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her eyes, and finally her ears. The mocking bird, although he was only half awake, did sing beautifully, and perhaps she had been foolish—but not that was not the sound she had heard.

"Oh, jes' wait, honey!" said Rebecca. "We'll keep jes' es still as er mouse. Bime-by we'll hear dat noise ag'n."

"What was it?" begged Marjorie. "Please tell me. Now do tell me, Becky!"

"No, chile," replied Rebecca. "It'll come, bime-by. Now le's count all de diff' unt sounds we kin hear. Dis ain't like de Norf, yoh see. We hab heaps of queer noises in Floridy, dat yoh doan' hear up dah. Oh, ya-as, I bin ter de Norf, an' I was pow'ful glad ter git back home 'gin."

So Rebecca and Marjorie sat and listened. First came the peeping of

thousands of frogs, both big and little, with their notes running from the shrill piping of the young frogs, all the way down the scale, to the deep bass of the great bull frogs. Then, the song of another sleepy mocking bird, and far, far away among the swamp oaks in some lonely bit of wood-land, there came the repeated whistle of a bird, which seems to say over and over, "chuck-Will's-widow," the name by which he goes. Then, the dull bark of an alligator, but this only once, for an alligator does not have much to say; and then they heard the curious song of a cow-boy, calling to his scattered bunch of cattle—they speak of a drove of cattle as a "bunch" in the South—for they had strayed away, and had kept him hunting for them long after sundown. Then they heard voices and laughter down by the lake, and gradually Marjorie began to quite forget the alarming sounds she had heard. She was really growing sleepy. Suddenly she felt Rebecca press her arm.

"Wake up!" she whispered. "Doan' speak—jes look!" Wide awake in an instant, Marjorie raised herself in Rebecca's arms, and hardly daring to breathe, she looked in the same direction toward which Rebecca's eyes were turned.

Some ten feet distant ran a low fence, and perched upon the top rail was a queer tuft of feathers. It was about as large as a small chicken, and it sat motionless in moonlight. Again Rebecca whispered:

"Keep still, now. Doan' yoh squeal, no clatter w'at comes. Hark!" Then something queer happened.

As she straightened herself up, still holding fast to Marjorie's hand, there came from out of Rebecca's round throat an exact imitation of the moaning, thrilling cry that seemed so terrifying to Marjorie! And lo! from that innocent tuft of feathers seated upon the rail, there came another cry in answer!

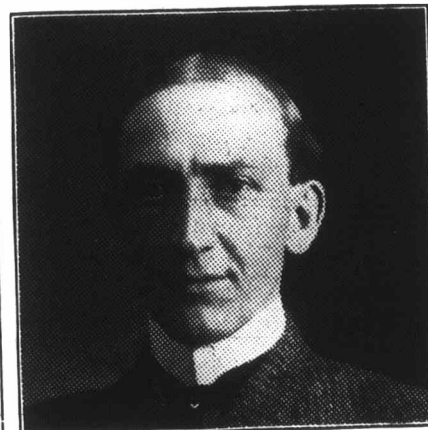
Marjorie's fear was gone. Some way, the sound did not seem at all dreadful, now that she could see what a "mite" of a thing was making such a goblin-like noise. She was all eager to know what the "thing" could be—so full of trills and moans, but she did not dare to speak, for fear of frightening it away.

"Dah, honey!" whispered Rebecca. "It's er owl—jes' er little screech-owl. Ise called dem jes' like dis, heaps ob times. Dat's w'at skeered yoh, chile. Now, ain't yoh jes' 'shamed? Hol'

on er minit. Dat's de ole owl. Now, min' out for de baby owls. I'll keep er callin' till dey come, too. Dey ain't fur off."

Sure enough, before long, for Rebecca continued to call, there was a bit of a sound—so soft that it could

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hardly be called a sound of wings, because the owl flies very silently—and then, one by one, there came five little baby owls, and perched in a row along the rail! A pretty sight they were, this mother owl and her family,

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