

THE RUNAWAY NEGRO

HIDING OUT—ATTAINED WITH HIM THE RANK OF A PROFESSION.

Figure of the Old South—He Was a Born Woodcraftsman and Cave Dweller, and He Climbed the Trees Monkey Fashion—How He Managed to Live.

Among the many picturesque figures with which the old south teemed a most striking one was the runaway negro. Not the occasional "hider out"—the one who sought temporary refuge in the woods to escape punishment for something done or left undone, or for fear of being sold to the speculators, nor even when the crop was grassy and the work hard, but the one who clung to a wild life as instinctively as an Indian, and who might almost be termed the professional runaway.

Your genuine runaway was a born woodcraftsman. The habits of wild animals and ways of taking themselves to be his by instinct. He had no difficulty in varying his menu of pig, lamb and poultry with all the rabbits, squirrels, opossums and fish that he wanted. Sometimes he carried his dog into the woods with him, although of course it greatly increased his danger of being taken. But this was more for companionship than anything else, for a single handed, with his snares, traps and "gins" he was more than a match for "wild game of all kinds."

Discomforts which would have driven the amateur back to the snug chimney corner of the plantation quarters and a whipping had no terrors for him. Like the rest of his race, he cared not a fig for wet, while cold, the negro's dread, he knew well how to guard against. The art of producing the maximum of fire with the minimum of smoke was his perfection. He knew exactly what kind of wood and bark to select, and how to combine them to this end. No matter how hard the rain, how scolden the wood, all that he asked was a "chunk," or, lacking that, a coil of fire, to be as happy as a king—the ideal, not the real king, I mean. From a oak which, in unskilled hands, would scarcely have sufficed to light a pipe, he could, with care, bring forth a most impossible kind of fuel, good all into being the rarest of rarities, while in the preservation and transportation of fire he could have given lessons to Prometheus himself.

In the most essential feature of cave architecture—secrecy—he easily surpassed all imitators. Between two sums, and often more than two, of the worn-out stump of a log, the runaway would dig and conceal a cave which defied detection from the eyes of a lynx. At the same time several cubic yards of upturned earth had to be whisked away and hid under distant leaves, or, better still, consigned to the safe keeping of some running stream.

For several reasons the worst "old fields" of the southern states were the favorite site of the cave digger. These dreary wastes, given over to gullies, broom sedge and scrub pines, being deserted by manhood in general, were of course his safest retreat. The soil having been over exhausted and "burned out," and the sappy, twisted stumps being held worthless for either rails or fuel, there was no danger of the woodman's ax coming that way again for many a long year. Nor did the squirrel or fox hunter have often to seek or follow his quarry into the terra incognita—where indeed the dense screen of the low, thick pines would have confined their vision to a very limited space.

Here this Eastern of the south, whom indeed every man's hand was against, and surroundings unpropitious to his sustenance of safety. The weirdness and virtual barrenness drove off other men. The deep, water worn gullies, barriers to the ordinary traveler, whether mounted or on foot, formed him a highway whose firm or gravelly bottom registered no passing footprints to be read by curious or hostile eyes. Nowhere did he display more ingenuity than in contriving means to approach and depart from his burrow and leave no sign. As I have said, the gully was his favorite path, though occasionally he had recourse to the Indian's highway—a stream. Sometimes he would sever at the ground a long, stout grapevine, the other end being securely interlaced among the trees, where many feet above. By grasping this vine he was able to swing clear of the ground many feet, or even cross a considerable ravine and drop just at the mouth of his cave. Again, when the pines were thick, he might climb a tree, and passing from limb to limb, monkey fashion, slide down a tree trunk at the proper spot. Still another, which could sometimes be practiced, was to mount a stray ox, and forcing him to the proper place spring off. One very original old doper, little dreaming that history was repeating itself with a variation—is said to have fashioned to his shoes an old pair of horsehoes, reversed, knowing that no runaway hunter would ever think to notice a horse track.

Amid the swamps the malaria proof negro found little difficulty, if so minded, in passing a lifetime "hid out." But up among the hills, the "hider out" was not where there were no retreats impervious to all but the initiated, where the farmhouses were close together and comparatively little land cleared, it took no little skill and cunning to play the runaway successfully for any considerable period. Yet Thomas's surrender brought in more than one ragged, "warmittick" creature, who had spent perhaps the better part of a long life in this manner. There were even women runaways, and sometimes very successful ones. A few children were born in the woods. I knew of one instance in which the close of the war brought up a considerable family of whose existence the legal owner knew nothing.—David Lodge in Kate Field's Washington.

A Tideless Sea. For practical purposes the Mediterranean may be accepted as being what it is popularly supposed to be, a tideless sea, but it is not so in reality. In many places there is a distinct rise and fall, though this is more frequently due to winds and currents than to lunar attraction. At Venice there is a rise of from one to two feet in spring tides, according to the prevalence of winds up or down the Adriatic. In many straits and narrow arms of the sea there is a periodical flux and reflux, but the only place where the tidal influence, properly so called, is unmistakably observed is in the Gulf of Cadex, where the tide runs at the rate of two or three knots an hour, and the rise and fall varies from three to eight feet.—Philadelphia Ledger.

An Irreverent Yankee. A Yankee was being shown a lamp by an eastern priest, which the latter affirmed had not been extinguished for five centuries. He just gave a vigorous puff and remarked, "Well, I guess it's out now anyway."—London Tit-Bits.

Would Be a Columbus. Little Boy—I wish I could go off and discover a country. Proud Father—Do you, my boy, and why? Little Boy—I think it 'ud be a good deal more fun sailin' around than sittin' in school an' studyin' about wot others discovered.—Good News.

HELPING HER ALONG.

An Accommodating Youngster Who Was Equal to the Occasion.

"It don't do ter get discouraged 'bout a boy. He may disappoint you pleasantly. The old flagman surveyed the stretch of track in both directions as he spoke, then rolling up his bright but well worn hanger sat down upon an old hand car beside the road. His vocabulary was more extensive than accurate, and it was often necessary to exert one's imagination in order to arrive at his full meaning.

"It's pretty hard," he said, "to look at a rampart boy an see the Dan'l Webster, or, moreover, the Lord Chesterfield in him. But it may lurk there in subtle guise, howsomever.

"I have tended this 'ere crossin thirty years, an ever'thin from that school there on the hill has ter come over this track, an I have got pretty well versed in the habits of young ones.

"When people 'lowed Briggs' boy was destined ter hang pendent from the gallers, I used ter cry 'Halt! He ain't nothin but a yearlin', says I. 'Wait ten year or so 'fore yer vote him such an aggre-jus failure.' An he did turn out ter be 'famously heard on."

"What did he do?" asked the listener.

"Well, I had trouble 'nough with him. He was internally persistin in gittin behind me an shoutin out 'Wah-hoo! wah-hoo!' ter see me jump a rod or two. Up to all such capers! But the time he took Miss Toppum down hill was a clincher. He give her a 'lift,' as we say, figurative.

"Yer see 'twas good slidin on the hill that winter, an the sleds was flyin over this crossin two a minute, continous. Briggs' boy was loadin the sled, as usual. He was on a single sled that day.

"I see him start from the top of the hill, an he was jest under full way when I noticed Miss Toppum walkin 'long moderate, right in the rut where the sleds was goin. She's a hearty year old, an consequently very hard heartin; so she didn't pay no 'tention ter the shoutin.

"The lad tried ter turn his sled out, but 'twas so deep in the rut that he couldn't, so he jest give a little spring, an he was steerin by the leg, an flung himself over with his feet forward, an holdin out his arms, let slide right at her.

"She sot down sudden, but firm, an he held on to her, an 'long they come, I could see 'em some distance, an the boy was so hid it looked far all the world 'as if Miss Toppum was out slidin.

"I could see when they went by me that the old lady hadn't made up her mind whether she was dreamin or whether she was tuk up by a cyclone.

"She lives right there in that house, an they slogged down and stopped right in front of the gate. She was all of a whew, but that boy jest got up an tuk off his cap an says, perlitte as can be:

"Oh, no trouble at all, madam; I was comin your way an was glad ter save yer the walk."—Youth's Companion.

A Knight Blooming Serious.



—Life.

Even the doctor, accustomed as he was to all sorts of sights, could not help but notice that the girl with brown hair and blue eyes looked absolutely bewitching in her white robes, lying there amid a wealth of lace drapery.

"When the physician had felt her pulse he smiled.

"Only a fever," he remarked, with a reassuring nod. Raising herself upon her elbows she glared at him.

"What kind of a fever?" she demanded. "I should say!" The doctor was still smiling.

"It was scarlet fever." With a groan she fell among the pillows. "Oh, dear!"

"Why couldn't I have yellow fever?" "Scarlet!" She turned her face to the wall.

"Is so awfully unbecoming to my complexion." Then she declined to take any medicine by way of wreaking vengeance on a cruel fate.—Detroit Tribune.

There Are Rocks and Rocks.

"Dear father," wrote the son who had gone to the city, "since leaving the old New Hampshire farm I have been doing splendidly and am just piling up the rocks."

"Dear Thomas," was the old man's reply, "if all you went to the city for was to pile up rocks you might have stayed at home and helped me to build a stone wall around the 'c-acre field.'"—Texas Sitings.

A Suggestion. Woman (on railway train)—Hush! hush! There! there! Baby! I don't know wot in the world to do sometimes. The more I work with him the worse he cries.

Quiet Passenger (benevolently)—Have you ever tried chloroform?—New York Weekly.

Clara—How did Miss Spangson come to marry a plain, ordinary traveling man? Maund—His firm sends him over to Europe twice a year.—Cloak Review.



Taking Time by the Forelock.

FEMALE CRIMINALS.

A DETECTIVE SAYS THAT WOMEN ARE MORE CRUEL THAN MEN.

In Reality There Are as Many Female Criminals as There Are Males, but Circumstances Conspire to Shield the Wicked Woman—Women Seldom Reform.

Theodore C. Metzler, the well known San Francisco detective, has not had twenty-six years of experience in his profession without obtaining some very strong impressions and opinions in regard to crime and criminals.

"As a sort of text," said Mr. Metzler, "for what I have to say on this subject, I will state that in considering men and women as criminals, between whom and their deeds comparisons are to be made, I consider that, while man is undoubtedly, as a rule, the more prominent in crime, woman, on the other hand, is at once more cruel and cunning in what she does.

"From the circumstance that a considerable less number of women than men are convicted of crime the inference is drawn that in women the criminal propensities are weaker or under better control. Such a conclusion is, however, not borne out by the facts, for when crimes have been traced to women it has been found in the great majority of cases that the guilty deeds have been committed not only with systematic cunning, but also with a coolness and brutality which have seldom been attributed to man.

"There are several reasons," continued Mr. Metzler, "why so few women have been convicted of crime. Man's natural sympathy for her often causes him to overlook important points against her, and then again he is always extra careful for fear, he might do her injustice and injury. Men in the detective profession may pretend to have no sympathy for a woman, yet a good looking face and a bewitching smile, always find a tender spot in their hearts.

"Of course there are exceptions, but they are very few. If there are men in this profession who are not susceptible to a woman's plea, I, in my experience of twenty-six years, have failed to find them.

"Another thing: It is seldom considered that girls are watched more carefully than boys and are under greater restraint. Neither is it taken into account that older females spend more of their time at home, while males of their own age are on the street or mingling with persons whose habits are not always the best. Many of the temptations to crime come from business complications, in which women have little or no share, as they spend most of their time at home with their children and female companions. Most homicides, you know, are the results of anger excited when persons are away from their homes and families, as violent quarrels generally take place in the street or barroom, and not in the parlor or sitting room.

"Now as to the cruelty and deliberation of the female criminal. The history of crimes shows that most of the murders committed by women are those perpetrated upon their husbands and children. In almost every instance treachery is employed, the victim being invited to partake of refreshments by one who is presumed to be a friend.

"Murder by the administration of poison is considered the most foul and the darkest of all crimes, but it is the one that women have been addicted to more generally than men in all ages and countries.

"Another very remarkable fact," continued the detective, "has recently been mentioned in a London paper by the chaplain of Clerkenwell jail. It is that some criminals are practically incurable. From a table prepared by him it was shown that during last year there were committed to the prisons and jails of England and Wales 5,686 men and 9,764 women who had been convicted no less than ten times previously. You see the force of the comparison.

"A partial explanation of this strange state of things may be found in the fact that women are more thoroughgoing in all things, good, bad or indifferent, than the men. They do nothing by halves. Be the matter the construction of a shortcake, the making of a crazy quilt or the poisoning of a rival, woman devotes all her time, knowledge and talent to what she has in view.

"Then, again, a woman has less chance of reforming than a man. The latter can go to a strange or distant place, raise whiskers or shave those he had, assume a different name and commence life anew. He can generally find employment, but with the woman it is more difficult. Disguise is not so easy, and if she goes to a different place some one is liable to recognize her.

"A strange woman is always looked on with suspicion, as it is presumed that she would prefer to live in the town where she is brought up and where her old acquaintances are. A man gets credit for his enterprise if he goes to a new country and engages in a business for himself, but such is not the case with a woman. If she is once discovered her own sex are the first to point their fingers at her, turn up their noses and refuse to associate with her, the result of which is that she becomes hardened and callous, and is again driven to crime."—San Francisco Post.

As Far As Looks Go. "They're raked in a pretty tough looking lot this morning, haven't they?" observed the stranger, who had dropped in at the police station.

"You are looking at the wrong gang," said the reporter to whom he had spoken. "Those are not the prisoners. They are the lawyers."—Exchange.

Where Boston Streets Got Their Names. The English names given to the Back Bay streets were evolved by a couple of Irish-Americans on the board of survey, aided by a copy of the "British Peerage."—Boston Pilot.

Merely a Hypothesis. One remarkable thing in Japan is the number of small children and babies which are strapped to the backs of other children. Heaven only knows where they come from. In Germany there is a legend to the effect that storks bring babies. Perhaps the great number of storks in Japan are engaged in the same pursuit.—Baltimore American.

MRS. CLEVELAND'S RET CHARITY.

She and Miss Young Are Interested in New York Kindergartens.

(Special Correspondence.) NEW YORK, Dec. 10.—Two or three years ago, before Mrs. Cleveland had Baby Ruth to occupy her mind and her time, the pretty ex-lady of the White House devoted all her spare moments to the work of establishing a system of free kindergartens in New York city.

The kindergarten association was formed, with Richard Watson Gilder, the editor of The Century Magazine, as president. Mrs. Cleveland was made vice president, and there were among the various other officers several representative society people and philanthropists.



MARY KATHARINE YOUNG.

Sufficient money was raised to start the first free kindergarten, and Miss Mary Katharine Young was chosen its principal. It was located in one of the worst parts of First avenue, and for a few days its gentle teacher and her assistants had the toughest time ever experienced by educators in a well organized city.

With no powerful school board back of them and no city ordinances to protect them as to the attendance of these pupils, these courageous young women continued bravely at work, and before two months had passed were instructing daily from 50 to 100 poor children, all under five years old. The children are taught to play quietly, to sew, to cook and to keep house. A piano is in every school, and the teachers are always supplied with food for the little tots who may come to lessons hungry.

Every Christmas Mrs. Cleveland sends a Christmas tree to Miss Young's kindergarten and liberally supplies it with dolls and toys for the girls and flannels, shoes, etc., for the parents of the children. On Christmas day she visits the school and takes part in the exercises.

Last summer Miss Young was chosen by Mr. Gilder to be his representative at the meeting of kindergarten associations held in Denver. She was one of the principal essayists on that occasion. In the December Century Miss Young writes about kindergarten work. She is devoting all her time, her energies and her thoughts to the task of educating the children of the poor.

Miss Young is a very charming woman. Although yet in her early twenties, she is thoughtful and accomplished. She has a sweet voice, cultured manners and is always gentle and dignified. She is generally inclined and to fortunately situated in regard to the goods of this world that she gives nearly all her salary to extend the work in which she is engaged.

OHIO'S COLORED POET. He is Still Young and May Achieve a Fine Reputation. (Special Correspondence.) DAYTON, Dec. 30.—At a recent meeting in this city of the Western Authors' club a public entertainment was given. One of the numbers was assigned to Paul Dunbar, now, Paul Dunbar was a strange name to nearly all the out of town people present, but it was poetic enough to inspire curiosity as to its owner. Imagine, then, the surprise which manifested itself when a young colored boy of slight build responded to the programme number opposite his name. The surprise, however, gave way to genuine satisfaction when Mr. Dunbar recited in a musical voice a delightful little poem of his own composition. Since then those who heard him with pleasure have had not a little interest in Dayton's colored poet and eloquist, and a great future is predicted for him.



PAUL LAWRENCE DUNBAR.

Paul Dunbar was born in Dayton in 1872. His parents had been slaves in Kentucky. He started at six years of age to attend the Dayton public schools and graduated at eighteen. He excelled in composition and elocution, and at fourteen years of age his little poems were readily accepted by the local papers. With a bent toward writing he continued to supply newspapers with poetry and sketches, and gradually to appear at public entertainments as a reciter.

Young Dunbar is a quiet, unassuming fellow, and has hosts of friends in this city and country, where he is regarded as a bright and talented youth, whose abilities, if afforded proper opportunities, will make for him a creditable career.

Here is the first verse of one of his poems, which gives an idea of his ability as a dialect versifier:

You kin talk about yore anthems An yore arias an such, An yore modern choir singin That you think so awful rich, But you orter heed us youngsters, In the times now far away, An singin' of the ole songs, In the ole-fashioned way.

J. K. KINNEY. How He Got It. First Beggar—Where did you get that fine croquet? Second Beggar—In the big house at the corner. First Beggar—I went there only this mornin shiverin with cold an they wouldn't give me a rag. Second Beggar—I didn't ask for clothes fer myself. I told 'em it was for the poor houten in darkest Africa.—Comic Cata.

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