Wild Fugitives

Archibald Rutledge in The Virginia Quarterly (October, '31).
(Author of "Plantation Game Trails," "Children of Swamp and Wood").

A general misconception concerning wild animals—and one that causes a good deal of real suffering to tender-hearted people—is that wild things exist in a state of terror, both because of their natural enemies and because of man. But to one who has roamed the woods most of his life, nature is no madhouse of terrors, and her children are characterized by serenity and joy.

Wild creatures, as far as we can fairly judge, have no imagination. They live from moment to moment, occupied with but one idea at a time. They are untroubled by either the past or the future. Our own acute spiritual awareness and our clairvoyant, volatile imagination serve to make life for us both terrible and beautiful.

Of the mythical terrors that we imagine for wild creatures, perhaps none is greater than that supposedly inspired in the fox and the deer by the pursuit of hounds. As far as I have been able quietly to observe, over a long period of years, neither the fox nor the deer is much concerned over the chase; and at times the fugitive appears to derive a positive degree of pleasure from it, discovering in it the elements of an exciting game.

A pet buck of mine that I had raised with a bottle was on terms of friendly intimacy with my hounds; and in the autumn, when he had his new antlers and when his physical well-being was at its height, he used actually to provoke the dogs to give him a race. It was a strange yet accountable sight to see the proud stag, mincing arrogantly, lowering his head and bulging his neck, approach the hounds drowsing in the sun by the old barn. He would paw mischievously at them, snort in their faces, feign to menace them with his gleaming horns. After this mock threatening had gone on as far as the hounds could stand it, they would "take notice," rousing themselves, at which the buck would bound away in artificial panic. Stimulated by what appeared to be the deer's real fright, the dogs would take up the chase, sending the lithely joyous fugitive flying down the avenue, over fences, through thin strips of woods, back along the river, and thence to the avenue again, and so up to the house. As the buck would near home, he would miraculously transform himself from a wild deer into our tame one, would break off the race, and would not even deign to look back at the hounds which, with tails waving and long ears flying, were clamoring on his trail. As soon as the dogs had come to where the deer had stoped, they stopped too. The fun was over, and everybody was happy. Each had had his "daily dozen."

During my lifetime I have been privileged to see certainly more than a thousand wild deer pursued by hounds, and I have yet to see a deer in distress because of this pursuit. So superb is the deer's natural vitality, so keen are its senses, so familiar is it with the forests where it ranges, and so adequate is its speed that it can take excellent care of itself. Nor are we to forget that such a fugitive may take whatever course it chooses, whereas its pursuers have to unravel its mazy trail.

Deer play in front of dogs; they dodge; they skulk; they exercise an almost incredible precience to do what is least expected. If ever hard pressed, they take to water, and wherever the deer is found, it is commonly found in such numbers that fresh trails are constantly crossing one another. As a result, dogs pursuing one deer will usually rouse others, so that the whole affair, instead of being the stern pursuit of one unhappy fugitive, is far more likely to be a sort of relay race, or merry-go-round.

What is true of the deer's elusiveness, and failure to take very seriously the pursuit of the clamoring pack, is true likewise of the fox, between which and the dog there exists an ancient and honorable enmity. Many a time I have been afforded an opportunity to observe the behavior of a fox at some distance ahead of the dogs; and usually the pursued appears to take a wily and sardonic delight in outwitting the pursuers. It must be remembered that most of these chases in the wilds are tests of mental rather than of physical supremacy. It is commonly the superior strategist who wins.

One November day I was in the woods alone, when the far-off music of a pack of hounds in full cry was borne to me. There were fox-hunters on the place adjoining mine, and evidently they had their quarry started. Because foxes, like deer, have their regular runs, and because in those woods their runs are known to me, I was able, since the race was coming in my direction, to take a position enabling me to see the fugitive.

Hardly had I settled myself before the fox came within sight, stealing along in his inimitable wary fashion. He was trotting rather idly, his fluffy brush straight out behind him; at intervals he would pause to look ahead, to listen, and to look back. There is no more characteristic pose assumed by a fox on the move than the one he commonly takes when he comes to a log in his path. Putting his forefeet on it in order to secure strategic elevation, he will survey the whole stage of the forest. I saw my fox take this stance; and for about two minutes he did not move. Wild creatures pursued by hounds have come to learn that the real danger is often ahead rather than behind. After satisfying himself that the coast was clear, the fox, instead of crossing the log and following the path, turned down the prostrate tree, ran its length, and then, through dense bay-bushes, returned to the path.

But a better manoeuver was to come. A storm had uprooted a huge yellow pine; the dead top lay fringing the path; the roots had torn up with them a great half-moon of earth. Where the pine top touched the path, there was a wide slash of water. The fox avoided the water, yet did not pass it, but, at its widest part, leaped across it straight into the shadowy shelter of the old pine-top, from where he ran down the log, climbed the strange mound of earth, and there lay down, some ten feet off the ground.

In due time came the hounds, puzzling out the trail. At the water they became completely bewildered, and for some moments they cast about vainly for the lost scent. One dog went almost under the fox, which never moved. At last the oldest hound gave notice that the fugitive had run the log. Instantly the fox leaped lithely down the farther side of the embankment on which he had been craftily reposing, and I saw him bobbing away serenely through the woods. He must have been a good half-mile away before his pursuers straightened on his tracks; and by that time he was probably making a new puzzle for them. For in such cases the fugitive is generally the real master of the situation; and insofar as I have observed him, his attitude betrays less fear than a certain amused curiosity, and a certain assurance in his own superiority, which subtly reflects contempt upon the following pack.

Considering predatory creatures and their prey, we have to admit that a stalking or a chase often ends in death. But in practically all such cases, the victim suffers merely the initial shock, which is, so far as we can fairly judge, attended by little pain. Death in the wilds seems to me merely the operation of one of nature's indispensable, and, upon the whole, beneficent laws.

"What's this, daughter. You let Mr. Brown, whom you barely know, kiss you."

"Now, father, let's get this thing right. I didn't let him kiss me, I merely let him try."

Prince of Wales Resumes Hunt

London.—The Prince of Wales has taken to the hunt again. Both he and his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, were hunting on Jan. 2nd with the Belvoir hounds, this being the Prince's first day this season. The Prince of Wales abstained from fox hunting the entire season before last, but was out a few times last winter before leaving on his South American trip.

What New York Is Wearing

BY ANNEBELLE WORTHINGTON

Illustrated Dressmaking Lesson Furnished With Every Pattern

One of the smart new ideas which Paris favors so much, is this new sports type.

The front-buttoned bodice is given a basque effect. The neckline is especially becoming. And don't you like the intricate lines at the front of the skirt? They're very slimming.

The original French model in Spanish tile sheer woolen, choose a brown waffle surface woolen for its collar and cuffs. The buttons toned with the brown woolen.

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32,209 Schools Attended in '30

There are 32,209 schools or colleges in Canada which were attended by 2,490,623 pupils at the end of 1930. In these schools and colleges there are 83,144 teachers. The schools in Canada are attended by about one-quarter of the population of the Dominion. They involve an average expenditure of $66 for each pupil enrolled according to a recent bulletin of the Canadian Government.

The schools controlled by the Provincial Governments number 30,685, in which 2,285,045 pupils are enrolled; the privately controlled ordinary day schools number 795, with 92,275 pupils. There are 182 business training schools, with an enrolment of 29,120. The schools for Indians, which come under the control of the Dominion Government, number 342, with 15,743 pupils, and the 205 universities and colleges are credited with 78,440 students.

The average daily attendance in the schools was 77 per cent. for Canada as a whole, which the official report observes "is a marked improvement in this respect in the past decade; the percentage having risen from 64.7 per cent in 1919."

Sunday School Lesson

January 24. Lesson IV.—Jesus and the Samaritan Woman—John 4: 9-26. Golden Text—Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—1 Timothy 1: 15.

ANALYSIS

I. LIVING WATER, 4: 7-16.
II. FACING THE FACTS, 4: 17-19.
III. SPIRITUAL RELIGION, 4: 20-26.
IV. CHRIST'S FOOD, 4: 27-42.

INTRODUCTION—In order to avoid even the appearance of rivaling the work of the Baptist, Jesus and his disciples withdrew to Galilee. They took the shorter, Samaria route. It was noon (the sixth hour, Roman reckoning, v. 6) when the party came to Jacob's Well. There it was that Jesus met the Samaritan woman.

I. LIVING WATER, 4: 7-16.

This encounter was all the more remarkable because Jew and Samaritan so bitterly hated each other. The broiling heat of noon may be part of the author's symbolism to make more vivid the teaching that is to follow about the refreshing water of life.

Recognizing him by his dress to be a Jew, the woman was surprised to be accosted by the stranger. An ordinary Jew would not speak to a woman, much less a Samaritan—and such she evidently was. Jesus began by asking her for a drink. To establish the essential friendly contact with those whom you would win, have them do you a favor. His appeal to human kindness, going beneath all racial and religious differences, was successful. While the stranger was quenching his thirst, the woman with familiar impudence twitted him, "How is it that you, a Jew, should ask drink of me, a woman, and a Samaritan at that?" v. 9. Ignoring her banter, he told her of "living water"—that is, running spring water as contrasted with the stagnant water of a cistern. See Gen. 26: 19. In our lesson "living water" symbolizes the spiritual life that never becomes exhausted. He said to her, in effect, "You are trying to satisfy yourself at the stagnant pools of life's sin and folly. You are failing in your quest. Life has grown stale for you disappointing. The gift that I offer you will meet your soul's deepest need, bring out the best that is in you. One satisfaction after another, comes to those who live my kind of life."

She missed his deeper meaning. She answered him half in jest, half in earnest, v. 15. She wanted her life made more comfortable. Religion for too many of us is just being comfortable in this life and safe in that which is to come.

II. FACING THE FACTS, 4: 17-19.

Finding her inclined to be flippant, Jesus sobered her by suddenly confronting her with the seamy side of her own life. "Call your husband." As Professor Dow says, "Before Jesus can do anything for us, he insists on frankness. The whole facts of our moral life must be faced before the evil can be cured." Under the penetrating gaze of this uncanny stranger the woman felt as if all of her past life stood exposed before him. See her exaggeration in v. 39. The reply of Jesus in vs. 17, 18 was probably only "Thou hast well said." In reporting the conversation to her friends she particularized the sins which he had brought home to her conscience. She was unable to hide her real character. So are we. "What you are speaks so loudly, I do not hear what you say." We cannot fool God, nor, usually, our neighbors.

Those who regard the woman in this story as merely the type of the Samaritan people, see in her five husbands the gods of the five nations settled in Samaria by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17: 24-34), the sixth being the God of Israel whom they "do not know" (v. 22), that is, do not worship according to the pure rites.

III. A SPIRITUAL RELIGION, 4: 20-26.

The sudden turn of the conversation to deal with true worship would seem to support the view that the story is allegory. The woman, changing the subject, began a theological discussion. She was the victim of an unspiritual religion—churchy, but not godly. She thought of God as in a place—the temple on Mount Gerizim, v. 20. We say of a church, "This is God's house." But everywhere is God's house. He is to be reverenced in the person of everyone we meet. If we fail to honor him there, our reverence for special places is mockery.

The woman worshipped a God who was a Samaritan. Do we worship a God who is a Britisher? We did, during the war. The Germans worshipped a God who was a German. Is our God a United Churchman, or does he belong to the Anglo-Saxon race? A good lady was shocked at the suggestion that perhaps Jesus of Nazareth had a swarthy skin. Imagine a Jesus who did not look like "us"!

Denationalize God, recognize him as the Father Spirit who "inspires" the best we know in human character, worship him honestly, reverence him in the personalities around us, dedicate the best we have to the highest we know—that is the true worship.

IV. CHRIST'S FOOD, 4: 27-42.

At this point we have a good illustration of John's characteristic lack of interest in a story for its own sake, once it has illustrated the truth he wishes to tell. The woman disappears.

To the surprise of the returned disciples, Jesus did not wish for any food, v. 32. He had derived so much spiritual satisfaction from doing his Father's will and helping some one that he forgot all about physical hunger, v. 34. In the multitude whom the woman was bringing to him from the village (v. 30) he saw the speedy harvest from the good seed he had sown, v. 36.

The Samaritans were not satisfied with hearsay. They came to Jesus themselves and found him to be their Saviour. So must we all pass from an unquestioning credulity to a first-hand, thoughtful faith.

"The Guardian" Lives On

Montreal Daily Star: British journalism has lost one of its most distinguished figures and the newspaper world one of its greatest forces for good through the death of C. P. Scott, managing director of the Manchester Guardian. He was its editor for fifty-seven years, and he had brought it into the very forefront of the world's really great newspapers. A man of unimpeachable integrity, brilliant intellect and keen discernment, he held before him a staff of distinguished writers who were eminently well qualified to give those ideals vivid and convincing expression.

Mr. Scott wielded an influence perhaps unparalleled by any other English editor since the days of Delane, and he enjoyed a reputation within the ranks of his own calling excelled by none. He made the Manchester Guardian notable not only for its sturdy spirit of independence, but also for its high literary quality, and he leaves it one of the outstanding news papers in the Empire. His editorship was an inspiration to all with whom he was associated, and he did honour to the profession his great gifts adorned.

A Religious Salesman

A certain minister was trying to raise money for a religious purpose. Raising money seemed to be out of his line, and he went for advice to Dwight L. Moody. Moody decided to see what could be done and suggested to the parson that they call on some of his prospects. Very logically they set out first to call on a rich widow. On the way Moody asked his friend how much he intended to ask her to give. "Oh, perhaps $250." Moody made no comment, but when they reached the house he pushed forward and said to the lady,

"Madam, we have come to ask you for $2000 to help build the new Mission."

She threw up her hands in horror. "Oh, Mr. Moody, I cannot possibly give you more than one thousand!"

That was the way he did it.—Gamaliel Bradford, in D. L. Moody.

"It is customary to seal a proposal with a kiss is it not?"

"It used to be, but nowadays it is considered best to have a witness"

An unwelcome guest is one of the best things going.

Burma Delegate

Miss May Oung, only woman delegate at the Burma round table conference in London, appeals to her fellow delegates to "trust Britain".

London Scientists Believe Substance Pure Vitamin D

London—Dr. Robert Bourdillon has just announced that after months of experimenting at the National Institute for Medical Research, he and a group of five London scientists had isolated a substance they believed to be pure vitamin D.

"We have isolated a pure white crystalline substance which we have named calfiferol and which we have every reason to believe is pure vitamin D," he said. "It is certainly vitamin D in a purer state than has ever existed before."

Recalling the fact that vitamin D has long been known as a cure for rickets, Dr. Bourdillon said the importance of the discovery apart from its scientific merit was that the vitamin could now be administered in correct doses.

He added that their success came almost simultaneously with that of Professor Windaus and other German scientists who produced the same substance recently while working on the same lines.

The Integrity of Canadian Banks

Le Soleil, Quebec (Lib.): Since the beginning of the crisis there has been no banking disaster in Canada. Our great financial institution have resisted the depression with such strength that they deserve our admiration and our confidence. Other countries have not been as fortunate as we have. Bank failures have been exceedingly numerous in the United States. In the last ten years at least 6,987 banks in the States have gone under with $2,586,000,000 of deposits. In the last two years more than three thousand banks disappeared. Here in Canada we have been fortunate in saving all our institutions, and we believe that all serious danger is now passed. We have turned the corner of the crisis.

A FRESH START

We have all heard about the storm-driven ship whose crew was half frantic for water. At last another ship came near, and they cried, "Water! water! we are perishing with thirst." "Dip down into the ocean," was the answer; for they were off the Amazon, which hurls its mighty flood of fresh water far out into the briny Atlantic. In the same way there are many who are longing for a fresh start, a new chance, who have the opportunity every day of their lives if they will only reach out and take it. "Every day is a fresh beginning."

MUTT AND JEFF— By BUD FISHER

Not a Bad Idea, at That.