

COUNTRY LIFE AND WORK.

THE LITTLE HIGHWAYMAN.

Did you ever meet a robber, with a pistol and a knife, whose prompt and cordial greeting was, "Your money or your life?" Who while you stood a-trembling, with your hands above your head, took your gold, most grimly offering to repay you in cold lead?

Well, I once met a robber: I was going home to tea; The way was rather lonely, though not yet too dark to see; That sturdy rogue who stopped me there was very fully armed— But I'm honest in maintaining that I didn't feel alarmed.

He was panting hard from running, so I, being still unalarmed, Very boldly faced the rascal and demanded what he wanted; I was quiet as big as he was, and I was not out of breath, So I didn't fear his shooting me, or stabbing me to death.

In answer to my question the highwayman raised an arm and pointed it straight at me—though I still felt no alarm; He did not ask for money, but what he said was this: "You cannot pass, Papa, unless you give your boy a kite!"

—ALLAN G. BIGELOW in St. Nicholas.

HARVESTING POTATOES.

The New England Farmer advises farmers not to leave potatoes in the ground long after they are ready to harvest. It is cold work handling potatoes after the ground begins to freeze nights. The cold and the dirt often make the hands crack and become very sore. Besides, late digging gives the weeds and grass a chance to grow, and makes the work of digging still harder. Some think the late fall rains injure the quality of the tubers for eating. However this may be, there is nothing gained by leaving sound potatoes long in the ground after they are ripe and ready to dig. When the crop is rotting, however, it is well to leave them undug till the disease is far enough advanced so that the unsound can be separated from the sound ones without difficulty. Dig in fair weather so that the tubers will come out clean. Potatoes dug when the ground is muddy never look well in the bin, nor are they as salable in market. If the white grub is very abundant in the soil, it may be necessary to dig to save the crop, even before the vines are dead.

If potatoes are dug by hand, it is easier to lift them while the vines are still alive. Plunging a spading fork into one side of the hill and prying with one hand while the vines are grasped by the other, the tubers may be lifted almost at a single operation and shaken upon the surface to dry for an hour or so, before picking and sorting. Some farmers make much unnecessary work in harvesting this crop. They pull the vines, then dig out the potatoes with hoes or hooks, throwing them into baskets which are emptied into a cart or wagon, from which they are afterwards sorted before putting into the cellar. It is better to sort when picking from the field, and a fork is far better than a hoe for lifting and spreading out the tubers to dry.

When one has a large field that is fairly free from rocks and weeds, the digging can be done very rapidly by the use of a small, double-winged plough, drawn by a horse, letting the horse, walk on the row, or better, have two horses astride the row. Unless there are pickers enough keep up the team, which is impracticable, the team should go through the field taking alternate rows, and after these are cleaned up, go through again, taking the remaining rows. Farmers must economize in every way possible to save labor in producing their crops, or they will have reason to complain of "hard times." When the potatoes are put in the cellar, see that they are covered from the light, which will turn the skin green and make the potato bitter and practically worthless, except for planting. One thickness of newspaper, if nothing better can be had, will shut out the light and keep the tubers sound. Store in the coolest part of the cellar where there will be no danger from freezing. A warm cellar starts the sprouts too early in the spring.

TREATMENT OF SEEDS.

Mr. John H. Brown of Hay Springs, Neb., says:

(1.) I planted a lot of ash seeds in April. Although we have had plenty of rain not one in a hundred has come up. I covered them from two to three inches.

(2.) Larch and Russian mulberry seeds have also failed to come up. They were covered from one to two inches.

(3.) At what time and at what depth should hackberry seeds be planted.

(1.) The successful germination of green ash seeds depends on the proper wintering of the seeds, and modes of planting in early spring. We have had the best success where the seeds were spread about four inches thick in the fall on a hard garden walk, over them spread a layer of leaves or straw, and over all place boards to protect in part from rain and snow. Plant in moist earth early in spring, not over three-fourths of an inch deep, and press the earth firmly. (2.) Larch seed should be sown in beds and treated in all respects like evergreen seeds. The Russian mulberry seed should be soaked 24 hours before sowing, changing the water at least twice. Then sow in mel-

low, moist earth and cover lightly. If they air is dry, we have found it to pay to strew mulching over the rows while the are germinating, as the shallow covering often permits their drying up before the radicle is pushed into the earth.

(3.) We crush the hackberry and wash off the pulp at once on gathering. Then mix with sand and bury the box where sand and seeds will freeze in winter, and yet not dry up. Sow early in spring the same as Mulberry seed.

FORAGE CROPS FOR MILK.

From results of experiments obtained at the Model Dairy Farm of Altensbourg, in Hungary, Indian corn promoted the largest yield of milk, while sorghum produced that of the richest quality. The other crops experimented were beet root, lucern and sanfoin. The former gave the smallest yield per day of milk, but the percentage of solids in it was very high. The percentage of sugar in the milk obtained by feeding beet root was higher than that produced by any of the other foods. These experiments differ somewhat in their results from those made in our own country. For example, Indian corn or meal is found to produce a richer quality of milk; but the superior value of beet root in giving a larger percentage of sugar in milk, has long been known among us. We would like to see a thorough trial of this root at our several agricultural college farms alongside of parsnips, carrots, potatoes and rutabaga fed raw as well as cooked. Parsnips are highly esteemed on the Island of Jersey as forage, giving, as the dairymen contend there, an extra quantity and quality of milk from their cows.—Z., Ocean County, N. J.

THE PINES.

Scotch and white pines retain their leaves from two to three years, Austrain pine (P. Cembra) from four to five years. Norway white and black spruce from five to seven years. Balsam-firs from six to nine years, yews from seven to twelve years and abies pinsapo sometimes as long as fifteen years. If the boys and girls will examine different cone-bearing trees where the annual wood growth can be readily observed, the leaves will be found still growing on several of the latest year's growth, and by counting back to the first bare joint the number of years during which the leaves persist in the different species can be ascertained.

IF NOT, WHY NOT?

What is simpler than hatching and raising late chickens? What delights an old hen more than to sit when she thinks it contrary to all the rules and regulations of the household? She will spread herself over a whole nestful of eggs, calmly wink at the broiling sun when it is hot enough to blister a brass kettle, and in due time come off with a whole brigade of fluffy, animated balls, which she will straightway lead into the nearest pig pen and then go into hysterics when an old sow swallows a dozen or so of them as an appetizer.—Farmer.

AN IOWA STORY.

This story must be true, as it is given by Col. Swalm of the Oskaloosa Herald: A hen, half black Spanish and half game, has been doing a land office business in Rolla, Mo. She laid her first egg on the 10th of May, 1886, and has continued to lay an egg every day since. She went to setting as soon as she laid her first egg and is still on her nest. She comes off every morning to get water and food, and then goes back. She has hatched one egg a day except the three first weeks of her career. She has now been laying one year, and is the mother and hatcher of 356 chickens, one-half pullets and the other half roosters.

HERE A LITTLE, THERE A LITTLE.

American apples sold in England last year amounted to \$3,500,000 in value.

Reaping with a hand sycle, or mowing with a scythe, will soon be among the lost arts.

Young turkeys are the best gleaners of surplus grasshoppers, which were ever introduced to a farm.

To see the ordinary young farmer of the present day swing the scythe is as interesting as the illustrations of the pictorial papers of farm scenery.

The common oleander is poisonous, flowers, leaves, and all parts. Hence it should always be kept out of the reach of children and domestic animals.

A solution of saltpeter sprinkled on cabbages is said to be effective in driving off the cabbage fly. It is harmless, and also an excellent fertilizer. It should be applied twice a week, however, and used plentifully.—Indianapolis Journal.

President Sanborn, of the Missouri Agricultural College, some time since said Missouri and Iowa did not raise one-half as much corn, wheat, etc., to the acre as they should. This year he had seventeen acres of pulse wheat on the Missouri Agricultural Farm from which he has threshed 774 bushels, or forty-five bushels and a half per acre. This is the way to prove his theories.

FUNNY FUN.

HIS ANXIETY ALLAYED.

"Remember, Bobby," said his mother, "when you are about to do something you know to be wrong, that, although I may not see you, there is One who does."

"Who do you mean?" inquired Bobby, anxiously.

"God."

"Oh," said Bobby, with a look of intense relief, "I thought you meant pa."

A QUARTER OF TWELVE.

Mrs. Gingersnap (to her spouse, who gets home at 3 a. m. in a condition of demoralization)—Well! This is a nice time of night to be waking up everybody in the house! What time do you suppose it is now?

Gingersnap—Quar (hic) quar'er of twelve b' my watch.

Mrs. G.—A quar'er of twelve, indeed! What a fool you must be to say that when the clock has just struck three.

G.—Well—rr—Isn't three a quar'r of twel (hic) twelve?

Loud crash in the hall and servants called to carry Gingersnap up-stairs to bed.

AS THEY DO IN CHICAGO.

Mrs. Wabash (of Chicago), "Are you ready for dinner, dear?"

Mr. Wabash. "I will be as soon as I can take my coat off."

JUSTICE TOO SLOW.

Citizen—"Read about the murder yesterday?"

Visitor—"No. Somebody killed?"

Citizen—"Yes. Farmer out here sold a few dollars' worth of hogs and was slaughtered for the money. But they got the assassin."

Visitor—"That's good. I hope he will be tried right off. Justice is too slow."

Citizen—"O, he won't be tried at all. Fact is, in the West we don't think it necessary to try a man after he has hanged from a railroad bridge five or six hours."

Visitor—"I guess it was Eastern justice I had in my mind."

NOT A MODEL HUSBAND.

Omaha Wife—"You are the meanest, ugliest thing in existence. I just hate you."

Husband—"What have I done now?"

"Done? What have you not done? This morning when I discovered that Colorado beetle crawling on my dress and called to you for help you didn't stir, but let me sit there just writhing in terror until I had to shriek."

"I didn't hear you call. What else?"

"This afternoon when that jeweler showed us a live Brazilian beetle beautifully set in a breastpin, you refused to buy it for me."

HOW NEW YORKERS RECOVERATE.

Gentleman (looking for country board). "How far from City Hall?"

Farmer. "Forty minutes."

Gentleman. "Near station?"

Farmer. "Five minutes."

Gentleman. "Plenty of trains?"

Farmer. "Twenty each way."

Gentleman. "How early can I get New York papers?"

Farmer. "Seven o'clock."

Gentleman. "I'll try it for a week. My system is all run down, and my physician says I must have absolute rest."

A MEAN TRICK.

"Never heard of anything so contemptibly mean in all my life—never!" he said, as he brought his right hand down upon his left.

"What was it?"

"Why, I bet \$20 with a man on one of the races, and we put the money in the hands of a stakeholder. I won it."

"Well!"

"Well, a constable stood right there and attached the whole \$40 for a debt five years old!"

"No!"

"He positively did, and he offered to mop the ground with me to boot! It is just such work as this that has brought horse-racing into disrepute, and which keeps honest people away from the tracks."

COULDN'T STAND THE CLIMATE.

Omaha man—I thought you went to St. Louis to start a dime museum?

Showman—I did, but all my savings were swept away by the loss of one curiosity.

"A freak?"

"Not exactly. I imported a South African King at great expense and got everything started when the man suddenly died."

"Consumption?"

"No, sunstroke."

AMERICAN FABLES.

Smith and the Editor.—Upon a certain Occasion, as the Editor of the Weekly Jabwock sat in his Sanctum, a young man by the name of John Smith Rushed up-Stairs and Demanded that his Honor be cleared of a Vivid Stain. The Jabwock had announced that some one by the Name of John Smith had been sent up for Thirty Days. This John Smith wanted it known that he wasn't the John Smith, or he would bring a Great, Big, Overgrown Libel Suit. "Certainly—with Pleasure," Replied the Editor of the Jabwock. And as wrote that the John Smith of Pumpkin-Pie Avenue was not the John Smith who pounded his aged Mother;

nor the Smith who stole a Harness; nor the Smith arrested for Bigamy; nor the Smith who had a Prize Fight; nor the Smith who set the Saw Mill on Fire. In fact, he cleared him of all the Crimes and Offenses on the Calendar, and the result was that Smith Stopped his Paper, withdrew his Advertising, Ambushed and Licked the Editor, and was the means of Bankrupting the Paper. Moral: There is such a Thing as Being Too All-Fired Anxious to Please Subscribers.—Detroit Free Press.

THE WAY OF THE WICKED MEN.

"John," said Mrs. Tompkins, "you've been out to a lodge meeting every night this week."

"Yes, my dear."

"And every night last week."

"Yes, love."

"And every night the week before."

"Ye-es."

"And for a good many weeks before that."

"Ye-es, I suppose so."

"And before we were married you used to come to see me every night. You didn't bother the lodges much then."

"I guess that's about right, my dear."

"Now, John, what is the reason for this?"

"I guess, my dear, the reason is we are married now and weren't then."

OBLIGED TO BE ABSTEMIOUS.

"Stranger," he said, as he tendered his pocket pistol, "join me in a drink. You'll find that the real old stuff."

"Thanks, no liquor," was the reply.

"Well, will you smoke a cigar?"

"Not any cigar."

An old gentleman who had observed all this grasped the stranger warmly by the hand.

"Sir," he said, "it fills my heart with joy to see a young man like you turn away from such vile destroyers."

"Yes, sir," the young man replied, "you see, I'm a prize fighter in training, and I've got to go slow."

HIS LETTER HADN'T COME.

"Look here, sir," he said at the chief clerk's window in the post-office, "I've been trying for half an hour to unlock my post-office box."

"Yes, I know it."

"But the key won't fit."

"Of course it won't. No man's front door key will unlock his post-office box."

"O, yes, I see. Yes, that's it. I got 'em mixed, of course. But look here, sir! I want it understood that I excuse none of the shortcomings of the Post-Office Department on this account—not a single one."

A PLEASANT EXPRESSION.

"Where are you going with the water melon, Uncle Rastus?" asked a gentleman.

"Ise gwine ter hab my photograph taken, sah."

"What do you expect to do with the melon?"

"I want ter look at it, sah, while de photograph am in process of construction, so's ter git do right expression on de face, sah!"

HE'LL TEACH HER.

"I asked Miss Tittleback to marry me," remarked Tompkins, "and she refused me. But I'll teach her."

"Why, what are you going to do about it?"

"I'll teach her to treat me in that way. I'll never ask her again."

SOME OTHER DISEASE.

"They say she died of a broken heart," said the first woman as they came up the car steps.

"I don't believe it," sharply replied No. 2.

"But why?"

"Why? Because she had as many as six new bonnets a year, and not one of them cost less than \$15."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LOVE.

"What is an epistle?" asked a Sunday-school teacher of her class. "The wife of an apostle," replied the young hopeful.

Lord Salisbury and Ouida.

My Lords of Salisbury and Granville arrived the other day at a certain railway station just as the train was about to start. The porter opened the door in all haste, and just as my Lord Granville was stepping in, he espied Ouida seated in a corner. He whispered the fact hastily to Lord Salisbury. There was no time to retreat; the whistle sounded, and the noble pair scrambled in, the Prime Minister saying hurriedly:

"If you introduce me, it will be the severance of a life-long friendship." Spreading his "Times" before him, he then subsided to a corner, but not before Ouida had caught a glimpse of the well-known features. Lord Granville, who was acquainted with the aggressive novelist, engaged her in conversation.

"How like the gentleman in the corner is to Lord Salisbury?" she said; Lord Granville took no notice. The train shortly stopped at Hatfield, when the Prime Minister got out, still concealing his face as much as possible, when Ouida again said: "How like Lord Salisbury. Who is that gentleman?" "O," replied the courteous diplomat, "that is a local magnate,"—and the train moved on.—Irish Times.

Col. Ingersoll's Marriage.

A good story is told of Col. Bob Ingersoll, which, if it reaches the ears of St. Peter, may improve the Colonel's standing with that gentleman. Some time ago an old Illinois soldier made application for a pension on account of lung trouble, which he had contracted during his service in the army. During the examination into his case the Examiner was struck with the peculiar exactness with which the applicant recalled the very day upon which he caught the cold from the effects of which his trouble was claimed to have originated. "How is it," asked he, "that you are so sure that you caught a cold on the 21st of February, 1862? You must have an excellent memory to recollect such an insignificant event for so long a time."

"I remember it from the fact that Col. Bob Ingersoll was married on the following day."

"Why, what has that to do with it?" asked the Boston Examiner, astonished.

"Well, I was in the Colonel's regiment, and on the night of that day I was on guard duty. It was a bitterly cold night. Col. Ingersoll happened to stroll along by me, and I said to him that if he did not either send me a warm overcoat, a bottle of whisky or relieve me from guard duty, I'd freeze to death."

"I'll do all three," said the Colonel, and suiting the action to the word, he took off a fine fur overcoat he was wearing and handed it to me. Then he took from one of his pockets a flask of splendid old rye, which he also gave me. Not content with this he actually went up to headquarters and wrote out an order calling in the guards, as it was entirely too cold for guard duty. That is why I happen to have such a vivid recollection of the date of the Colonel's marriage and contraction of my cold."

A Game Crow.

"It is not very often one sees a crow in this part of the country," said one of the animal-feeders at Lincoln Park, Chicago, "so it is no wonder the boys turned out to watch the big black fellow that came a-cawing out of the oak trees at the north end of the park late last Monday afternoon. He sailed over the lake drive until he got about opposite the old floating hospital, where he was attacked by two sea gulls. The crow started to turn back, but being hotly pursued by the gulls he wheeled round and then began one of the prettiest fights I ever saw. The sea birds attacked their black adversary front and rear, plucking his feathers by the beakful and pecking his head until his hoarse cries announced that blood was being drawn. The crow made a game fight, however, and when all of us began to think he could stand the punishment no longer, he suddenly rallied and dashed against one of his tormentors with such force that it dropped diagonally into the water. The other, not desiring to carry on the battle single handed, turned her tail-feathers to the crow and was soon beside her mate, who was slowly making his way out into the open water with a broken wing. Both adversaries thus disposed of, the crow gave an exultant whoop and flopped back to the oak trees whence he came."

An Effective Rebuke.

Cambridge, Mass., you know, is a suburb of Boston, but is itself a large city. It is the seat of Harvard, the oldest college in America. The other day a Cambridge lady entered a crowded horse-car where there were a number of Harvard undergraduates, all of whom rose to offer her a seat. She accepted one with thanks. Presently the car stopped, when a poor woman with a baby in her arms entered it. The lady waited a few moments, and then finding that her young admirers took no notice of the woman she rose and asked her to take her seat. At once a dozen young men sprang up and again tendered their seats to her, but she persisted in standing and had full opportunity of noticing the confusion of the young collegians. It was a quiet, but an effective rebuke. A statement of the affair soon got over to the college and no undergraduate could be found to admit that he was in a horse-car that evening.

Sixty Thousand Relics.

Shang-le, or precious relics of Buddha, are so abundant that only a miracle could explain their number. Dr. Medhurst throws some light on their history. According to the Buddhists there are 84,000 pores in a man's body, and therefore he leaves behind him 84,000 particles of miserable dust in the course of transmigration. Buddha had also 84,000 pores in his body, but by his resistance to evil he was enabled to perfect 84,000 relics through them, for and which eight Kings contended. A good wise King named Ayuka arose, who built 84,000 pagodas to cover these 84,000 relics. These relics still remain, but can only be seen by the faithful. A good Buddhist sometimes discern one of these relics illuminated with brilliant colors and as big as a cartwheel when unbelievers are unable to see anything at all.—All the Year Around.