

SOWING THE WIND.

I.

All Pertuis was busy sowing beans. From the heights of the Luberon to the shores of the Durance the peasants all were at work...

II.

Of all the sowers sowing like mad the most furious sower was the honest Pitalugue. His loins braced sturdily...

III.

Meanwhile a hundred yards away from a little thicket, a man whom Pitalugue had not noticed was following his movements with seeming interest.

IV.

Exactly at that moment Pitalugue raised his head and beheld his wife, La Zoun, approaching with his smack.

V.

"Hullo, Pitalugue!" hailed his neighbors, home-bound; "break off work and finish the beans to-morrow."

VI.

"I guess the frost won't harm 'em," replied Pitalugue philosophically, and having eaten his bread and finished his wine...

VII.

"Beans forever!" he muttered, as he resumed his illusory occupation; "put another in here—a hundred—a thousand!"

VIII.

Perchance the reader may be curious to know who Pitalugue was, and why he had adopted this singular system of bean culture.

IX.

Pitalugue was a rural philosopher, one who took the weather as it came, and the sun as it rose and set, leading a remarkably happy-go-lucky life...

X.

One evening Aunt Dido, Pitalugue's wife's mother, a most experienced matron, made a visit to the patch despite her great age, and having taken a careful observation...

XI.

The hall had been evidently decked and garnished; the lamps burned brightly in the crystals amid the golden balls and ostrich feathers...

XII.

The pot was singing furiously and expectation was at its height when one of the boys, who had been posted as a sentinel, rushed in to say that an old gentleman with glasses and having a stamped paper in his hand was hurrying down the street.

XIII.

"I suspected him all along," said Aunt Dido, solemnly. "To your posts, my children, and see that every blow tells!"

approaches and remorse awaited nothing. Each morning on setting out he vowed he never would touch another card, but each night he returned having played and lost.

"Use them well, but don't waste them," said La Zoun, "you know they are the last we have."

VI.

Unfortunately, at the lower gates he met the barber Fra, returning red-eyed and feverish from making a night of it at a farmhouse.

VII.

"You're coming home late, Fra." "You're going out early, Pitalugue." "Yes; not a soul stirring."

VIII.

What was to be done? Go home and confess all to La Zoun? Impossible! Buy more beans? Yes, without the first penny! Borrow from a friend? Then the whole story would come out.

IX.

"I can't sow beans," he said to himself, "because I have none, but I can go through the motions. La Zoun will not suspect anything; one never knows where luck will strike."

X.

Many things, indeed, did happen before harvest time to the no small surprise of the people of Pertuis.

XI.

His neighbors admired him, his wife was stupefied and M. Cougourdan hugged himself as he thought how he would seize those beans, and talked mysteriously of treating himself to a new pair of glasses when some money he had never expected to collect came in.

XII.

Lo! at the end of a fortnight all the beans of Pertuis showed themselves. First a little white sprout, crooked like a bishop's crozier; then two leaves coiffed with the seed and bearing a few particles of earth; then the dried seed fell away, the leaves unfolded and all the plain, from the Luberon to the Durance, turned to a tender green.

XIII.

And now the peasants went forth and, knife in hand, cut poles, and Pitalugue too went forth knife in hand, cut poles, freed them from knots and trimmed and sorted them and set them up in stacks of four, tied at the top.

XIV.

All but those of Pitalugue, it should be said. His patch remained reddened and dry, made still more melancholy by its rows of withered poles.

XV.

It seems to me, said his wife, "that our beans are backward." "They must be late beans," he replied, calmly.

XVI.

But when from the Luberon to the Durance every bean plant in the plain put forth a thousand white blossoms—when all these flowers turned into crisp green pods and it was seen that only the haricots of Pitalugue neither showed nor bore, a decided sensation was caused in the town.

XVII.

Malicious folk began to nudge each other and grin; the superstitions made pilgrimages to view "the accursed field;" M. Cougourdan became uneasy, and La Zoun took up her dwelling at the hut and gave her days and nights to hearing indignant reproaches upon the sun and soil.

XVIII.

One evening Aunt Dido, Pitalugue's wife's mother, a most experienced matron, made a visit to the patch despite her great age, and having taken a careful observation...

served, and bearing it home she placed it duly upon the fire in the presence of all the Pitalugues.

"Then, having filled it with water, Aunt Dido cast into it, not without muttering sundry magic spells, all the old nails, rusty knife blades and headless pins and needles that the family had been able to drum up in the neighborhood."

X.

"Good," said Aunt Dido; "one more armful of wood, and the villain will come here on his knees to beg our pardon."

XI.

"We'll give him our pardon," was the horse reply in chorus, "the scoundrel!"

XII.

Meanwhile the astute Pitalugue, whom the proceedings had amused greatly, had whispered the news to some of his friends, and with exceeding great joy Pertuis heard that the tribe of Pitalugue was boiling for a witch, to disenchant the beans. M. Cougourdan, who was taking his walks abroad, did not hear the news, however, but, having noticed the unusual gait of Pitalugue's demeanor, asked Fra the barber, what had happened.

XIII.

"Aye," answered the barber, "and so would you look happy if it had happened to you."

XIV.

"Ha! has he won at cards?" "Better than that, M. Cougourdan." "Been left money, hey?" "Better than that. While repairing his cellar wall to-day he found a thousand gold crowns in an old stocking."

XV.

"Pitalugue has just gone home," said the barber; "you had better see him before he has gambled and guzzled it all away—better run before any one else gets there."

XVI.

M. Cougourdan was off like a flash. The pot was singing furiously and expectation was at its height when one of the boys, who had been posted as a sentinel, rushed in to say that an old gentleman with glasses and having a stamped paper in his hand was hurrying down the street.

XVII.

"It is Cougourdan!" screamed La Zoun; "he was there when we sowed the beans!"

XVIII.

"I suspected him all along," said Aunt Dido, solemnly. "To your posts, my children, and see that every blow tells!"

XIX.

Silently and sternly the fifteen male Pitalugues ranged themselves along the walls, each grasping a stout cudgel. Nothing could be heard but the glugging of the water and the clinking of the nails, and presently the footsteps of M. Cougourdan on the stair outside.

XX.

Well, no witch or wizard in Pertuis had ever had such a tanning as he received, to the immense delight of all the townspeople. Like a discreet man he kept quiet.

XXI.

As for Pitalugue, when all was over, lighted his pipe philosophically with his note, which Cougourdan had dropped during the melee, and said solemnly to La Zoun:

XXII.

"You see, my good woman, the proverb is right. Good sowing is never labor wasted, and the soil always recompenses those that treat it kindly."

XXIII.

Horrible Rites of the Aissouais at Kairwan. The hall had been evidently decked and garnished; the lamps burned brightly in the crystals amid the golden balls and ostrich feathers...

A Live Dead Man.

An incident related in the experience of a clergyman here which suggests strongly some of the weird sketches of Poe. The only difference is that this is true—a plain recital of what actually occurred. Among the flock of the minister referred to was a family of foreigners, and the father of the family was stricken with a fatal illness.

How the Chinese Grow Miniature Trees.

We have all known from childhood how the Chinese cramp their women's feet, and so manage to make them keepers at home, but how they contrive to grow miniature pine and oak in flower pots for half a century has always been much of a secret.

Popping the Question.

Constitutionally timid men might, if necessary, resort to some such expedient as that of the youth whose bashfulness would not admit of his proposing directly to the object of his affections, but who at length summoned up sufficient courage to lift the young lady's cat and say: "Pussy, may I have your mistress?"

The Right Sort of Men.

As a rule the men who are favorites with their own sex are the truest and best in their relations to women. The men who like sometimes to "go away with the fellows" and have a rousing time on the water, the mountain or the field, are the men we mean.

New York Houses.

The luxury and perfection of detail in New York dwellings is passing into a proverb. Nowhere in the world, perhaps, is so much time and money spent upon the furnishing and ornamenting of the homes of the rich as in New York.

Canning Factories.

The Sycamors (Ill.) Republican says: "The Clinton Canning Company have contracted for 600 acres of corn at \$5 a ton, and tomatoes at 15 cents a bushel. As they have contracted for much more than they did last year, it must be a paying business for farmers."

HOUSE AND FARM.

Foot Rot in Sheep.—H.M., Dubuque, Iowa, in the Prairie Farmer, asks the following question: Quite a number of our sheep are foot sore and lame, and on examination we find that portions of the horn of their claws are black and rotted and smell badly. Some of them have almost got well without any treatment. Off and on, especially during fall, winter and spring, we have experienced the same thing. I do not think it is contagious. I have heard of other parties having sheep similarly affected.

Potatoes Under Straw.

Several years ago there was much said about growing potatoes under straw, and we published at the time several reports from those who had tried the method with success. Interest in the subject appears to be renewed, to judge from inquiries. The method is very simple; the land is prepared in the usual manner and the rows marked off; the sets are dropped along the rows and very slightly, or not at all, covered with soil.

Peas and Oats Together.

The pea is very rich in muscle and bone building elements, and oats are also superior to corn in this respect. The oats also assist in holding up the pea vine, so as to prevent early lodging, and thus cause it to retain its succulence longer. The crop should be sown in the proportion of two bushels of peas to one of oats per acre, and well covered. The drill puts them in best. The united crop should produce from forty to sixty bushels of grain to the acre.

The Industrial Age.

James Wilson, in Iowa State Register, says: Pastures are often spoken of from parties. The cow gets more mention than the politician. Foreign commerce draws more attention than foreign politics. The dairy creeps more stir than the district court. Heavy horses invite more inquiry than any political issue. The orchard gets more thought than the stalwarts, and the grove more than the half-breeds. The death of a well bred bull is more regretted than the defeat of a party leader. We are more alarmed at foreign cattle disease than opposition to the Monroe doctrine, and see more probable annoyance from Canada thistles than tissue ballots.

In Reply to a correspondent the Louisville Journal says:

"Sow as soon as you can work the ground in spring, and on until the middle of April. For field culture, use one and one-fourth to one and one-half bushels of seed per acre; for a thick lawn, two bushels."