for a stronger hand than hers to control him, he proposed to adopt him as his own son, and to act by him a father's part. This was a sore trial to a loving mother; but, with all her gentleness, she was at heart a heroine, ever ready to sacrifice her own preference and comfort for others' good. After a few natural tears and struggles, she gave her consent, and when the time came for us to return to America Lorenzo came with us. From that day forth he was my brother.

He was a noble fellow! With nothing in his soft blue eye or rosy cheeks to mark him out for greatness, he had within him a heart strong as a lion's in courage, and faithful in friendship as a Damon or a Pythias. Dear Lorenzo! I love to think of him, and to repeat and write his name. There is no danger of his blushing to meet these lines—he has long since passed away. He died in Montgomery, Alabama, during a season of yellow fever, preferring to remain and help the needy to being safe from attack by fleeing away

If modest merit in all cases received its due, he would have a monument erected to his memory. In love and reverence to worth I here record his name.

CHAPTER XI.

The Promise—Learning to Swim and to Float—Peculiarities of Salt-water Bathing.

LORENZO, like my father, in coming to America, cherished an almost morbid desire to see the Indians, and to enjoy life in the untamed forest. No doubt his feelings had been greatly influenced by the pictures which I often drew from my own experience of the summer before.

One day, after our arrival at Sapelo, while we were freely conversing on the subject, and picturing in vivid language our wishes, plans, and expectations, our good father came near enough to overhear our boyish talk. It interested him, and he finally put the matter on a practical footing.

"I know how you feel, boys," said he, "for I used to feel and talk so myself. But, of course, it will be many years before your desires can be gratified. I will say this, however, that if you will redeem the time to be lost from your education by faithful study while at school, and if you will prove by your prudent and manly habits that you can take care of yourselves, I promise that, as soon as the proper time arrives, you shall have your wishes."

Strange as it may seem for boys of our age, this promise was a powerful stimulus to us both. The hope it inspired often incited us to study, and controlled our conduct, when other motives would have failed. We were not remarkably bright boys at school, nor were we faultlessly good at home, yet we enjoyed the satisfaction of knowing, in various ways, and from time to time, that our father was satisfied with our endeavours.

During these years of study and of training there occurred many incidents of a character highly interesting, and instructive too, which

appear to me too valuable to be wholly passed over. I will briefly narrate some of them.

The first in order in its beginning, yet the latest of all in its perfection, was our learning to swim. The very night after our return home, which was the 25th of September, we went in the river to bathe. It was in a little sandy nook, where the water was only waist-deep at high tide, and where we were perfectly safe from both sharks and alligators. Scipio escorted and took care of us. Lorenzo, who had never before been in the open salt-water, was almost alarmed at two things: the water into which he plunged was all ablaze with light, and when he hurried out his arms, legs, and body seemed to be on fire, except that there was no heat, and that the light, which appeared in spots, was soft, like that of the fire-fly, or of reflected moonshine. We told him that our sea-water always sparkled so at night; and then I showed, by running my hand rapidly through the water, how it left a blazing track behind. While I was trying to explain to him this beautiful phenomenon, a school of small

mullet, that had been intercepted in the stretch of water above, came leaping and darting past, marking their several pathways with a track of light. With these explanations Lorenzo once more waded in, and stood there playing, when I saw him again hurry out.

"I don't like it," said he; "something bites me."

"Where?" I asked.

"Oh, everywhere," he answered; "first in one place, then in another."

"But none of them bite very hard—do they?" I inquired.

"No," he replied, "not hard; but there are *so many* of them."

"They can't harm you," I added. "Nothing but minnows."

"But they *stuck* me, too, like so many pins," he continued.

"These are shrimp—the little hardbacks. They and the minnows are as tame as pet chickens," I explained. "But you need not fear them, for they have already done their worst."

The plan on which we learned to swim was this: I had brought down to the bathing-place an old window-shutter, on which I balanced myself, and struck out with hands and feet as I had seen swimmers do, and, to my delight, found myself making progress through the water. Lorenzo then tried it with equal success. The next time, in going to bathe, we brought each a short piece of plank, on which we balanced ourselves as before, and every time thereafter when we went in, we made the plank smaller, until, in the course of a few days, we could balance and propel ourselves without any assistance at all.

Having mentioned these facts to my father, he came to the water with us, and gave some lessons not only in swimming, but in floating. I shall never forget the delightful sensations of this last. In learning the art we were made to place our hands at the back of our heads, then we were laid flat on our backs in deep water, where we were in turn supported by my father's two hands, until we were perfectly at ease, when the hands

were so gradually withdrawn that we did not know when they ceased supporting us, and we were left securely floating on the surface. We struggled and resisted a little at first, but our father said to us:

"Boys, you recollect the other day I made a needle float, after passing it through tallow. I gently laid it on the water, as I propose to lay you, and I slowly withdrew my finger from under it. If I had *pitched* it roughly in, or if *it* had struggled and resisted, as you are doing, it would have sunk. You must be quiet, as the needle was, and you will float too."

He repeated the process several times with each of us, then taught us how to support each other. Finally, we were able to put ourselves in position without help. And I must take occasion here to say that, of all situations of bodily repose which it has been my privilege to enjoy, the most perfectly luxurious is that of floating in the salt water. I have at times been in danger of going to sleep and of floating away on the tide.

But before leaving the subject, there are two remarks which I will make for the benefit of those who may need the information. The first is, that it is much easier to float in salt water than in fresh, because it is heavier, and therefore more buoyant. The second is, that in floating the hands must be placed behind or beyond the head, and *the elbows kept under water.* The reason of this is that the cavity of the chest is the buoyant part of the human body, while the extremities are weighty, and the head needs the addition of the arms thrown back to counterbalance the weight of the legs. If the arms are not thus thrown back, the feet will sink perpendicularly downward, and the mouth and nostrils will be brought below the surface of the water. But when the arms are thrown back there is a balance established between the extremities, in which the body lies at full length upon the surface, with the toes and face projecting above water. Try it the next time you go in bathing, you who read this, and if you do not enjoy a very great pleasure, your friend, the writer, is

very much mistaken. And here it will not be amiss to throw in another remark, that, although any one who is not perfectly skin and bones can float in *salt* water, all persons, except the leanest of the lean, can float in the fresh water too.

CHAPTER XII.

Saucy Shark—Pull, Boys, Pull!—Pitfall for Rabbits.

OUR bathing-house, to which was attached a balcony for fishing, was under a high precipitous bluff. The steep narrow beech to the right and left was covered with large masses of soft sand-rock, undermined and brought from the bluff above by the action of storms. These rocks, lying under water as well as on shore, made the place a safe retreat for fish. There was one particular spot that was my favourite fishing-ground. A stump lay there imbedded in the mud, and Lorenzo and I used to sit on the rocks and throw our lines beside or beyond it. In fact, we had constructed a pair of movable seats to suit any time of tide, and had moreover contrived

a rough ladder for passing up and down the steep bluff.

One day, while we were seated there, our rods projecting beyond the stump, and the tide, at half-flood, rippling around our coarsely-booted feet, I saw a shark's fin protruding from the water just beyond our rods, and rapidly nearing us.

"Draw up your feet, Lorenzo!" I said quickly to him; "that shark may nab you!"

Our feet were out of the water by the time the words were out of my mouth, and so likewise were our fish, which had been secured by a nicely arranged cord passed through their gills. Whether that saucy shark was smelling after our feet or after our fish I cannot tell, but he came and put his nose to the places where these had been, and passed so near that I could easily have touched his back with a three-foot rod. This daring act he repeated three times.

Scipio was fishing from the balcony of the bathing-house. We called to him, telling of our ugly visitor, and begging him to come quickly with my father's fish-gig (a sort of pronged dart,

or small harpoon), and with it the shark hook, kept ready there for use. Before he could arrive the shark had passed beyond reach of the gig; we, therefore, baited the hook with a fish from our string, and threw it hanging over the stump into the deep water. This was Scipio's doings, for we would not have dared to undertake it by ourselves, and he was such a dear lover of adventure that he needed only our invitation to do all that we wished in the case.

The hook was of steel, a foot long, attached to a chain and cord, and when Scipio threw the baited end of the line into the water, he made the other end fast to a stake driven into the sand. Lorenzo and I took hold of the rope midway between the stake and the water, saying:

"We will hook him, and pull him in."

Scipio was much amused, and answered:

"Yes, hook 'im, and pull 'im, ef you kin. But I'll hole de stake fas' at dis een'."

Soon Lorenzo and I felt a slight pull, then a pull somewhat harder. The shark was evidently experimenting. We planted ourselves, and held

on stoutly. Then there was a jerk, so quick and violent, that before we could let go the rope we found ourselves pitching in the mud, almost at the water's edge. By the time we were on foot we heard Scipio calling to us:

"Come yuh, quick! Come help me! I 'fraid he pull out de stake."

We ran to him, and helped to keep the stake pressed into the sand. The struggle was short and violent. In less than a quarter of a minute it ceased, the cord slackened, it hung in an easy festoon between us and the stump—the shark had broken loose.

Scipio was greatly disappointed. We drew the hook ashore, put on a fresh bait, and tried again; but in vain. The shark was not hungry, or else was suspicious of danger.

There occurred, about this same time, another incident which gave us a hearty laugh, and which is withal connected with a device so useful, in case of similar need, that I am tempted to record it. Quash, who was gardener as well as carriage-driver, complained to my father, soon after our

return home, that the rabbits were eating up everything in the garden, and asked if nothing could be done to stop them.

"Are you fond of roasted rabbit?" my father playfully inquired.

Quash's eyes glistened, "Yes, maussa."

"How do you like them best, roasted, fried, or stewed?" my father continued to inquire.

"Like um any way I kin *git um*, maussa," Quash replied.

"Well, if you do as I bid you, I will give you rabbit to eat, roasted, fried, broiled, stewed, or any way you prefer. Go around the garden and stop every hole through which they come, except the principal one. Leave that open."

"Kie, maussa!" Quash exclaimed; "de fence so old and so full of hole, de rabbit git troo ebbery way."

"Do as I bid you, or I promise you no roast rabbit," persisted my father.

Thus doubly impelled, Quash set to work as otherwise he would not, and in a few hours re-

ported the task complete. The principal pathway was left open, but nothing was done to it the first night, except to place on the ground beside it a small, light board, sprinkled with sand. In the morning the sand showed many tracks of rabbits' feet; a barrel was then sunk in the ground below, and the board set firmly upon it and sprinkled with sand, as before. It was manifest, next morning, by the number of tracks, that the intruders into the garden had not been scared off by the works in their passway. The board was now set as a *trap-door*, so balanced as to right itself, after having allowed the intrusive passenger to drop into the pit below, and thus to close the barrel's mouth. The morning after the trap was set Quash came early to ask that my father would go and look into the barrel.

"Has it caught anything, Quash?" he asked.

"Why, maussa," he answered, "dah barrel scare me. I peep in and see—but you come see fuh yo'self."

There were several gentlemen who had spent

the night with us, intending a pleasure excursion the next day. My father said to them, as they assembled for early breakfast:

"I set a pitfall last night for some rabbits that have been molesting my garden. Will any of you go with me to see what has been its success?"

They all went, Lorenzo and I with them, accompanied by Quash and Scipio.

"Push down the trap-door a little way, Quash. Peep in, and tell us if you see anything," said my father.

Quash peeped in, and his eyes stretched wide.

"I dunno wuddah dey" (I do not know what is there), he reported; "I don't see nutten but yers, yers, rabbit yers, and some'n black right in de middle."

"Peep, Scipio," said my father to the boy, "and see if you can tell what is there."

Scipio put his eye to the crevice made by depressing the board, and gave an unrestrained "Whoo-pee, maussa! Yo' barrel half full o' rabbit!"

The cover was now sufficiently removed for us all to see, and there followed a roar of laughter. Sitting on their hind-quarters, with their big eyes and long ears all directed toward us, were *seven rabbits*, in the midst of which sat, as demure as they, a big black Tom-cat, and under them all a large moccasin snake had gained a comfortable length for his body by lying in a circle next the staves. They were enduring their imprisonment together as peaceably as if Tom-cats never preyed upon rabbits, nor moccasins preyed upon either.*

Quash had his promised roast, broil, stew, and fry, and never complained again of rabbits infesting his garden—he had learned what to do with them.

* The above scene is no fancy.

CHAPTER XIII.

Blackbeard Island—Alligator-steaks—Soft as a Feather-bed—Sea-beach—Surf—Shells—Sand-crabbs—More Scared than Hurt—Hunting—Mullet-fishing—Return.

BETWEEN Baisden's Bluff and the sea is a dead level of green marsh, beyond which, at the distance of eight miles, is a blue streak of woodland. That is the beautiful island of Sapelo, so famous in those days for the princely hospitality of its chief proprietor. Beyond Sapelo, and separated from it by a narrow marsh, is a long, low, uninhabited island, belonging to the United States Government. Like several other islands of like character upon the coast, it is called Blackbeard, in commemoration of a celebrated freebooter of the seas, who is reported to have made them his haunts, and to have buried upon them his ill-gotten treasures.

The Georgia Blackbeard is eight or nine miles long, by about a mile broad, and is overgrown with moss-covered oaks, cedars, sea-myrtles, and palmettoes. Its retired position and untenanted solitude make it the favourite resort of deer, which congregate there from the neighbouring islands, and from the main. Unfortunately, however, for the peace of these brute denizens, the fact of their congregating there, and the abounding of the adjoining waters in very fine fish, make it the favourite resort also of those who are fond of marooning. So numerous are they, and so easily reached by shot, that a gentleman hunter of our neighbourhood, who spent only three days on the island, accompanied by a young lad and a servant, reported the capture of thirty-two deer.

Our return from Liverpool, September 25th, was too early for the opening of business in Darien, but not too late for a hunt on Blackbeard. My father, therefore, determined to indulge himself in his favourite amusement, and, appointing an early day, set off in company with several

friends. What impresses it indelibly upon my memory is the fact that, in hopes of stimulating us to study, by affording us a taste of the wild life we had asked for as the reward of our fidelity, he resolved to take us with him. We left home about two hours after our visit to the rabbit-trap described in the last chapter.

There were two sail-boats in company, freighted with four or five persons each, and carrying tents, provisions, cooking utensils, and a barrel of good water, for the best on the island was execrable. Our voyage occupied four hours. We were scarcely more than under way when we heard the sound of a gun from the foremost boat, and, as she headed for shore, Mr. Jamieson exclaimed:

"That's right! Cut off the tail and bring it along; for, good as the fish may be at Blackbeard, none can make a better fry than a young alligator."

The alligator was about four feet long, and the steaks, parboiled before frying (as is necessary in the sturgeon also), made so acceptable an addi-

tion to our dinner that day, that it was slighted by no one.

We found the island delightfully wild and solitary. It was a sandy level, raised only a few feet above high water, and bearing the mark of being once in a while totally overflowed. Scarcely an interruption could be found in the perfect level of its surface, except an occasional hillock of sand blown up by the winds, or certain mysterious pits and mounds left by those who had excavated for hid treasure, especially at a spot known as "Money-Old-fields."

The first experience of novelty which Lorenzo and I enjoyed was in (what I know not how to describe except as) a thicket of grass growing next the beach. The blades of this grass were about two or three feet long, very narrow, very stiff, very elastic, and so closely packed together that when we threw ourselves upon them to rest after our weary sitting for hours upon the thwarts of our boat, we were supported several inches above ground. It was a natural couch, equal in elasticity to any produced by art, and reminding

us, by the luxuriousness of the repose afforded, of what we had begun to experience in floating.

So soon as Scipio was at leisure to accompany us, after pitching tent and eating lunch, we boys were permitted to take a stroll seaward along the beach. Away we dashed, eager to explore the mystery of certain white caps we saw upon the waves, attended by an incessant roar. It was the surf—not heavy, for there was little wind astir, and few of the waves were as high as our heads, but the graceful cresting of each, as it swelled with the return-water of its predecessor, then burst into foam and rolled and roared along the gentle slope, was so beautiful that we watched them with undiminished interest through the whole of our walk, and through the whole of our stay upon the island.

The beach, varying in width from one hundred to two hundred yards, was composed of the cleanest and finest sand, packed by the waves hard and smooth as a floor. It was profusely covered with shells, sometimes heaped in piles or long rows, and sometimes strewed so closely

together that every foot-fall crashed among them.

Lorenzo and I scampered over the sands, perfectly wild with delight, stopping here to pick up some shell of uncommon beauty, or some richly-coloured sea-weed—stopping there to write our names, or to make grotesque figures in the sand, and stopping yonder to wonder over a queer-looking egg of shark or conch, or a jelly-like sea-blubber, or some other strange thing washed up by the waves. The sand-crabs, too, were a novelty to us, so different from all others with which we were familiar, so almost ghost-like, with their white bodies, and their long, taper legs, and such swift runners that we tried in vain to capture them.

Time would fail me to describe all the interesting objects of that beautiful beach. Suffice it to say that we had been gone from camp one or two hours without its seeming to us more than a few minutes. Scipio had been left behind, out of hearing, almost out of sight—so far away that he seemed like a little child walking along the beach. I had become leg-weary, and was beginning to

look for a resting-place, when my fears were aroused by seeing in the sand footprints which looked to me like those of an enormous cat. I called Lorenzo's attention to it, and said:

"I am afraid that is a panther's track. Maybe we had better be getting back to camp."

We immediately reversed our course, and were walking pretty fast, when there came from the woods to our left a shrill, unearthly screech, and we could also see the bushes toss in great commotion. Our fast walk quickened into a run. Nor did we slacken speed until we came within hail of Scipio, who, seeing our excited movements, and conjecturing some cause of alarm, had hastened to meet us. Scipio was well acquainted with the island and all that pertained to it, having made frequent visits as a servant to my father and other hunters. On hearing our story, he quickly decided:

"Nobody nebber see no panter on dis island. How he gwine git yuh? He can't swim like deer. I 'spec' wat you see is otter track."

When we told him of the dreadful sound we

heard, and of the commotion in the bushes, he looked rather grave, and began to talk of the old pirate Blackbeard, or rather of his ghost, coming to guard his buried treasure. After that, he brightened up and spoke of the screaming of an eagle and the scampering of deer as the causes of our alarm. Then his thoughts took a merry turn; he burst into a laugh, and informed us that on his first visit to the island he had been as badly scared as we by some person concealed in the bushes.

"I 'spec' it is George" (the servant of the other boat), "nobody but George, tryin' to git some fun out o' you," said he, apparently satisfied that he had now hit the truth; then, seeming to be angered, as another thought flashed into his mind, he added: "Ef you two only stay yuh tell I kin go and find George, I'll gi'e 'im such a lickin' he won't want to trouble you no mo'e."

We looked our admiration of his prowess in being ready to fight a boy bigger than himself, and thanked him too for his offered champion-

ship ; but we preferred returning to camp without delay, as the sun was scarcely an hour above the horizon. Our weariness returned so rapidly after being relieved from our fears, that, ere we reached the tent, we could scarcely drag one foot after the other. That night we slept without any trouble, except that of not getting soon enough to bed.

The maroon occupied four days. Lorenzo and I were too young to take part in the hunting. The nearest approach we made to it was being allowed to occupy a concealed place near my father's stand, and see him shoot as the herd of deer came by. I shall never forget how beautiful they looked that day, with branching horns and flaunting tails, and how gracefully they loped along unconscious of danger. My father discharged both his barrels in quick succession, and brought down two of the fattest of the herd, when the remainder hurried away, following a well-beaten track, and lost another of their number in passing the next stand. Each hunt was more or less successful. We feasted on venison, morning,

noon, and night, until I became almost sick of the name.

Part of each day was spent by the company in fishing in deep water, a sport which we boys could safely enjoy, although our hands were often blistered by the rapid run and resistless pull of the fish. Twice we went out, at night, with Scipio and George, under the superintendence of Mr. Jamieson, to witness the operation of casting for mullet. This is done by means of a circular net about ten feet in diameter, heavy loaded at the circumference with lead, and fitted with a system of cords passing through the centre for drawing the circumference together like a bag. The net, held for a moment by hands and teeth, is slung so as to fall broadcast upon the surface of water about two feet deep, where it rapidly sinks, enclosing the fish, which are then drawn up and shaken out into the boat.

The net had not been cast more than a few times before we heard at a distance the sound, "Puff! puff!" of porpoises coming. They seemed to know what we were about, and came to

join in the sport, for they swam just outside our boats, so near as almost to rub against them. Lorenzo and I, being novices in the art, were disturbed to see the immense backs of these creatures protruding above water so near us, but Mr. Jamieson quieted our apprehensions by saying:

"Porpoises are the fisherman's friends; they keep the mullet in shallow water, where we can best catch them."

There was a school of sea-mullet, very numerous, as large as mackerel, which were so badly frightened by the porpoises on one side of our boat and the splash of the casting-net on the other, that they leaped into the boat in great numbers, without giving us the trouble of casting for them.

Every day, almost every hour, of our stay, was marked by some fresh novelty and new enjoyment; nevertheless, I believe that after four days' sojourn, all were glad—at least, I know we boys were—when our boats, loaded with the spoils of the island, were shoved from shore, and our sails spread for home.

CHAPTER XIV.

Just in Time—Hungry Shark—Preparing for a Gale—A moderate Hurricane—Rash Adventure—Oranges—"The Grove"—The Orange-room—Farewell to the Tide-water.

IT was well that we left Blackbeard no later that morning. Half an hour's delay would have kept us there for days, perhaps resulted in loss of life.

A mile or more from the north end of the island begins a broad sandy shoal, which, at low tide, forces all passing boats into the open water of the inlet, where the waves from sea, brought by an east wind, rush and roar with unrestrained fury.

Before we shoved from shore the wind had chopped around to the east, and there was every indication of a coming gale. A light vapoury

scud, scarce visible at first, began to race overhead, and dim the blue vault of heaven. With it came a multitude of sea-birds flying landward as if for refuge, while a low moan could be heard afar off on the sea, and the freshening wind caused an ominous swell upon the beach. Urged by these signs of danger, we freighted our boats with all speed, spread what sail we dared, and hastened to round the shoal before it was too late. We succeeded, but that was all; for, although our boats were trimmed to stand their utmost pressure of wind abeam, and we put on so much sail that time and again they dipped water, we had scarcely gained the lee of a friendly marsh beyond the shoal, ere we saw the waves we had left behind shaking their white caps at us, and telling us, by so doing, that we had barely made our escape.

Our friends in the other boat, knowing that their craft was not so rapid as ours, and that she drew less water, endeavoured to gain time by sailing closer inshore; but they only illustrated

the old proverb: "The more haste the less speed,"—for they stuck fast in the sand more than once, and each time some one was compelled to leap overboard and shove ahead.

Ordinarily, the inconvenience of this amphibious mode of navigation would have been esteemed a trifle; but at that particular juncture our moments were precious as rubies; and, additional to other reasons, there was a large and hungry shark prowling in the water between the two boats, going first to one, then to the other, as if confident that in the rising gale it was to have a delightful feast on some of us. Such was its size, that, in its approaches to the other boat, in her passage over the shoals, its fin and part of its back protruded above water. It seemed to know the moment the boat stuck fast, and then made right for the legs of the person who was shoving. The negro boy, George, was allowed only once to go into the water; for sharks have a great partiality for the strongly-flavoured blood of the African, and this marine hyæna made toward him

with such violence that, by the time he leaped into the boat, it had turned sideways in the effort to seize him.

After passing the shoals we were protected from wind and waves, so that we were in no immediate danger the rest of the way; but long ere we reached the bluff the sky had assumed a very wild and troubled aspect. At the landing not a moment was lost in unloading the boats and making them safe; after which the gentlemen who accompanied us on the excursion mounted their horses, hastily securing behind them each a saddle of venison, and galloped away to their several homes, while my father went to every door and window of his house, and examined the shutters and fastenings, to see if they were in condition to stand the strain of a hurricane. Our beautiful boat was relieved not only of its load of venison and fish, and its sails and oars, but even of its rudder and row-locks, and then carried round to a well-protected cove, where it was securely anchored in company with the other boat. Water for all necessary purposes was

brought into the house from the spring; the cattle and horses were plentifully fed, and every possible preparation made for being kept at least a day in a state of siege.

These precautions were not in vain, although the gale was not so severe as we had reason to expect. Before sunset the tide rose to a height I had never before seen, covered the marsh for eight miles with an unbroken sheet of muddy, angry water, and continued to rise so long as we had light to see. Ere dark, enormous waves, loaded with fallen trees and with marsh-grass, in rafts fifty or a hundred yards long, came from the islands and hammocks between us and the sea, and beat like battering-rams against the bluff, undermining it and bringing down great masses of sand and rock upon the buried beach below. Sea-gulls, pelicans, gannets, curlews, white, gray, and pink, and other birds of the coast, flew frantically overhead as soon as the wind set in, some trying vainly to beat against it, and others yielding to what they could not resist, and passing over us with fearful velocity.

The wind had been blowing from sea all day; but the *hurricane wind,* as we know it upon the coast, did not begin until near sunset. Then it came in puffs, lasting for several minutes, and succeeded by intervals of comparative calm. At first these puffs were nothing more than gentle sighs, as if mourning over the trouble and terror that were soon to follow; but in the course of four or five hours they increased to groans and roars that made everything tremble.

All at once the wind ceased. The sky overhead was as black, and the night around us as inky as ever, but the calm was so perfect that any one could walk in the open air with a lighted candle. We youngsters thought that the trouble was all over, and were about to accompany my father, as with a lantern he went with Quash and Scipio out of the back door to see after the horses. He, however, waved us back, with instructions to keep the door securely barred, and to open it only when we heard his knock. He had been gone the greater part of an hour when all at once we heard a loud, ominous roar in the

forest behind the house, then a quick rap at the back door. We moved as quickly as we could; but before we could reach the door the rap was repeated, and, while we were in the act of removing the bar, I heard my father say:

"Too late! You must let us in at the front."

He and the two servants ran as fast as they could around the house; we knew that they moved fast, because we saw the light from their lantern, streaming through a crevice between the window-blinds, move rapidly on the wall of the room. Ere they reached the front their light was extinguished; there was a horrible roar of wind from a new quarter; the house shook in every timber, and, in the midst of the commotion, we heard a crash like thunder—the chimney-top had been blown off, and it fell so near them that one of the bricks struck Scipio on the ankle and lamed him for days. The front of the house was now in the lee of the wind. My father's rap was there repeated, and we admitted him and the two servants dripping with wet. He afterwards described the rain-drops as not falling,

but driven horizontally, like shot projected from a gun. With the coming of that rain the wind began to abate, and when we next went out of the house we enjoyed the pleasure of seeing that our night of storm and darkness was followed by a bright and beautiful day.

The only casualty we experienced besides the loss of our chimney-top and the destruction of several valuable yard-trees, was in having the roof of one of our shed-rooms pierced by the limb of a tree which had been broken off during a severe gust, carried fifty yards, and shot like an arrow through the shingles and the sheathing.

There was a sad casualty, however, that we *witnessed,* and in which we the more readily sympathized from the recollection of our own recent dangers. A small boat, manned by a single person, but of what colour we could not distinguish, came soon after sunset, sailing over what had been marsh, but now was unbroken sea. He had spread a tiny sail, not bigger apparently than an ordinary palmetto hat, but

he was scudding over the water with the rapidity almost of a race-horse. He was evidently making for some point on the main a few miles to our left. As he passed us he was sailing in comparatively quiet water under the lee of a long low island, which, though itself submerged, broke the violence of wind and wave from sea. But we could discern from the Bluff, what he could not from his boat, that, directly ahead of him, and at no great distance, the water was dangerously rough from wind that eddied round the north end of the island. My father signalled to him his danger as well as he could by means of his hat and handkerchief, and pointed to the cove where his own boat was moored, with a beckoning motion, as much as to say: "Come here!"

The boatman, whoever he was, waved his hat in acknowledgment, but kept on his way. He soon came to the rough water, saw his error when too late to correct it, made an effort to change his course, was caught in a trough between two waves, and in a moment was swamped. We

could see a small black object floating for a few minutes near the capsized boat; but whether it was the head of the unfortunate man endeavouring to regain his canoe, or whether it was his hat moving on the foamy surface, we could not determine. The canoe, very trimly built, and uncommonly steady upon the water, was discovered the next day lodged in the branches of a live-oak. It was brought to my father, who used it so long as he made his home upon the coast, and kept it ready for delivery to the rightful claimant. But who that rash adventurer was, or why he persisted in the attempt that cost him his life, we never could learn.

Early in November we removed to our winter residence. The only circumstance connected with the change that I recollect, worthy of record, was the delight of Lorenzo in first meeting with our orange-trees. Our yard in Darien was crowded with them, and at the time of our removal the fruit was just ripening. There was one tree in particular that awakened and long

retained his profoundest admiration. It grew beside the window of our breakfast-room, attained the height of twenty-five or thirty feet, and was loaded with fruit in that stage of half-ripeness when patches of emerald-green appear in rich contrast with the superb yellow of its general surface. The branches hung so near the window as partially to obstruct the shutters, and were so full of fruit that a basket, heavy as either could carry, might be gathered by simply raising the sash and stretching out the hand. Later in the winter the graceful white blossoms of this tree filled the room with spicy fragrance; and still later—ere the flowers had ceased to bloom, and ere the ripe oranges had dropped (for they will hang to their stems until the sap of the ensuing spring fills them a second time with juice)—he was delighted to see the elegant fruit of the preceding autumn, the sturdy-looking germs of the coming crop, from the size of a pea to that of a plum, and all of a dark glossy green, the full-blown flower, and the modest, bridal-like bud, all interspersed among the aromatic leaves, and

offering a feast at the same moment to eye, olfactory, and appetite.

I have the impression, however, that rich as the treat was in my father's yard, Lorenzo's chief enjoyment was at the place of a relative of my mother's, whom we children were taught to call Aunt Bell. It was about a mile distant from Darien, with a wide lawn between the house and the river, while on every other side, for more than a furlong, extended a forest of live-oaks, with long, drooping branches gracefully hung with moss, under which were occasional clumps of evergreen, with here and there a rustic seat, the work of one of her tasteful daughters. Her court-yard was crowded with flowers and shrubs, some of a tropical and some of a semi-tropical character — sagoes, bananas, guavas, and oranges of every ornamental variety, from the little dwarf and myrtle oranges the size of a walnut to the shaddock, a Malay variety of pear-shape, large as the head of a two-year old child. But the chief attraction to Lorenzo was not so much the beautiful forest around the

house, nor the beautiful lawn before it, nor the beautiful court-yard beside it, as it was the large and beautiful *orangery* adjoining it, from whence the place derived its name of "The Grove," or rather the large and beautiful orange-*room* above stairs, to which he never failed to pay his admiring attention. During the whole winter the floor of that room was kept covered with delicious oranges, to which we young folks had free access, and where we were permitted to eat as many as we pleased; for the orange, like the fig, is so wholesome a fruit, and so soon satisfies the appetite, that it is seldom if ever possible for any one to eat of it beyond the boundaries of health.

During the winter spent in Darien Lorenzo and I were closely occupied, like most others of our age, with the labours of school-life. We were entered at the public Academy, and there we faithfully pursued our studies according to promise, until freed, next spring, by the breaking up of the community as usual for the summer.

Then followed a change of residence, which for various reasons was unavoidable, and which, though I never cease to lament it, continues to this day. Whether from the associations of a happy childhood, or from a charm in the scenes themselves, or from peculiarity of natural taste, my heart clings to the tidewater. To this day every relic of it interests me. I cannot see, in these mountainous regions where I dwell, a handful of moss brought from the coast, or see, in the streets of these upland towns, a crimson fragment of crab or prawn, but my pulse quickens at the sight; and it makes me almost laugh, on my occasional visits to the coast, to note how the smell of the saltmarsh rejoices my olfactories like the perfume of roses.

Dear old Seaboard! With your grand expanses of water; your stretches of green waving marsh; your sea-birds of endless variety and tireless wing; your waters, musical with the flutter of fish; your forests, evergreen with magnolia, and live-oak, and cedar, and pine, and palmetto; and your groves of orange, and fig,

and pomegranate, luxuriantly rooted in your rich sands—FAREWELL! I expect to die loving you as at the first; and if ever a kind Providence favours the wish, you shall see me one of your children again!

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