The Port Tobacco Times

AND CHARLES COUNTY ADVERTISER.

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Fancy Bordered fringed Cloths, with Napkins to match all sizes.
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100 dozen Barnsley Kitchen Towels size 24x36 12½ cents each.
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The best we have ever sold at that price.
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Select Story.

A DOUBLE AMBUSH.

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

We lived in Florida (said Mrs. Walters) through all the Seminole war, which lasted seven years, so that I grew up with the names of the great hostile chiefs, Osceola, Alligator, Wild Cat and Tiger Tail, making a part of my childhood.

A sense of peril was always present with us. I remember the feeling with which we heard of the slaughter of Lieutenant Dade and his command. The tragedy took place in open battle, yet it seemed dreadful that so many brave men should be shot down in the dark woods, with the painted savages yelling around them.

In the spring when I was thirteen and my brother Arthur fifteen the war was at its worst, and my father talked strongly of removing to a greater distance from the danger.

Among our few slaves, consisting only of two black families, was a half-idiotic young negro named Jason, who had the privilege of wandering pretty much as he pleased. He would often remain all day in the forest, either lying asleep or mocking the gobble of the wild turkeys.

One day he returned with an appearance that startled us. His woolly head had been completely shaved, and his black face dyed to a bright scarlet. He had, however, received no real hurt, and seemed not in the least terrified by the ordeal through which he must have passed.

We gathered from his broken sentences that he had fallen in with Indians; and it was plain that they had been in some measure true to the proverbial respect of their people for idiots. An ordinary person they would have sacrificed without merey; but when Jason stared aimlessly at the tree-tops, or gobbled like a turkey they simply set their mark upon him, and let him go.

The incident showed that our danger was more imminent than had been supposed; but there was fortunately a squad of United States cavalry picketed within a few miles of us, and my father lost no time in notifying the officer in command of what had occurred. The soldiers, however, could find nothing of the enemy, and in the meantime we passed a couple of days in very anxious suspense. The movements of Indian warriors are erratic and to white men unaccountable.

My parents began to regain confidence, believing that the Seminoles were gone from the heighborhood, as they doubtless were for the time. Father said they were probably scouts, and there was no telling how they might have scattered themselves, or at what point some of them might appear next He hoped, however, that the presence of the soldiers had led them to abandon any design they might have entertained of attacking us.

On the third day after Jason's adventure we were feeling much relieved. The negro men were at work in the fields, and father had gone to a considerable distance from the house Mother, Arthur, and myself, with the female servants, were within doors

Presently, not far off, we heard the gobble of a wild turkey, or what seemed such, although, as turkeys were not in the habit of approaching so near the house, we imagined Jason to be at his old silly pastime again, imitating the call which he could so well counterfeit.

The notes were continued with great regularity at intervals of a minute or two, and so natural were they that Arthur would have been all on fire to seize his rifle and hurry in quest of the game, had he not remembered how often he had been led upon a fruitless chase by the vocal powers of the poor idiot.

'We all excel in something,' said mother, 'and Jason was made to call turkeys. But I do wish he would be quiet; he makes me nervous to hear him.'

'Jason,' said a little negro girl who just then came in from the rear of the premises; 'why, missus, Jason done gone asleep in de shade at de back ob de wash-house. I done see him dis minute.'

Arthur hastened out doors, looked behind the wash-house, and having assured himself that the black boy had nothing to do with the gobbling, returned quickly for his rifle.

'It is a real turkey,' he said, 'and he's somewhere in the hollow.'

The hollow was made by a depression of the ground about fifty rods from the house front, and running parallel with it. Upon its further side was a decayed stump, some four or five feet high, standing below the sloping bank, and with its top just visible from the house. Of this stump the portion next to the slope had so fallen away as to leave a large cavity capable of containing a man.

The gobble indicated the turkey's whereabouts pretty definitely.

'He's somewhere near that stump,' said Arthur; 'perhaps inside of it, sitting upon the rotten wood toward the top. I'm afraid he'll get high enough to see me. But I'll make a circuit, and creep around him lower.'

He went out at the back door, so as to make sure of not being seen. The land on our right, a few rods from the house, was very low, the depression stretching off in crescent shape until it reached the gully, which crossed it at fair rifle-shot distance from the stump.

Arthur, young as he was, had already become an excellent marksman, having two years possessed a rifle of his own, which father had bought him, and which was almost always in his hands. We had no doubt that, with anything like an ordinary chance he would put a ball through the turkey's head, and return in triumph.

But somehow, after he went out, a sudden thought seemed to strke mother. Wasn't it strange that a turkey should come so far out of the woods, and keep up such a gobbling in the hollow? No, not strange, perhaps, nor very unusual; and she wondered at her own uneasiness. But her nerves had been shaken by poor Jason's incident'

The house had a half-story in front with two small windows above the ground rooms, and mother's feelings impelled her to run up there for a better view. She wished to see where father was, and perhaps might discover something of the wild turkey.

I was close at her side. We saw father with his rifle away off across the fields, and the negroes at a distance from him engaged in ther work. The stump, too, was visible nearly to its foot, and at intervals we caught sight of Arthur carefully working his way in a half circuit toward the gully.

Father had evidently heard the turkey, and was warily approaching the spot where it seemed to be. His half stooping posture showed that he feard the bird might get upon the stump and see him.

Suddenly mother started, and her face had a look of ghastly terror. Something which certainly was no turkey rose a little above the stump, between its shattered rim and the grass of the bank. I saw it too, and my blood ran cold.

It was something that greatly resembled the head of an Indian. We felt that the face must be peering through the grass toward my father, while we saw the black, gleaming hair behind.

Without doubt it was a Seminole warrior in ambush, watching father's approach.

Mother gave an agonizing cry. 'What shall I do?' she exclaimed.

Would not any outcry she could make be misunderstood at such a distance, only hasten the catastrophe, since father was still thirty rods beyond the Indian, and eighty from the house? Then there was Arthur, who had now disappeared? And should she by a sudden alarm cause him to show himself, might not the Seminole rise up and shoot him on the spot? She was dizzy with her sense of the dreadful situation.

But in a moment I called out to her, 'There's Arthur, mother! there's Arthur!' for I saw him among the rank grass, lying flat upon the ground, within good rifle shot of the stump, which he seemed to be watching intently.

Once again the Indian's head was shown slightly, and we got an instant's glimpse of Arthur's rifle. But the black hair disappeared, and the weapon was lowered.

Father was now so near the scene of danger that we had no alternatve but to watch. Terrible as was her anxiety, mother now felt that Arthur had discovered what kind of game the old stump contained. She knew that the Indian could fire at father without exposing his own head, and that the moment it appeared it would be covered by her brave boys's rifle.

How our hearts beat for the few moments that intervened! Another gobble came from the stump. Father was working his way stealthily toward it in anticipation of a prize, and Arthur lay as still as death in the grass.

All at once we saw the sunlight glance upon a mass of long raven hair that rose slowly above the gnarled wood which had hidden it. Father was within six rods of the spot. It was a dreadful moment.

Our eyes turned to Arthur. The grass in front of the slight knoll where he lay was not high enough to interfere with his aim as his elbow rested on the ground. We could see him drop his young face against the breech of his gun. The barrel gleamed for a single instant, a puff of smoke streamed from the muzzle, and he leaped to his feat.

But there was a still more sudden leap from the old stump, for an Indian with flying hair, and with his rifle still clutched in his hand, sprang up and fell dead against the slope which had concealed him from father's view.

The reunion which followed, when we all ran into each other's arms, joyful, yet thrilled with consternation, I will not dwell upon.

We found the dead enemy to be a tall young warrior, hideously painted, and having in his belt a hatchet and knife.

He had not doubt entered the gully from the swamp, and seeing father at a distance, had attempted to decoy him within a gun-shot by imitating a wild turkey.

The occasion proved to be the only one on which the Seminole war was brought home to us, as the successes of the United States troops afterward kept the Indians at a distance from our neighborhood.—*Harper's Young People.*

A very smart little boy—One who has just been spanked.

'No, indeed; there's no place like home,' sighed the married man who tripped over the coal scuttle and fell into a washtub while lightiug the kitchen fire.

A minister who had passed around the hat unsuccessfully at a country church said: 'My good people, hog cholera has broken out in this neighborhood and I advise you all to leave the country.'

Select Reading.

Snake-Handling In India.

Out here, individuals of one sect of fakirs—religious mendicants—are frequently met with wearing young and tame phthons as neclaces. Ones uch animal took the fancy of an officer and for a few rupees was transferred from the fakir's neck to his; and for some time both were on good terms. One day our friend sat down to breakfast with the python round his neck, a thing he never before had done; the tail of the animal came across the arm of the chair and instinctively coiled round it. The leverage thus obtained seemd to revive its memories of victim squeezing, and in a moment the officer was in the pangs of strangulation, bound fast to his chair and the awful coils of the python around his neck. But in that supreme moment of horror appalling he retained his nerve; with his left hand he seized the reptile's head, and with his right grasped a table-knife, and was just able to inflict a gash behind his head, and then the suffocating coils fell back. The officer was afterwards found prostrate on the floor in a dead faint, from which he only recovered to be seized with brain fever, the delirium of which was entirely occupied with encounters with monstrous serpents. In course of time he recovered, but no one could recognize in that pallid, grey-headed and careworn shadow of a man the once stalwart, hearty and enthusiastic sportsman.

Another note to illustrate the extreme danger of handling even dead snakes, Major Dennys, a police officer in the central Province, was recently out shooting and killed a large cobra. His companion asked to see its poison fangs, and Major Dennys, seizing the head with ane hand, opened its jaws with the other to exhibit the fangs, which, in the approaching rigidity of death, closed on his finger. Aware of his awful risk, he sucked his finger and hastened home. But all assistance was unavailing; he died in three hours

I once kept and freely handled a snake declared to be innocuous: it escaped, and after much searching could not be found, presently my boy ran up tears in his eyes, declaring that his three pet rabbis were all dead; and, true enough, they were so, and quite rigid. Coiled up in the hutch was the missing snake which my boy and I had so frequently handled!

The handling of snakes is often unavoidably forced upon us by the extraordinary and often-times incomprehensible positions in which snakes are frequently encountered. We are apt to fancy that snake are essentially groveling creature, forgetting that their vestral scales give them admirable facilities for climbing. Unless you recognize this fact, it is difficult to understand how snakes get into the roofs of up county bungalows, which are supported by smooth and whitewashed walls and pillars; how you meet them on the upper shelves of your bookcases, or in other apparently inaccessible situations.

But when you meet snakes in the act of ascending trees, and apparently with nothing to hold on by, you are resigned to your fate, and are prepared for sanguine encounters anywhere and everywhere. If you are a lady you must not be suprised—as my wife was—at a deadly snake dropping out of the sleeves of your velvet jacket, which your ayah was helping you on with, that jacket having previously hung from a wallpeg, leaving it three or four feet from the ground. Nor, sf you are going out calling, must you be astonished if a cobra looks in upon you from the double roof of your brougham. How did the one snake ascend the smooth wall and get into the jacket? How did the other pass up the smooth and glass-like sides or wheels of the brougham and get into its double roof?

I might adduce illustrations by the score of these strange rencontres, and they show us how we must always be on our guard against snakes. Yet it is marvelous that, among Europeans, we very rarely hear of deaths from snake-bite, while the bare feet and legs of natives leave them frequently and fatally open to attack.—*Cambers' Journal.*

Mistake of Terms.

'I don't see as this butter we get from the cremary is much better than cow's butter,' said Mrs. Vancover, one morning at the breakfast table.

'What! ejaculated Mr. Vancover, excitedly.

'I say that I don't think the crematory butter is a bit better than any other.'

'My dear,' replied Mr. Vancover, trying to calm himself; 'do you know what a crematory is?'

'No, not unless it's a place where they make oleomargarine.'

'Well, my love, I will inform you. A crematory is a place where dead bodies—'

'Oh, gracious!'

'A place where dead bodies are burned to ashes, and the ashes carried home in a jar and stored away among the family archives. You are thinking of a creamery, darling, but don't for heaven 's sake ever get on this subject again in presence of our friends.—Don't do it for my sake, will you, love?'

And she said she would be eternally cremated if she would.—*Toledo Blade.*

The Troy girls wear water proof gossamer cloaks for bustles. There is nothing like putting something by for a rainy day.

The Need for Scientific Athletics.

The increasing popularity of athletic exercises is patent to every observer. Wrestling, boxing, bicycling, walking, running and swimming were never so universally indulged in as now; and every form of out-door sport in which the strength or agility of the youth of both sexes is tested, attracts crowds of observers as well as numerous participants. At the same time it is doubtful if ever the indulgence in athletic exercise was so little directed as at the present time. The selection of the exercise is often directed by the tastes of the individual for a particular sport rather than by any study or knowledge of the part of the body to be built up. In very few instances does the doctor dictate; and it frequently happens that the exercise chosen is calculated to develop a part not requiring improvement at the expense of a part already too weak. From this misdirection in training too often follow the bad consequences attributed mistakenly to 'over training.'

That athletics have been brought so nearly to a perfect science that any part of the body may be developed by appropriate exercise is so generally accepted by physicians that it is idle to argue in favor of the proposition. Rather let us urge the need there is for the education of physicians in this speciality; and call attention to the importance of 'body-building' in youth as a preparation to a long and useful life. Special education in physical development ought to be made a part of the course of every medical college, whether the student proposes to adopt it or not as a special branch of his future practice. And a few minutes of each day in every public school ought to be devoted to the training best adapted to the development of particular parts of the children's bodies.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

A Mother's Disappointment.

A Detroit lawyer who had business in one of the Northern counties a short time since put in a night at a farm house. It was a long structure containing two rooms and such furniture as pioneers get along with. The family consisted of an old man, his wife, and a girl of 20, who was slashing around bare-footed and had a fist like a slugger. After supper the old woman took a seat in front of the lawyer and suddenly asked:

"Do you wear such fine duds all the time?"

"All the time madam."

"Is that a real diamond in your shirt?"

"It is."

"And I heard you tell the old man you had a horse and a buggy at home?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And that watch and chain are real gold, I suppose?"

"Yes, the real stuff."

"Cost as much as $200?"

"Yes, over $300."

"My stars! Why, you must get as much as $40 a month and board!" she gasped.

"Madam, I sometimes make $50 per day," he placidly replied.

"Shoo! Why, you are worth a thousand dollars!"

"Yes, ten times that."

"Stars and stars!"

There was an interval of silence as she recovered from her amazement.—Then she tip-toed to the corner of the house to see if there were any eavesdroppers. Coming back she walked up to the lawyer and dropped her voice to a whisper and said:

"Say! We've bin saving Sally these last two years for the boss of a sawmill four miles up the creek, but if you are struck on her and she is struck on you, I'll run the old man six miles through the brush after a preacher to do the splicing!"

The lawyer had to decline on the ground of having a wife in Detroit; and the old woman felt so bad that the husband had to raise at midnight and make her a mustard plaster—*Detroit Free Press.*

Testing the Eyesight.

To test the eyes of the employes of the Pennsylvania railway, the examiner places upon the candidate's nose a pair of spectacles, literally without glasses. A movable disc of iron is placed before the right and left eye alternately to determine whether he can see or read equally well with both eyes. Wearing these peculiar spectacles he reads printed cards upon a movable frame and also upon the wall across the room. From these tests his capacity for sight is marked according to a graduated scale. The tests for hearing are made according to a stop-watch and tones of conversation at a greater or less distance. The candidate is shown a stick about two feet in length, from which hang skeins of colored zephyr, twenty or more, and all numbered. He must first pick out all the red ones, from the deepest cardinal to the faintest salmon; next, all the greens, from the darkest olive to the palest Nile green, and then all the rose tints, from delicate shell-pink to garnet. Nor must he confuse any of them with each other or with the grays and browns scattered between, which latter he must plainly distinguish from yellow and orange. Then, from a collection of railroad flags, new, passable and old, he must select the required shade and be able to tell a battered green from a navy blue and a dirty white from a black, as well as know the bright hues of the fresh bunting. It will thus be seen that those who use this building are trust worthy, active, wide-awake men.

Every father should paddle his own; can you?