

THE LITTLE HOPPING FROG

BY LUCY PRATT

'Of course I should love to stay, but I must be back in Boston to-morrow evening for my paper at the club,' explained pretty, conscientious Miss Hope Hendon to Miss Jane Lane. 'Did n't I tell you about that paper—"Our Better Attention to the Negro"?' I simply could n't get out of it.'

'Oh, surely, I remember. Well, this is a good place to come and consider a subject of that sort.' Her eyes wandered to the Institute buildings where faithful numbers daily gave their attention to the Negro, and then to the ever-moving, changing crowd which stretched across the green lawns before them. 'I wonder how many of these persons are considering the same subject. Well, I suppose that is what these visiting days are for.'

'It's picturesque,' murmured the other dreamily, her eyes resting, too, on the shifting crowds and the smooth, green stretches. 'Now, who's this little one coming along all by himself?'

'Why—why, that's Ezekiel!' declared Miss Jane briskly. 'What is *he* doing over here? It's time he went home to supper.'

The other looked up with a quick flash of interest.

'Ezekiel? Ezekiel, did you say? Oh, I know Ezekiel. Do make him come here. Don't you suppose he would?'

'Why, yes, Ezekiel is usually willing,' returned Miss Jane amiably; and she held out a hand significantly, while her friend's face beamed with undisguised delight, and she dropped contentedly on a low bench on the green bank.

'It's so lovely here, just beside the water, and I need a breath before starting.'

She glanced invitingly at Ezekiel as he came trotting on.

Miss Jane sat down on the bench and glanced at him too.

'Well, Ezekiel, what have you accomplished to-day?' she began without parley or preamble, as he hovered uncertainly before them.

'Wha'm? Wha'm yer say, Miss Jane?' questioned Ezekiel, a bit dazed just for the moment.

'I asked what you had accomplished to-day,' repeated Miss Jane. 'Did you have a good time at school? Were you satisfied with your lessons?'

'Yas'm, *I'se* satisfied,' returned Ezekiel politely; and Miss Jane scrutinized him anew.

'You have been at school to-day, I suppose?' she suggested.

Ezekiel looked puzzled.

'Wha'm yer say?' he repeated. 'No'm, *I ain'* been ter school ter-day, Miss Jane.'

'Why, Ezekiel! And what did you just say?'

'Yas'm,' agreed Ezekiel weakly. 'Yas'm. No'm. *I ain'* been ter school ter-day, Miss Jane.'

'Then you surely were not satisfied with your lessons. At least I hope not,' added Miss Jane with fervor.

'Yas'm, cert'nly hope so too,' murmured Ezekiel.

'Are you planning to go to-morrow?' went on Miss Jane, with perhaps justifiable suspicion.

Ezekiel's eyes rested on her soothingly.

'W'y, yas'm,' he assured. 'Co'se I'se 'blige go ter school ter-morrer. Leas'ways ef I gits my edjercation, co'se I'se 'blige go ter school *sometime*, ain't I?'

'Well, it would seem so,' agreed Miss Jane, glancing with some asperity toward the delighted friend at her side, 'but I doubt if your education ever amounts to very much, Ezekiel. Why, I thought you had given up those shiftless, unaccountable habits! What in the world can you expect to amount to if you persist in such irregularities? Going to school one day and staying out the next! Is that any way to do?'

'No'm,' agreed Ezekiel in no uncertain tones. 'Yer could n' git no edjercation dat-a-way, could yer! Gwine school one day an' stayin' out de nex'! Dat ain't no way ter git yer edjercation, is it, Miss Jane, gwine school one day an' stayin' out de nex'!' The idea was evidently quite revolting to him. "'Twuz a gen'leman wuk fer Mis' Simons done jes' dat-a-way too. A culled gen'leman he wuz. Yas'm, an' he say 'is edjercation ain' nuver 'mount ter ve'y much, cuz it wuz jes' gwine school one day an' stayin' out de nex', twell he 'cides he might's well stay out *all* time. I reckon dat's de way yer feels 'bout it anyway, after yer's been foolin' 'long like that — doan't yer, jes' gwine school one day an' stayin' out de nex'!'

'I think very likely,' agreed Miss Jane. 'What can one expect to accomplish without regularity?'

'Yas'm, Miss No'th, she's axin' me dat, too. Say yer cyan' 'spec' *nuth'n'* 'thout regerlarity. De sun cert'nly look r'al pretty on de water — doan't it, Miss Jane?' he added pensively.

Miss Jane glanced at the sun with doubtful appreciation, and Miss Hope Hendon glanced at it with delight still

on her face, and then they both turned their heads, as steps sounded beside them on the grass and a familiar-looking group moved toward them.

'We are making our final rounds!'

The eager-looking young man in the lead glanced out at the quivering blue bay and drew a deep breath.

'George! This is a lovely country round here,' he breathed. His foot brushed Ezekiel, who had dropped down comfortably on the green bank to regard the sun. 'What's this?' he questioned.

'That's Ezekiel,' replied Miss Hope Hendon.

'Ezekiel? Who's Ezekiel? Well, he fits in with the scene pretty satisfactorily, does n't he, peacefully perched there on his green bank? Look here, Uncle Jo!'

Uncle Jo detached himself from the group and glanced about him briskly. 'What's that? Another one?' he demanded; 'good Lord, what's going to become of them all!'

'Why, that sounds pessimistic, Uncle Jo, after all that you've seen to-day!'

'Oh, I know,' answered Uncle Jo, a bit peevishly, 'I've seen so much that my head *whirls*, but what is it all going to amount to. That's the question. What are they going to make of all these opportunities?'

'Well, well, well! They're going out as *leaders*. Is n't that the talk?'

'Of course it's the *object* to train leaders, Jo,' joined in a soothing voice, 'that's what they're working for, of course.'

'I know, Fanny,' went on Uncle Jo querulously, 'but that's just the point. Now a — a *leader* has to possess certain qualities of mind that will attract attention from other minds! Change the *current* of other minds! Command a following! How many leaders do you suppose they've got here? Look at all the passive, good-natured faces we've

seen to-day. Well, do you suppose there's a mind in the whole company that is really going to attract a following — effect anything — change anything — stir up the natural order — arrest attention? That's what I'm trying to get at!

'Oh, you're talking about brilliant leaders, Jo. Of course there are n't going to be a lot of brilliant leaders. But leaders in small ways, around homes and farms, and — and schools. You're looking for too much, Jo.'

'You did n't get my point at all, Fanny,' retorted Uncle Jo, in mild despair, 'not at all—'

'I suppose your point is,' interrupted a judicial voice, 'that the mind of the colored man is at present more passive than active, more receptive than productive, more — more calculated to follow than to lead.'

'That's just my point, Mr. Knowlton,' returned Uncle Jo warmly. 'I don't believe that there's a mind here that could successfully turn any *group* of minds from their own natural course. Arrest attention, break up the expected order, you know! That's my point!'

Uncle Jo himself sat down on another bench on the green bank, and critically regarded the low sun as it crept modestly down to meet the water.

'Well, I'm glad of a few minutes to *breathe*,' he declared. 'How soon do we start for that boat?'

'Not yet. We can all breathe first; sit down, sit down everybody!' encouraged the eager-faced young man, dropping contentedly down on the green bank. 'I'm sure you could n't ask for a more soothing spot. Hullo, young feller!' he broke out, as Ezekiel stirred uneasily beside him; 'what's his name, did you say, Hope?'

'His name's Ezekiel,' admonished Miss Hope Hendon gently. 'He's quite worth knowing, I assure you. I only

wish he would tell you one of his nice stories.'

Ezekiel looked up at her and smiled shyly.

'You used to tell stories, did n't you, Ezekiel? About — about Emanuel — the little boy who lived all alone?'

'Yas'm — 'thout no kin,' agreed Ezekiel, with pleased recollection. 'Thout no kin,' he repeated, 'cuz — cuz dey's all daid.'

'So did n't he get a — some sort of a little animal for company?'

Ezekiel looked at her, quite unconscious of anything but her questioning, riveted eyes.

'Yas'm,' he returned slowly, 'he — he gotten 'im — he gotten 'im — a li'l frog.'

'A frog?' repeated Miss Hendon softly, 'what a nice companion!'

'Yas'm, a li'l hoppin' frog,' meditated Ezekiel. 'He's a-settin' on de steps one mawnin', an' de li'l frog come a-hoppin' in de ya'd.'

'What's that?' inquired Uncle Jo briskly, not entirely grasping the situation. 'What's that he's saying about frogs?'

He half closed his eyes and again glanced critically at the sun.

'Yas'm,' went on Ezekiel evenly, still conscious of nothing but Miss Hendon's appreciative eyes, 'he's jes' a-settin' dere on de steps, kine o' studyin' an' thinkin' 'bout bein' ser lonesome, w'en de li'l frog come a-hoppin' up de steps.'

'Go on, tell us about it!'

'Yas'm — an' he's cryin' too, wid 'is haid bu'y in 'is lap.'

'Yes?'

'So fus' he didn' hyeah nuthin', an' de li'l frog keep on hoppin' up de steps. An' she hop right up dere nex' de li'l boy an' se' down 'side 'im.'

'So 'Manuel open 'is eyes r'al slow, an' look down, an' by dat time li'l frog wuz feelin' bad, too.'

“Well, w’at’s yer name, frog?”
 ‘Manuel say.

‘An’ den de li’l’ frog she look up an’ wipe ‘er eye r’al sad ‘n’ gloomy an’ look at de li’l’ boy.

“My name’s Bella,” she say; an’ she jes’ bu’y ‘er haid an’ bus’ right out cryin’.

“Well, ‘t ain’ nuthin’ ter cry ‘bout ef ‘t is,” ‘Manuel answer ‘er; “I reckon we better go out an’ play a li’l’ on de grass, ain’t we?”

‘Well, de frog she wipe ‘er eye agin, an’ den she start hoppin’ right ‘long down de steps siden de li’l’ boy.

“Doan’t yer see de sun-spots on de grass?” ‘Manuel say; “ef we runs ‘roun’ on de sun-spots I reckon we’ll feel better.”

‘So dey run ‘roun’ on de sun-spots twell ‘Manuel stop an’ look at de frog ‘gin. “Ain’t yer no kin, frog?” he ask.

‘An’ li’l’ frog she wipe ‘er eye agin.

“No, I ain’ no kin!” she say.

“Den I reckon yer better live yere wid me, ain’t yer,” ‘Manuel answer ‘er, “cuz my kin’s all daid!”

“My kin’s all daid, too!” li’l’ frog answer, sobbin’ like ez she speak.

“Well, se’ down an’ res’ yerself,” ‘Manuel say. An’ he tukken a li’l’ piece o’ cake outen ‘is pocket, an’ dey bofe se’ down on a sun-spot an’ ‘mence eatin’ dey breakfus’.

‘An’ af’ dat de li’l’ boy an’ de li’l’ frog live dere ‘lone tergedder.

‘An’ fum dat ve’y time seem like de li’l’ frog ‘mence ter feel diffunt. An’ she tole ‘Manuel it cert’nly seem r’al homelike to ‘er. An’ she’s mos’ allays up an’ hoppin’ outen de house ‘bout five erclock in de mawnin’. She say she like ter look roun’ a li’l’ ‘fo’ de sun gits ole or dull, an’ she say she like ter play a li’l’ wid de bugs ‘n’ flowers w’en eve’ything’s r’al clare ‘n’ bright, an’ she say she like ter ketch de fus’ breeze w’en it come runnin’ fru de ya’d an’ pas’ de house.

‘So Bella an’ de li’l’ boy dey keep a-livin’ on so, an’ cert’nly seem like dey ain’ nuver gwine have no trouble ‘tall.

‘An’ ef ‘t ain’ been fer de *night*, dey prob’ly would n’ nurrer. But it all start out in de night. An’ one mornin’ ‘bout five erclock, ez de li’l’ frog’s gwine a-hoppin’ out de do’, she look out in de ya’d, an’ den she look up in de sky, an’ den she jes’ stop right dere in de do’ an’ could n’ go no furrer. Cuz ‘t ain’ no sun an’ ‘t ain’ no ya’d — ‘t ain’ nuthin’ ‘scusin’ jes’ de rain a-drappin’ fum de sky, an’ a gret big kine o’ ribber like, a-flowin’ fru de ya’d.

“Oh, my!” li’l’ frog say.

‘An’ den she went a-hoppin’ down de steps r’al slow an’ studyin’, an’ den she se’ down on de bank by de ribber an’ jes’ set dere an’ set dere, a-studyin’ an’ a-lookin’ off.

‘An’ w’en ‘Manuel come out ‘bout ‘leben erclock, de ribber wuz still a-flowin’ fru de ya’d, an’ de li’l’ frog wuz still a-settin’ on de bank.

“Well, how come de rain ter do like dat, anyway!” ‘Manuel say. “‘T ain’ no call fer no sech a shower’s dat!” An’ he went out an’ se’ down on de bank too, an’ den dey bofe set dere studyin’ ‘bout it an’ a-lookin’ off.

‘Well, ‘twuz jes’ de way de trouble come — in de night. Dey knowed ‘t wuz de way it come, an’ yit w’en de nex’ night come, dey went ter baid same’s ever. But seem like dey ain’ no mo’n went ter sleep ‘fo’ de win’ it blow up awful cole, an’ dey come a bangin’ an’ a slammin’ on de do’.

“W’at’s dat?” de li’l’ boy say, kine o’ stickin’ ‘is haid out fun de baid cloes. “W’at’s dat, Bella? Is it de win’?”

“No, ‘t ain’ no win’,” Bella say, kine o’ shiverin’; an’ de bangin’ an’ de slammin’ come agin.

“I guess yer better go ‘n’ ax w’at ‘t is, Bella,” ‘Manuel say.

‘An’ de li’l’ frog she’s r’al brave any-

way, so she jes' start right off a-hoppin' ter de do', an' den she stop.

"Is dat de win'?" she call.

"No, 't ain' no win'," come back de answer.

"W'at is it den?" she call again.

"It's a hu'ycaane!" come back de answer.

"Is dat all?" Bella ask r'al nice — an' p'lite too.

"No, 'tain't," come back de answer, "it's a hu'ycaane an' de moon an' sky a-pitchin', — an' a bu'glar a-knockin' at de do'!"

"Is dat all?" Bella say, r'al brave, an' jes' ez p'lite 's ever.

'An' den, w'y, she ain't even wait fer 'em to answer. She jes' open de do', an' 'fo' she kin say a word, de hu'ycaane tukken 'er an' blowed 'er right up in a tree, wid de bu'glar a-blowin' 'long after 'er, twell de tree ketch 'im so he could n' git down. But Bella, co'se she hop righ' down an' went a-hoppin' right up de steps an' in de house agin.

"Yer done r'al well, Bella," li'l' boy say, w'en she tole 'im 'bout it, "an' ter-morrer I reckon we kin run roun' on de sun-spots agin."

'But nex' mawnin', 'bout five er'clock, w'en Bella look outen de do', 't ain' no sun, an' de ribber's flowin' 'long jes' same's befo'. An' w'en de li'l' boy come out 'bout 'leben er'clock, Bella wuz settin' dere on de bank a-lookin' off.

'An' w'en de nex' night come, de win' it blowed up awful cole agin, an' dey come a bangin' an' a slammin' on de do'.

"W'at's dat?" li'l' boy say, a-stickin' 'is haid outen de cloes; "is it de win'?"

'An' jes' soon's he spoke, w'y, Bella she jes' hop righ' down on de flo', an' hop off ter de do'.

"W'at's dat?" she call out. "Is it de win'?"

"No, 't ain' no win'," come back de answer.

"W'at is it den?" she call agin.

"It's a hu'ycaane, an' de moon an' sky a-pitchin', an' a bu'glar, an' two 'free crim'nals a-knockin' at de do'!"

"Is dat all?" Bella ax 'em; an' co'se she's r'al p'lite, but seem like 'er voice is jes' a li'l' unstiddy too.

"No, 't ain't all," wuz de answer.

'But Bella she ain' wait fer nuthin' mo'. She jes' open de do' an' look out. But 'fo' she r'ally seen much, de hu'ycaane it tukken 'er an' blowed 'er right outen de do' an' inter de ribber, wid de bu'glar an' de crim'nals a-blowin' right in after 'er, twell dey wuz drowned daid. But co'se Bella she hop right out an' went a-hoppin' up de steps an' inter de house.

"Yer cert'nly done r'al well, Bella," de li'l' boy say, w'en she tole 'im 'bout it. "An' ter-morrer mawnin' I reckon we kin play roun' on de sun-spots agin fer sho'."

'But w'en Bella went a-hoppin' out agin 'bout five er'clock in de mawnin' 't wuz all jes' same, an' de ribber wuz flowin' 'long sad 'n' slow, same's befo'.

'An' de nex' night, oh, 't wuz tur'ble! It's jes' like dis. Fus' de win' it blowed up awful cole an' rough, an' dey come a tur'ble bangin' an' slammin' on de do'.

"W'at's dat?" li'l' boy say.

'An' Bella she ain' stop fer nary thing. She jes' went a-hoppin' ter de do'.

"W'at's dat?" she say; only seem like 'er voice is awful small an' shiverin' dis time too. "Is it de win'?"

"No, 't ain' no win'," come de answer.

"W'at is it den?" Bella ax 'em.

"It's a hu'ycaane, an' de moon an' sky a-pitchin', an' a bu'glar, an' two 'free crim'nals, — an' fo' five murd'rers a-knockin' at de do'!"

"Is dat all?" Bella say, kine o' chatterin'.

“No, 't ain't all,” dey say.

‘But Bella wuz ser frighten she jes’ frowed open de do’. “Is dat all?” she holler.

“No, 't ain't all!” dey scream, “it’s fo’ five murd’rers, an’ dey’s gwine shoot yer wid dey gun!”

‘An’ w’at yer s’pose? Same time dey spoke dey jes’ aim de gun right plum at Bella, an’ bline ’er in de eye. But jes’ zackly ez dey’s fixin’ ter aim it agin ter kill ’er, an’ same time bline ’er in de udder eye, w’y, de hu’ycane it tukken ’em an’ blowed ’em right outen de do’, an’ right up a top o’ de house an’ lef’ ’em dere siden de chimley. But co’s’e it blowed Bella righ’ down de chimley siden de li’l boy.

“Yer done r’al well, Bella,” li’l boy say, w’en she wipe de udder eye an’ tole ’im ’bout it, “an’ ter-morrer I’s’e mos’ sho’ de sun-spots ’s gwine be dere.”

‘But nex’ mawnin’ ’t ain’ no change, an’ w’en ’Manuel come out Bella wuz jes’ a-settin’ dere on de bank a-lookin’ off wid de udder eye.

‘An’ ’Manuel he look up in de sky where de sun useter be, an’ say, —

“Look like de sun’s los’, ain’t she, Bella? Look like we’s ’blige go ’n’ fine ’er, ain’t we, Bella? Cuz ’t ain’ gwine be nuthin’ but trouble twell we does.”

“Ya’as, sir,” li’l frog answer.

‘She’s feelin’ r’al sad ’n’ discou’ged, but she kin see de li’l boy’s right ’bout it, too. So dey bofe look clare ’way down ter de en’ o’ de road, where de sun useter git up in de mawnin’, an’ den ’Manuel spoke ’gin.

“De sun she’s a-hidin’ down yonder,” he say, “down yonder ’hine de road, Bella. We’s ’blige go down de road an’ fine de sun, Bella, cuz ’t ain’ gwine be nuthin’ but trouble twell we does.”

‘So he start off down de road, an’ de li’l frog start hoppin’ ’long beside ’im.

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An’ dey keep a-gwine ’long like dat, ’Manuel and de li’l frog a-hoppin’ ’long beside ’im. An’ de furrer dey went, de longer de road seem ter git.

“Cert’nly’s a long way,” ’Manuel say.

‘An’ praesen’ly night ’mence comin’ on’, an’ de dark wuz drappin’ fum de sky, an’ still dey’s gwine down de road, ’Manuel an’ de li’l frog a-hoppin’ ’long beside ’im.

“It’s gittin’ dark,” li’l frog say, stoppin’ jes’ a minute ter wipe de onlies’ eye she got, “it’s gittin’ dark ’n’ kine o’ lonesome!”

“I knows it,” li’l boy say.

‘An’ still de night wuz drappin’ fum de sky, an’ still dey keep on down de road, ’Manuel an’ de li’l frog a-hoppin’ ’long beside ’im.

‘Praesen’ly dey stop. “Is yer tired, Bella?” ’Manuel ax ’er.

“Ya’as, I’s’e kine o’ tired,” li’l frog answer.

“Cuz we’s comin’ ter de en’ o’ de road, an’ de sun’s down yonder behine de aidge, Bella.”

‘An’ Bella she look up awful brave.

“I’s’e gwine down yonder an’ fine ’er,” she say.

“Hole on, Bella!” ’Manuel call out.

‘But li’l frog she went a-hoppin’ erlong, an’ den she turn ’er haid jes’ a minute ter look back at de li’l boy wid de onlies’ eye she got, an’ den — an’ den she jes’ hop righ’ down behine de aidge o’ de road ter fine de sun.

‘An’ ’Manuel’s ser s’prise he could n’ say nuthin’, but jes’ keep on standin’ in de road.

“W’y doan’t she come back?” he w’isper praesen’ly, kine o’ skyeered like.

‘An’ jes’ ez he spoken de words he seen a li’l rim o’ red a-pushin’ up over de aidge o’ de road. An’ de rim o’ red keep pushin’ up bigger ’n’ bigger, twell praesen’ly de li’l boy wuz stan’in’ dere in de road a-lookin’ at de sun.

“She done it!” he holler, “she foun’

de sun! Bella foun' de sun! Now come back, Bella! Come — ba—ck!"

'An' de sun wuz shinin' at de li'l' boy as he stood dere in de middle o' de road, but 't ain' no answer.

"Where is yer, Bella?" li'l' boy call.

'An' he stan' dere mos' all de mawn-in', wid de sun a-shinin' on 'im.

'An' den he turn roun' r'al sad 'n' slow, an' went walkin' down de road all 'lone. An' w'en he gotten back home, de ribber wuz all flowed erway, an' de sky wuz bright 'n' shinin', an' de sun-spots wuz on de grass.

'An' af' dat 'twa' 'n' no mo' rain ner clouds, cuz de sun wuz allays up a-shinin' de ve'y fus' thing in de mawn-in'. But co'se de li'l' boy knowed de cause fer it, too. He knowed de cause. An' eve'y time he se' down on a sun-spot, he feel sad 'n' lonesome, cuz he knowed 'twuz Bella erway down yonder, behine de aidge o' de road, where made de sun git up ser bright an' shinin' in de mawnin'.

'So she could n' niver come back. Cuz she's ser busy down yonder wid de sun — she could n' niver git de time. An' dat's de reason de li'l' boy feel sad 'n' lonesome. Cuz he knowed he would n' niver see de li'l' hoppin' frog no mo'.'

Ezekiel paused.

'He knowed he would n' niver see de li'l' hoppin' frog no mo',' he repeated; and there was another pause.

The eager-faced young man on the grass sat up and rubbed his eyes.

'What!' he broke out. 'What!'

He sprang suddenly to his feet — and a distant clock broke softly on the stillness.

'What!' broke out Uncle Jo, bounding from his bench, 'what's that?'

'What — in Jerusalem are we doing!' shouted the eager-faced young man. 'What? We — we've stayed too long! We've — missed our boat! We've missed our —'

'What are you talking about!' challenged Uncle Jo furiously, 'We have n't either! We can't! I can't! *What are you talking about!*'

Ezekiel, sitting on the grass, was gazing peacefully, uncomprehendingly, at a hitherto silent, well-behaved group of people, scattering confusedly in many directions, shouting to each other excitedly, beckoning for carriages despairingly, and then by a common impulse, falling back into a confused group again.

'You little good-for-nothing!' broke out Uncle Jo suddenly, turning helplessly on Ezekiel, 'it's all your fault! Here you've been keeping us listening to your — your delirious chatter till — till —'

Uncle Jo clenched his fist weakly, and then he broke away again, while the others trailed after him in scattered confusion. There was only one young man, with an eager face, who half turned and shot back an inscrutable look at Ezekiel. There was such an odd light in his eye!

'What was that about — about "arresting attention"? What was that about — "commanding a following — breaking up the expected order, you know"? What was that, Uncle Jo?'

There were queer, explosive sounds behind his words, and the odd light in his eye danced wickedly.

'Say, young feller,' he ventured cautiously, 'are n't you — are n't you about even with Uncle Jo this time?' And he turned and fled after the dispersed and routed company.

Only Miss Jane was left, still sitting on the bench. Only Ezekiel on the bank.

'Well —' she finally declared lifelessly, 'you have done strange things before, Ezekiel. *Now* — look — at — what — you — have — done!'

'Yas'm,' conceded Ezekiel cheerlessly.

'I don't *pretend to say* — what you

will do next!' she concluded with abject and final hopelessness.

'Yas'm,' agreed Ezekiel faintly. And still perched on his bank, he gazed sadly, humbly, away at the peaceful, flowing water.

At 'the club' in Boston, it was announced that Miss Hope Hendon, who was to have read a paper, entitled 'Our Better Attention to the Negro,' had been unavoidably detained in the South.

WILD MUSIC

BY HERBERT RAVENAL SASS

When noon draws on at Otranto the wise man rests from walking. There are some in the brotherhood of rambblers who cry shame upon you if you call a halt. The day is so short, they proclaim, and there is so much to be seen; and there was one that brought Hazlitt into the argument, as though he were a battery of horse-artillery, and discharged forthwith a volley of quotation:— 'Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner. . . . I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy.' The wise man scoffs at such; his legs cry out for mercy; and as for Hazlitt, he never tramped beneath the midday sun in Carolina, else had he refrained from all such rash excesses as running and leaping on his way. He would have marched along slowly and soberly enough, — with no unnecessary frisking, — mopping his brow from time to time, and resting now and then in the shade of the trees; and if the scene of his ramblings lay in that green country round about the Otranto lagoon, he would have turned aside in the heat of the day and gone down to the place where a slim-bodied, square-

nosed punt was moored at the water's edge.

For the lagoon is the heart and soul of Otranto; and paddling, properly practiced, is a mild and easy form of exercise; and though there is much to be seen in those opulent forest lands of pine and oak and sweetgum and magnolia, through which the lover of nature and the student of her wild creatures might wander wellnigh forever and remain unsated, yet there is still more to be seen upon the quiet wine-colored waters that have stolen part of the forest for their own. The lagoon is beyond description, take it when and where you will; and so my picture of it shall be that of a mechanical draughtsman, not that of a painter.

It is about eight miles in length, and here and there as much as a mile in breadth. It is only about seven years old; for it did not exist until the historic city of Charleston, slowly awakening from the lethargy that followed the great and disastrous war, realized that she must have a new source of water-supply. Seven years ago deer ranged over all this area and wild turkeys 'kept' in the thickets. It was then a long curved basin drained by