

MYNHEER JOE.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

CHAPTER XIV.

"That is a small matter. I find them equal. One has a stain upon it, you see."

"But, monsieur," bending forward to look at it more closely, and then turning to the baron, who smiles coldly, as he speaks, "the stain is not there."

"The blood of young Lord Carmorgan. We used in Turkey. He was buried in Stamboul, I believe. A careless scoundrel failed to wipe the blade, and it is such a good spot that I hate to part with them."

"These words have not the slightest effect upon the American, who holds the two swords, one in either hand, watching them, then."

"Choose the one that is stained—what has stained the test, and may be broken," whispers Sandy.

"I will neither secured, my friend. I am in luck by the blood of a noble man. I'll take the same blade Lord Carmorgan handled. Since a Russian failed to teach the Russian Baron a lesson with it, 'twill see for another Jonathan can do. Hold it for me, Mr. Grimes."

"No one makes any remark, though secretly the baron is fuming, while both Mr. Grimes and Sandy chuckle at the words of the traveler. It is patent that Mynheer Joe has gauged the shake-up of his antagonist to a dot, and will be able to take care of him."

"Both principals in the contemplated affair proceed to business. Coats and vests are removed. Joe arranges his wrist just as in the gymnasium, placing the footholds over his shoes, tightening a belt around his waist, and fastening up both sleeves."

The baron observes his movements with a curiosity that shows itself upon his face. He discovers that his American antagonist knows more than he gives him credit for, and perhaps for the first time the startling thought flashes through his brain that this man may be a revelation to him."

His practical eye takes in the wonderful wrist of Mynheer Joe and the expert forearm. These points give promise of astonishing speed and strength if in the possession of a master. The baron feels concern—something that never bothered him before when about to enter a little affair of this kind, for the duello has been a prize-time to the Russian, feeling that he was a sure winner from the start."

Both are now ready. Their seconds place them, and as there is really no advantage in the ground, this requires little effort."

"One moment before we begin!" It is Mr. Grimes who speaks, and all eyes are at once turned upon him. "Let us understand the conditions of this affair. Will the gentlemen's honor be satisfied with first blood, or is it to be a duel to the death?"

The baron opens his mouth to declare for the latter, remembering the disgrace put upon him when the wine was dashed into his face. Just then his eyes rest upon the countenance of the American. What is it in Mynheer Joe's looks that causes a spasm to pass through the frame of the duelist? He hardly knows himself, save that for perhaps the first time in his life he has had an undeniable twinge of fear."

"The first disabling wound will satisfy me," says the baron, coldly, secretly meaning that when he himself gives this it shall be the coup de grace through his foe's heart. Mynheer Joe inclines his head.

"What the Russian says suits me. I am ready for any conditions," he remarks.

"It is understood, gentlemen, a disabling wound brings the little affair to a termination, and we, the seconds, are to be the judges. Are you ready for business?" calls Mr. Grimes.

Both swordsmen assume favorite positions and make affirmative responses. Mr. Grimes nods his head to the Frenchman.

"Begin!" calls that worthy, sharply. Hardly has the word left his lips when the swordblades kiss with a ringing sound, and the extraordinary duel among the hills of Mokkattam has begun. It is the baron who assaults; he is eager to discover the mettle of his antagonist, and throws some fire into his attack, though not forgetting to keep his guard intact, and retain some reserve.

The spectators group around, and prepare to witness one of the most astonishing scenes that ever took place upon the bank of the historical Nile."

It does not take an experienced wordsman long to learn that he has met a foe worthy of his steel, and one they have been at it ten seconds the Russian allows a look of surprise to be seen upon his face.

This is succeeded by an expression of terrible ferocity. He has discovered the caliber of his antagonist, and is more than ever determined to kill him then and there. Fortunately, the object of this solicitude has something to say about this matter himself, and he speaks with no uncertain sound.

For perhaps a minute or so, the swords meet and write and twist the gleaming makes. Then the agile Russian springs back beyond reach. He has failed in his first attempt. What will he endeavor to accomplish now?

He knows better than to display any signs of alarm. On the contrary, he forces a sneer upon his lips and appears unconcerned.

Again he advances, to adopt an entirely new system of tactics, which the American meets as becomes the favorite pupil of Monsieur Duval, the famous swordmaster of all Paris.

The baron is amazed to find that each of his little tricks is met in rapid order. He gains no advantage. If Joe were surrounded by a wall of steel

to continue the engagement with a man who has such a wonderful advantage over him, in that his left arm is as dexterous as his right."

Perhaps such a thought flashes into the mind of the Russian; he is human, and life is sweet to him; but he does not take advantage of the idea. Pride rises against it. He comes from a race that would meet death rather than appear a coward.

So he battles on, doing his best to meet the attacks of his foe. He no longer hopes to assault in turn—his arm is too tired for that. He suffers excruciating pain every time he makes a move. More than once Mynheer Joe, if he chooses, drive his blade through the body of his foe. He lets the chances slip by; perhaps the time may come when he will regret this mercy, but he does not like to have the blood of a white man on his hands.

At last the opportunity he looks for comes; there is a quick movement, a sudden cry, and the sword of the American protrudes through the right arm of the baron at the shoulder.

Lord Carmorgan has been avenged with the weapon he handled in vain!

CHAPTER XV.

THE BARON IS SATISFIED.

With another quick movement the American withdraws his sword and steps back a pace to avoid any punishment, but the baron is in no condition to deal such. He sinks back, and only that the French captain springs forward and catches the baron in his arms he must fall in a heap.

There is no sign of fainting, only exhaustion. He stands there, sustained in part by his second, looking at the first man in all the world who has proved his master, and the gleam of the eyes can be termed nothing less than diabolical.

Mynheer Joe leans on his sword and coolly surveys his antagonist. Then he calls for a match and applies it to the cigar which he has held between his teeth all this while. It is evident that he has no fear of the future.

The tableau remains unbroken for perhaps a full minute.

"Time!" says Mr. Grimes clearly. Mynheer Joe, still smoking calmly, elevates his sword. The plucky baron makes a move to follow suit, when his second, the French captain, throws himself between.

"Mon Dieu! You would not finish this affair with murder, comrades? It was agreed that a disabling wound would end it. See, my principal has no longer any arm. What served him so well is now almost as useless as a dead member. You will call it quits, or I shall offer myself his substitute!" he cries with commendable enthusiasm and pluck, since he knows he is no match for the Yankee.

"On one condition," returns Mr. Grimes, who also produces and lights a cigar, while the irrepresible Sandy is scribbling away for dear life in shorthand at the rate of a thousand words a minute, more or less.

"Name it, monsieur." "The baron provoked this duel by an insulting allusion to the American flag. It has had a trial by arms, and the decision rests against him. Let him frankly apologize, not to my friend only but to Americans everywhere, and I am sure Mynheer Joe will be satisfied as well as myself."

"The proposition is reasonable." "Parbleu! I see no reason why it should not be done in common justice, since it has been decreed that my principal was in the wrong. It was a grand sight though; a superb spectacle that will haunt me always. What say you, monsieur le baron—do you withdraw your allusion to the flag under which this gentleman serves?"

The Russian smiles. "I am compelled, since I declared that it covered only cowards, for he has proven very plainly that I made a mistake. Mynheer Joe knows my allusion was made only to provoke him to a meeting, so that I need retract my words no further than this."

"You have had the meeting; and you are satisfied, baron?" asks Joe himself. "For the present, yes," returns the other, between his teeth, "but this does not end it, my American friend. No man has ever yet run across my path and lived. Your time will come!"

"No man up to now has ever worsted you in a duel, Russia, but you met your life here. Take care it is not your life that is snuffed out like a candle. We Americans shoot to kill when we engage with wolves or tigers," says Mr. Grimes.

[To be Continued.]

SNAILS FOND OF MUSIC.

French Nationalist Has Discovered Their Peculiarity.

A German scientist recently pointed out that snails are able to draw immense weights, and now a French nationalist claims that there are few, if any, animals which have a higher appreciation of music than snails. This naturalist is M. S. Jourdain, and his views on the subject are expressed at length in a paper which he has addressed to the French Biological Society. Place some snails on a pane of glass, he says, and you will find that as they move over it they will make musical sounds similar to those which a person can produce by wetting his fingers and then rubbing them around a glass tumbler. Complete airs he points out, have been played or hummed in this way, and he expresses the opinion that quite as good results can be obtained by using snails instead of fingers.

Golfing Feat.

At the recent Oxford and Cambridge match at Woking one of the competitors—C. H. Allison of Oxford—landed his ball on the top of the clubhouse in approaching to the hole, but the player was allowed to get a ladder and play the ball from the top of the house. What is more to the point, he made a grand recovery and holed out in five.

The Necessaries of Life.

The average man will sit for want of air in five minutes; for want of water in a week; for want of sleep in ten days.

Agricultural.

What are you raising cattle for? If for milk and butter and other dairy products, you want Jersey, Guernsey or Holstein; if for the best market, you want Short Horns, Polled Angus or Herefords. Arrange these names to suit yourself.

Do not be tempted to abandon the old reliable varieties of vegetables for novelties, but first test the novelties as experiments. Some of them may be excellent, but all varieties depend for success upon climate and soil. It is never safe to make a complete change in any kind of crop by substituting a new for an old. Some so-called novelties are old varieties under new names. The best variety is the one that has been tested and found suitable for the farm upon which it is grown.

Successful Combination.

Seven years ago I built my first combined hotbed, coldframe and winter storage pit. It is the only successful combination I know for such uses. When converted into a storage pit, the sash is replaced by a door in the end, makes access possible without disturbing any part of covering.

It may be from three to five feet high at outside, or eaves. Excavation is made to bring the top of outer post about twelve inches above ground level. Make bottom two or three inches lower in centre for drain, with two-inch tile. Use best hardwood posts, not less than five by six inches, long

enough to be set below bed level two and a half or three feet. It is to be permanent, and only sound, long lasting timber should be used for walls, and even these should be heavily painted or covered with pitch. Use boards or plank outside as well as inside of line of posts, providing dead air space, and protecting inside wall. All except side walls, is of portable construction to allow taking down for driving or backing team in while filling or removing dirt, manure or stored crops. Use a four by four inch ridge pole, as shown at A, to support two by four inch rafters, held together by heavy bent wire at B. Place two by four inch centre uprights every six feet, resting on flat stone or plank.

Use one by one inch strip in the centre of each rafter for a sash guide. To prevent wind penetrating or lifting sash use ridge board on top, and a hook and eye at bottom of each sash.—Heg. Stubbs, in Farm and Home.

Red Raspberry Culture.

It costs more to grow red raspberries than it does to grow black raspberries. Red raspberries should sell for nearly twice the price of the black. If the market will not pay higher prices for the red varieties than for the black it will not pay to grow the red raspberries, but in most localities red raspberries are in active demand at high prices. I advise growers of small fruits to have at least a moderate sized plantation of red raspberries. They are not difficult to grow, and are an attractive fruit to offer in connection with other small fruits you are selling. Red raspberries should be planted in rows six feet apart, with the plants three feet apart in the row. These plants can be cultivated both ways for a time. When properly cultivated they will bear fruit a long time, much longer in fact than will the black raspberry. Cuthbert, London, Shaffer and Columbian are prominent red raspberries.

Growing of Corn.

One of the best ways of killing the weeds in the corn field is to destroy them before the corn comes up, and we make it a practice to run the weeder lightly over the seeded ground if the soil is the slightest promise that the corn is likely to be weedy. Another round of the weeder just before the corn shows through will take out a lot of the weeds and not injure the corn in the least, but leave less work for the cultivator to do in its first rounds, which is as soon as the rows can be fairly defined. It is true, this first and subsequent cultivating would kill off the weeds, but not so certainly as by the plan indicated. If the soil is fairly rich and the seed bed well prepared for a good variety, this plan of early and constant cultivation, as long as the corn can be worked, will give one crop which will amply repay for the labor involved. While corn is grown by nearly all farmers, there are a few little points like the above which, if put in operation, yield such results as to upset any ideas that we know all there is to know about raising corn.

As to Wheat Growing.

There seems to be a general opinion that wheat production has greatly fallen off in sections located outside the great wheat belts, and while this is so in some States, and particularly so with some individuals, statistics show that the falling off is not so great as

Agricultural.

is generally supposed. On the other hand there are individual farmers who are good wheat raisers who have given up their farms almost entirely to other crops, simply because they do not feel able to compete with the great wheat sections of the West.

It is doubtful if this is good policy, for while the farm may frequently be used to better advantage, there is always a market in any section for a crop of good wheat, and always use for a small crop on the farm. Then, too, wheat is one of the best crops to use in a rotation, having a value to the soil in this respect so great that it would pay to grow it even if the sale was comparatively limited. If it could not be sold at a fair price it has considerable feeding value, particularly where poultry is kept. Do not cut out the wheat entirely until you have investigated its value on your farm.—Indianapolis News.

Injury to Fruit Tree by Nits.

The Horticultural Section of the Iowa Experiment Station is in receipt of numerous reports from various sections of the State conveying the information that during the period last winter in which the ground was covered with snow, many fruit trees were badly girdled by field mice. Such trees, if left unattended, are very likely to die. The majority of them, however, may be saved by covering the injured portion with earth. The growing layer which lies just beneath the bark will form a new layer of bark if it is kept moist by banking up with earth for two or three inches above the girdled portion. The earth should be firmly tamped about the stem and pains taken to see that it is not separated by the tree swaying in the wind.

Another effective method of treatment, which is more trouble, but surer, perhaps, is to wrap the wound with broad strips of cloth coated with grafting wax. The wax is made by boiling together four parts resin, two parts beeswax, one part tallow.

To make this work effective, the wound should not be allowed to become dried out, and no time should be lost in covering the girdled portion. In cases where the injury has not been too severe, this treatment may also prove effective in saving trees injured by rabbits.—Indiana Farmer.

Hog Cholera—A Preventive.

Some time ago I heard a friend wonder if there was such a thing as a specific for hog cholera. Immediately there came to me a vision from long ago, of two gentlemen sitting on the broad veranda of a Southern farm house, one, my uncle, with whom I lived, the other a planter from Mississippi. The foreman of the plantation had just reported the death of ten more fat hogs from cholera, and my uncle had remarked to his visitor that he had already lost more than fifty hogs from that disease, and added that the time would soon come when hog raising would be a lost industry in the South because of it. The visitor regarded him attentively for a minute and then said slowly and impressively, "There is not the slightest need of a specific for cholera. While I know of no cure for the disease, I do know a certain prevention, which I have used on my plantation for years, and which I urged upon my neighbors, but its very simplicity prevents its general adoption."

"What is it?" asked my uncle, eagerly. "Its simplicity will not deter me from its use, I assure you."

"It is simply tar," replied the visitor. "I have a quantity of pine tar run, and three times a week I have each ear of corn given them liberally smeared with it. They root it about a little at first, but they will finally eat it, and I have never had a case of cholera since I began to use it." From that time it was used on my uncle's plantation, with the best result.—Miss M. E. Lowman, in The Epitomist.

Hogs For Meat.

For hogs we prefer the Poland-Chinas. While they do not produce as large litters as some other breeds, they are large hogs and of a dignified appearance. For meat, feed bone and muscle producing food until about six months old and give them a steady shove then and fatten on corn and sometimes mush. For meat, we often kill some of the old sows. These we fatten in the same manner. Do not feed your sow for at least twelve hours before killing; longer is better. When ready to kill, quietly to the pen with rifle in hand and shoot the animal. To knock it in the head is a brutal method and is fast being done away with. Bleed it quickly. Take it to your barrel or vat and place it in the same. Pour the water, which must be boiling hot, over the hog and scald well. Bake away the hair and then scrape. When this is done, hang

the hog on a hanger like the one in the cut. Place the hog on the hook B and then lift it up on the lever A. Place the legs against the fence or other stationary object. Take out the entrails, etc., and wash off by dashing water over it. After it has cooled cut it up and place in the storeroom to cool until the next day. Two days are better. Then apply salt and let it stand for another day or two. Then put it down in salt in barrels or boxes. When it has thoroughly taken the salt, take it up and smoke it either with hickory chips or the liquid preparation. We have tried both, and they are both satisfactory. Use whichever you wish. The condensed smoke is, I think, perfectly harmless.—Miss M. E. Lowman, in The Epitomist.

A HANGER FOR HOGS.

The diagram shows a hanger for hogs, consisting of a hook (B) and a lever (A) for lifting the hog.

APRIL CULTURE.

PLANTING FRUIT TREES.

Fruit trees planted on the north side of high, hilly ground are never known to utterly fail on account of damage done from freezing.

CARE OF FLOWERS.

If flowers do not mature well they may be made to, in many cases, by placing half an inch of powdered charcoal on the earth in the pot. A solution of white hellebore in water may often be used to a great advantage in destroying the insects that infest so many flowering plants.

FORKED FRUIT TREES.

The forked apple or pear tree sooner or later comes to ruin by splitting of the forks. When the tree is first transplanted it is the time to remedy this. Cut off one of the branches of the forks, usually the smaller one, with a smooth, sloping cut, and if the cut is large cover with a good oil paint or with grafting wax.

EARLY CULTIVATION.

Few people appreciate the value of early cultivation of the soil about fruit trees, plants and vines. Nearly all the growth of trees is made in the first few weeks and months of spring and summer. If cultivation is not given at this critical period the trees will be stunted in growth no matter how much cultivation is given in July, August and September. Just as soon as the ground is dry enough to work freely in the spring cultivation should begin among all kinds of small and large fruits. If this early cultivation is not given the ground is liable to become so hard it is exceedingly difficult to get it into good condition, but if cultivation is begun early when the soil is a little moist the earth is easily broken up and kept fine throughout the season.

CARE OF NEWLY SET TREES.

All who set trees recognize the importance of having them make a strong, healthy growth during the first summer that they may safely pass through the first winter. Particularly is this necessary in sections where the winters are severe. Of vital importance is the conservation of the moisture in the soil. It is of little use to pour water on the surface of the soil about the trees, for if the soil is at all of a clay texture, the sun will so get to the roots of the moisture will be lost.

One of the best plans is to keep the surface soil loosened until after a freezing rain, and then before the sun has a chance to bake the surface soil, place a mulch of hay or straw about the tree, putting it on several inches deep and extending for two or three feet about the tree. This will conserve the moisture in the soil. Of course, the best plan of all is to carry on the summer cultivation of the surface soil between the rows, thus obtaining the dust mulch; even then the mulch of hay or straw can be used to advantage close to the trees.

THINNING FRUIT.

Undoubtedly it does pay to thin peaches. Because of the inclination of many varieties to grow in clusters, it is almost impossible for all of the fruit to attain a marketable size, so that thinning usually pays. Whether it will pay to thin other fruit is a matter which must be determined by every grower for himself. In the experience of the writer, it has been found that when the fruit goes to a market paying a good price, it will pay to thin the fruit at least to the extent of shaking the tree to dislodge the fruit that will drop anyway, and then sending a lot of small boys through the trees to thin wherever it seems as if it could be done to advantage.

Of course, the lads will have to work under the direction of some one who knows, and the work should not be too finely carried on; that is, the thinning should be done only in cases where two or more fruits are so close together that none of them will likely mature. This sort of thinning will generally pay, but it is a matter of much doubt if anything more will be found profitable, except, as stated, with peaches, and possibly with plums.—Indianapolis News.

FRUIT PACKAGES.

Everything points to a general adoption of the box as the package to be used by orchardists the coming season, and apples of good quality will be packed in them to the exclusion of barrels, especially where a discriminating market is being catered to. The berry basket of the season is made of paper, and it is sold at a price which greatly reduces the loss of the grower, which has been quite a sum on this item. The crate of paper is also shown, but it looks too light, and is still an experiment. A few grape baskets of paper are also on the market, but offer the same objection as the berry crates. A start along the right road has been made, however, and fruit growers will be glad to encourage manufacturers.

A point which all fruit growers should bear in mind is that the city resident has little room for storage, and hence will pay much higher prices in proportion for good fruit in small packages than ordinary fruit in large packages. They will also pay more for a dozen fresh eggs neatly packed in a clean box than they will for the same number, more or less soiled, taken from a bushel basket. Try it, and you'll see it is so.

Two Experiences.

In an advertising periodical is reported the experience of two men as personally known to the writer of the report. One went into the fancy poultry business, but did not advertise. Eventually he grew discouraged from lack of buyers and gave up the business. A hundred miles away another man went into the same business, but advertised in a number of leading newspapers. He is still at it on a large scale, still advertises and is a rich man.

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GOOD ROADS.

Southern People Aroused.

THE people of the South appear to be greatly aroused on the question of highway improvement. The roads of the South are, on the whole, worse than those of any other section. There are several reasons for this, among which may be mentioned unfavorable climatic conditions and scarcity of road building materials. To these may be added the fact that the South has hardly as yet fully recovered from the devastating effects of the Civil War, and the population and wealth per capita are less in proportion to the mileage of roads than in most Northern States.

But the public spirited citizens of the South are enthusiastic advocates of better roads, notwithstanding these obstacles. In many counties of North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas bonds have been issued and many miles of first-class roads constructed.

If there is anything worse than a clay road, it is one of sand. But apparently, by accident it was discovered a few years ago that sand and clay thoroughly mixed in proper proportions makes an excellent road. As a result of this discovery, a large mileage of sand-clay roads has been constructed in North and South Carolina, and some in other States. Two advantages of this kind of road are cheapness of construction and abundance of material.

In many coast counties in the South shells are used for making roads, and they prove an excellent substitute for crushed stone. In southern Alabama and Louisiana may be found some stretches of shell road that are as fine as any in the country.

It is a matter of surprise to some that the sentiment for national aid to road improvement should be so strong in the South. The strength of that sentiment is shown by the fact that the pioneer advocates of that plan in both houses of Congress are from the South—Representative Brownlow, of Tennessee, and Senator Latimer, of South Carolina. The Legislature of Tennessee was the first to memorialize Congress to make an appropriation for road improvement.

At the recent meeting before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, a Northern Senator tried to quizz a good roads committee-man from South Carolina by asking if the people of his State "had overcome the prejudice which used to prevail there against Government interference in local affairs." The answer he received was: "Yes, we are getting broad minded down there," was greeted with applause. The fact is, that the South has been aroused by stern necessity. The farmers of the South want the help of the Government in improving their roads, because they need it badly, and because, like farmers in all sections, they think they are entitled to a larger share in the direct benefits of Government appropriation than they have heretofore received.—Atlanta Journal.

Scarlett Talks.

Winthrop E. Scarlett was chosen to make a public statement, defining the attitude of New York business men toward improved highways. He says, "The civilization of a people may be measured by their transportation facilities and the condition of their public highways. The pioneer had no roads that were worthy of the name. After more than a century and a quarter of existence, this country still has thousands of miles of public highway that are a disgrace to a civilization."

"America is a country of extremes. Congress has spent uncounted millions on rivers and harbors, while, on the other hand, for more than half a century she has spent practically nothing for roads. How absurd this is when you consider that probably there is one hundred times as much travel on land as there is on water. Steam railways have been encouraged. The Government has subsidized ships."

"How ludicrous, if not pathetic, has been the attitude toward good roads, notwithstanding the rapid growth of the United States and our boasted progress in civilization. It costs just as much to carry a ton of farm produce on a wagon to-day as it did before the war—namely, at least twenty cents per ton per mile. While almost every subject under the sun has received consideration at the hands of the Government, the roads have been left to languish."

"In a few of the Eastern States—notably New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York—the good road movement has been substantially aided by the States themselves. Enough has been done in these States to demonstrate absolutely the significance and value to any community of a system of good highways."

"Sand Clay Roads."

A sandy road is hard in dry weather and only tolerable after a rain. A clay road is fair in dry weather if not rutted too badly, but in wet weather drops the wagon wheel to the hub. They have a way in the South of combining sand and clay in making a road good in all weathers, continues the New York World. The sand and clay must be thoroughly mixed so that all the particles come in contact with each other; then the sand keeps the clay dry and the clay gives the mixture an element of solidity. Some of these mixed roads, nicely rolled, have lasted for five years without deterioration. It wouldn't be so easy in New York to build roads on this principle. Frost is fatal. The road must be dug out below the frost line, and the trench filled with the mixed sand and clay