

THE ANGEL AND ISAAC.

Old Isaac was a devout Christian. It was his custom when his work was done to retire to his cabin and devote himself to worship until bedtime. His earnest and frequent announcements that he was always ready to meet his "Lawd" had been so often heard that some boys decided to test Isaac's faith. One night while he was under full headway: "O Lawd, we know dy long suff'rin' fur dis ben'ited sinner, but we feel, O Lawd, dat in dy love we will be spahed dy vangins and raf. We are always ready, Lawd, at dy biddin' to cum and meet dy angel Gabr'el. Send him O Lawd, wid his shinin' trumpit, his robes ob glory and his crown ob lite, and take dy poh sahvant into dy vineyard—"

"Isaac! Isaac!" came in deep, sepulchral tones down the chimney.

"Amen!" softly said Isaac, closing his prayer abruptly and rising with fear and trembling.

"Isaac! Isaac!" came the still dread-

ful "who-no-no's dat?" stammered the awe-stricken negro.

"The angel of the Lord has come for Isaac!"

Isaac hesitated, and then, with a show of enforced courage, it came:

"De Lawd bless you, dat old nigger hain't been here fer a week."

A COCKNEY SPORTSMAN'S SHOT.

Tom Sheridan, the English politician, was staying at Lord Craven's, at Hampstead, and one day proceeded on a shooting excursion with only "his dog and his gun," on foot, and unattended by companion or keepers. The sport was bad; the birds few and shy; and he walked and walked in search of game, until at last he passed through a farm-yard. In the front of the farm-house was a green in the centre of which was a pond; in the pond were ducks innumerable, swimming and diving; on its verdant banks, a motley group of gallant cocks and pert partlets, picking and feeding. The farmer was leaning over the hatch of the barn, which stood near two cottages on the side of the green.

Our hero had an utter abomination of going back with an empty bag. Having failed in his attempts at higher game, it struck him that it would be a good joke to ridicule the exploits of the day himself, and to prevent any of his amiable friends from doing it for him; and he fancied that to carry home a certain number of the domestic inhabitants of the pond and its vicinity would serve the purpose admirably. Accordingly, he walked up to the farmer and accosted him.

"My good friend," said he, "I'll make you an offer—"

"Of what, sir?" replied the farmer.

"Why," answered Tom, "I have been out all day after birds, and haven't had a shot. Now, both my barrels are loaded,—I should like to take home something. What shall I give you to allow me to take a shot, with each barrél, at those ducks and fowls—I standing here—and to have whatever I kill?"

"What sort of a shot are you, sir?" asked the farmer, in his politest manner.

"Fairish," said our friend.

"And to have all you kill—Eh?"

"Exactly so."

"Half-a-guinea."

"That's too much," said the sportsman. "I tell you what I'll do; I'll give you seven shillings, which happens to be all the money I have about me."

"Well, hand it over."

The payment was made: Tom, true to his bargain, took his post by the barn-door, and discharged his gun—first one barrel, then the other. Such quacking, and splashing, and screaming and fluttering, had never been seen or heard in the place before!

Awa ran Sheridan; and, delighted at his success, picked up first a hen, then a chicken, then fished out a dying duck or two, and so on, till he numbered eight head of domestic game, with which his bag was nobly distended.

"Those were capital shots, sir," said the farmer.

"Yes," answered Tom; "eight ducks and fowls are more than you bargained for, my good fellow. Worth rather more, I suspect, than seven shillings—eh?"

"Why, yes," said the man, scratching his head; "I think they are. But what do I care for that? They are none of mine!"

How puny seem the works of man when brought into comparison with majestic nature! His groves, what pigmies when measured against the virgin forest! His noblest temples, how insignificant when contrasted with the masonry of the hills! What canvas can imitate the dawn and sunset! What inlaid work can match the mosaics of the mountains.

Is it blind chance that gives these glimpses of the sublime? And was it blind chance that clustered vast reservoirs about inaccessible summits and stored water to refresh the thirsty plains through hidden veins and surface streams?

No wonder man from the beginning of history has turned to the heights for inspiration, for here is the spirit awed by the infinite and here one sees both the mystery of creation and the manifestations of the Father's loving kindness. Here man finds a witness, unimpeachable though silent, to the omnipotence, the omniscience and the goodness of God.—From the O'd World and its Ways."

WATER THE ONLY BEVERAGE.

Our Bountiful Creator has supplied an abundance of all things, pure and good. The earth abounds in varieties of food, including flesh, fish, vegetables, corn and fruits of almost innumerable variety. But He has provided but one beverage, adapted alike to the wants of vegetable, animal and animal life. Not all the inventions of man can create another. Man may mix it, poison it, destroy its refreshing character by adding other ingredients, but the only thing still remaining for thirst is water.

Nowhere in nature has God provided alcohol. That is a poison which can only be secured by decomposition, destruction, or fermentation. It begins with decay, and proceeds to death, and results in death. It is always an enemy to life, whether vegetable, physical, social, moral or spiritual.

Two little girls were one day discussing matters of interest when Dorothy remarked: "I wish we could have a dancing school. We could get up a good class, too; now there are two in our family, three in yours, the two Dodds, and three Clarks." Whereupon Ethel burst forth: "O no, not the Clarks; they don't believe in it." "Why not?" asked Dorothy; don't they believe in anything like that?" "Well," said Ethel, with more hesitation, "I don't think they do. Anyhow, they don't believe in vaccination!"

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