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Worth the Winning

By The Duchess.

CHAPTER I.

Below, a great broad stretch of ocean, calm as death, slumbering placidly beneath the sun's hot rays; above, a sky of palest azure, flecked here and there by dainty masses of soft, fleecy clouds; and, far inland, a background of high hills, clothed with a tender foliage, a very baby leafdom, just bursting into the fuller life.

Toward the west the trees give way a little, letting a road be seen, that like a straight pale ribbon runs between the greenery for the space of quite a mile or so, and then reaches the small fishing village where the simple folk of Glowring Destley toil from one year's end to the other, some in careless joy, some in ceaseless labor, some, alas! in cruel weeping, because of those "who will never come back to the town."

Along the white road, that gleams thirstily in the burning sunshine of this hot midday in June, a carriage is crawling with quite an aggravating slowness—an antiquated vehicle of a type now almost unknown, but which once beyond doubt "cost money." The carriage, being an open one, enables the people as it passes through the village to see without undue trouble that the occupants of it are two girls; both very young, both singularly alike, though in distinctly different styles.

"It is charming!" says the younger girl, with a little quick motion of the hand toward the sweeping bay, and the awakening trees, and the other glories of the landscape. "All charming, far better than I ever dared hope for; and yet my mind misgives me, Vera."

She turns a brilliant glance on her sister, full of terrible insinuations, and then laughs a little. Thus animated, she is a very pretty girl, half child, half woman, as fresh as the morning, and with eyes like stars. She lifts one slender black-gloved hand, and placing it beneath her sister's chin, turns her face gently to her.

Such a beautiful face! Very like the riante one beside it, yet unlike, too. There is a touch of sadness round the lovely lips, a mournful curve; indeed, a thoughtfulness too great for her years is stamped on every feature. A tender, loving, yet strong soul shines through the earnest eyes, and when she smiles it is reluctantly, as if smiles all her life had been forbidden to her.

"Oh! that reminds me," said Miss Dysart. "I quite forgot to tell you of it, but the day before we left Nice, Nell Stewart said that this cousin you speak of, if he does exist at all, at all events does not do it here."

"Which means?"

"That either he won't, or can't, life with his father. Can't, Nell rather led me to believe."

"Can't it is, you may be sure," says the younger girl, restlessly. "Fancy a father whose son can't live with him! And yet, after all, virtuous astonishment on that score is rather out of place with us. I can imagine just such a father."

"Well, never mind that," says Miss Dysart, hastily.

"Yes. Very good; let us then go from sire to uncle," says her sister with a little shrug. "Do you think we shall gain much by the change? This old relative of ours is, perhaps, as delightful as we could wish him, and yet I wish father had not left us to his 'tender mercies.'"

"Do not dwell on that," says Vera, with nervous haste; "do not seek for faults in the inevitable. He is all that is left us. You know the sudden decision arose out of a letter received by father from Uncle Gregory about a year ago. When father was—was—dying——" She pauses abruptly, and a tremor shakes her last words.

The younger girl turns quickly to look at her. There is infinite love and compassion in her glance, but perhaps a little contempt, and certainly a little impatience.

"Do you know," she says, "it may seem heartless—positively coarse, if you will—but I do not think our father was a man to excite respect, much less love or regret, or——"

"Oh! it is better not to speak like that," interrupts Miss Dysart, in a low, shocked tone. "Don't do it, darling. I know what you mean, but——"

"And I know that I shall never forgive or forget the life he led you," says Griselda, with a certain angry excitement.

"Well, that is over!" says Miss Dysart, with a quick sigh, heavily indrawn.

"What was this vendetta, this terrible lifelong quarrel that was kept up between him and father with such monotonous persistency?"

"That had to do with our grandfather's will. Papa was the eldest son, yet the property was left to Uncle Gregory; and that for no reason at all. Naturally, papa was very angry about it, and accused Gregory of using undue influence."

"Just so, and of course there is a good deal behind that you don't know. There always is; nobody ever tells quite everything. And besides— Oh! Oh, Vera! Oh! what has happened?"

Griselda clutches in an agonized fashion at the leather side of the crazy old chariot, which has toppled over to the left side and stands in a decidedly dissipated position. The ancient driver, presumably asleep, had let the horses wander at their own sweet will, and they being old and sleepy, too, the result was that they had dragged two of the wheels up on a steep bank and nearly capsized the carriage.

"Oh, thank you," says Miss Dysart, leaning forward and addressing with earnest glance and heightened color the young man who had risen—descended, perhaps, sounds pleasanter and more orthodox—like a good angel from somewhere—the wood on their right, no doubt. A fishing rod, lying on the road where he had flung it when preparing for his ignoble battle with those poor old horses, proclaims the fact that he has been whipping the stream that gleams here and there brilliantly through the interstices of the trees.

"Oh, no," says he, lifting his hat, "you mustn't thank me. It was really nothing. Poor brutes, I think they were asleep; they— It is hot, isn't it?" This last he says hastily, as if ashamed of his animadversion on the age of the sorry cattle in question—their horses, no doubt; and there is something wonderfully charming in the faint apologetic color that springs into his cheeks. As he finishes speaking he looks at Griselda so hard that she feels it incumbent on her to return his glance and to say something.

"We thought our last hour had come," she says, laughing softly, and looking at him a little shyly, but so prettily. "But for you, one cannot say where we should be now."

She bows to him, and so does her sister quite as graciously, and then the horses once more commence their snail-like progress, grinding through the dusty road at the rate of three miles an hour. The little episode is over; the young man settles his soft hat more firmly on his head, picks up his rod, regards it anxiously to see that no harm has come to it, and disappears once more into the shelter of the cool wood.

Half an hour later they are at the entrance gate of Greycourt, and practically at their journey's end. Both girls, with an involuntary movement, crane their necks out of the carriage to get a first glimpse at their future home, and then turn a dismayed glance on each other. Anything more dreary, more unfriendly, yet withal grand in its desolation, could hardly be seen.

"How dark it is," says Griselda, a nervous thrill running through her, as they move onward beneath the shade of the mighty trees that clasp their arms between her and the glorious sky—thus blotting it out.

A sudden turn brings them within view of the house. A beautiful old house apparently, of red brick, toned by age to a duller shade, with many gables, and overgrown in parts by trailing ivy, the leaves of which now glisten brightly in the evening sunshine.

The coachman, scrambling to the ground, bids them in a surly tone to alight. He is tired and cross, no doubt, by the unusual work of the day. And presently they find themselves on the threshold of the open hall door, hardly knowing what to do next. The shambling figure of a man about seventy, appeared presently from some dusky doorway, he waves to them to enter the room, and, shutting the door again behind them with a sharp haste, leaves them alone with their new relative, Gregory Dysart.

CHAPTER II.

Vera, going quickly forward, moves toward an armchair at the upper end of the room in which a figure is seated. She sees an old man, shrunken, enfeebled, with a face that is positively ghastly, because of its excessive pallor; a living corpse, save for two eyes that burn and gleam and glitter with an almost devilish brilliancy.

"So you've come," he says, without making any attempt to rise from his chair. "Shut that door, will you? What a vile draught! And don't stand staring like that, it makes me nervous."

His voice is cold, clear, freezing. It seems to the tired girls standing before him as if a breath of icy air had suddenly fallen into the hot and stifling room.

"Vera, I presume," says Mr. Dysart, holding out his lithe white hand to permit her to press it. "And you are Griselda? I need not ask what lunatic chose your names, as I was well acquainted with your mother many years ago."

"I feel that I must think you at once, Uncle Gregory, for your kindness to us," says Miss Dysart, gravely, still standing.

"Ay, ay. You acknowledge that," says he, quickly. "I have been your best friend, after all, eh?"

"You have given us a home," continues Miss Dysart, in tones that tremble a little. "But for you——"

"Yes, yes—go on." He thrusts out his old miserly face as if athirst for further words. "But for me you would both have been cast upon the world's highway, to live or die as chance dictated. To me, to me you are indebted for everything. You owe me much. Each day you live you shall owe me more. I have befriended you; I have been the means of saving you from starvation."

If so corpse-like a face could show signs of excitement it shows it now, as he seeks to prove by word and gesture that he is their benefactor to an unlimited extent. The hateful emotion he betrays raises in Griselda's breast feelings of repugnance and disgust.

"I have consented to adopt you," he goes on presently, his cold voice now cutting like a knife. "But do not expect much from me. It is well to come to a proper understanding at the start, and so save future argument. Honesty has made me poor. You have been, I hear, accustomed to lead a useless, luxurious existence. Your father all his life kept up a most extravagant menage, and, dying, left you paupers." He almost hisses out the last cruel word.

Griselda starts to her feet.

"The honesty of which you boast is not everything," she says, in a burning tone. "Let me remind you that courtesy, too, has its claims upon you."

"Hah! The word pauper is unpleasing, it seems," says he, unmoved. "Before we quit this point, however, one last word. You are beneath my roof; I shall expect you to conform to my rules. I see no one. I permit no one to enter my doors save my son. I will not have people spying out the nakedness of the land, and speculating over what they are pleased to call my eccentricities. They will have me rich, but I am poor, poor, I tell you. Always remember that."

Griselda's features having settled themselves into a rather alarming expression, Miss Dysart hurriedly breaks into the conversation.

"If you will permit us," she says, faintly, "we should like to go to our rooms, to rest a little. It has been a long journey."

Her uncle turns and touches the bell near him, and immediately, so immediately as to suggest the idea that she has been applying her ear to the keyhole, a woman enters.

"You are singularly prompt," he says, with a lowering glance and a sneer. "This is Mrs. Grunch," turning to Vera, "my housekeeper. She will see to your wants. Grunch, take these young ladies away. My nerves," with a shudder, "are all unstrung to the last pitch."

Thus unceremoniously dismissed, Miss Dysart follows the housekeeper from the room, Griselda having preceded her. Through the huge dark hall and up the wide, moldy staircase they follow their guide, noting as they do so the decay that marks everything around.

She flings wide a door for the girls to enter, and then abruptly departs without offering them word or glance. They are thankful to be thus left alone, and involuntarily stand still and gaze at each other. Vera is very pale, and her breath is coming rather fitfully from between her parted lips.

"He looks dying," she says, at last, speaking with a heavy sigh, and going nearer to Griselda, as if unconsciously seeking a closer companionship. "Did you ever see such a face? Don't you think he is dying?"

"Who can tell?" says Griselda. "I might think it, perhaps, but for his eyes. They"—she shudders—"they look as if they couldn't die. What terrible eyes they are! and what a vile old man altogether! Good heavens! how did he dare so to insult us! I told you, Vera"—with rising excitement—"I warned you that our coming here would be only for evil."

A moment later a knock comes to the door.

"Will you be pleased to come down stairs or to have your tea here?" demands the harsh voice of the housekeeper from the threshold.

"Here" is on Vera's lips, but Griselda, the bold, circumvents her.

"Down stairs," she says, coldly, "when we get some hot water, and when you send a maid to help us to unpack our trunks."

"There are no maids in this house," replies Mrs. Grunch, sullenly. "You must either attend to each other or let me help you."

"No maids!" says Griselda.

"None," briefly.

"And my room? Oh—is this mine, or Miss Dysart's?"

"Both yours and Miss Dysart's; sorry if it ain't big enough," with a derisive glance round the huge, bare chamber.

"You mean, we are to have but one room between us?"

"Just that, miss. Neither more nor less. And good enough, too, for those as——"

"Leave the room," says Griselda, with a sudden, sharp intonation, so unexpected, so withering, that the woman, after a surprised stare, turns and withdraws.

CHAPTER III.

A few days later the girls are sitting in the garden. It is a beautiful day. Even through the eternal shadows that encompass the garden, and past the thick yew hedge, the hot beams of the sun are stealing.

"A day for gods and goddesses," cries Griselda, springing suddenly to her feet, and flinging far from her on the greensward the musty volume she had purloined from the mustier library about an hour ago.

"Perhaps I'll never come back. The spirit of adventure is full upon me, and who knows what demons inhabit that unknown wood? So, fare thee well, sweet, my love! and when you see me, expect me." She presses a sentimental kiss upon her sister's brow, averring that a "brow" is the only applicable part of her for such a solemn occasion, and runs lightly down toward the hedge.

She runs through one of the openings in the hedge, crosses the graveled path, and, mounting the parapet, looks over to examine the other side of the wall on which she stands, after which she commences her descent. One little foot she slips into a convenient hole in it, and then the other into a hole lower down, and so on and on, until the six feet of wall are conquered and she reaches terra firma, and finds nothing between her and the desired cool of the lovely woods.

With a merry heart she plunges into the dark, sweetly scented home of the giant trees, with a green, soft pathway under her foot, and, though she knows it not, her world before her.

It is an entrancing hour. She has stopped short in the middle of a broad, green space encompassed by high hills, though with an opening toward the west, when this uncomfortable conviction grows clear to her that she is lost. She is not of the nervous order, however, and keeping a good heart looks hopefully around her.

Far away over there, in the distance, stands a figure lightly lined against the massive trunk of a sycamore, that most unmistakably declares itself to be a man. His back is turned to her, and he is bending over something, and, so far as she can judge thus remote from him, his clothing is considerably the worse for wear. A gamekeeper, perhaps, or a—well, something or other of that sort. At all events the sight is welcome as the early dew.

(To be continued.)

To a Poet.

To learn poetry "for repetition" is doubtless a means of cultivating a knowledge of literature, but schoolboys sometimes regard the authors of poems learned as taskmasters and personal enemies. This view is amusingly expressed in a letter which was found among the papers of the venerable German poet Geibel. It was written to him by some schoolboys of Lubeck, and is signed "Karl Beckmann, II. Klasse." The letter is printed in Literature. After stating that two boys had been flogged because they could not learn Herr Geibel's "Hope of Spring," the letter reads as follows:

We suppose you did not think of such things when you wrote the poem. The Herr Lehrer says it is a very beautiful poem, but there are so many very beautiful poems and we are obliged to learn them. Therefore we beg and entreat you, esteemed Herr Geibel, make no more beautiful poems. And to make it worse we have to learn the biography of every poet, what year he was born in, and what year he died in. We write to you because you are the only poet still living, and we wish you a very long life.

Senator Mark Hanna wears as a watch charm a gold nugget which is worth several hundred dollars. It was presented to him by a number of Methodist friends who reside in Cleveland, Ohio.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

Lively Game for Indoors.

The painter and the colors is an amusing indoor game. The leader is the painter. The rest of the players are colors, each taking a name—orange, blue, green, etc.—to which he must respond directly it is mentioned. Beyond this there are four words which must be answered in various ways.

When the painter names the palette, all except the painter cry out, "Colors, colors!" When he speaks of colors in general, all cry, "Here we are!" When of his pencil, the answer exacted is, "Brush! brush!" Finally, when he names turpentine, general consternation is excited and the colors with one accord exclaim, "Help, help!"

Any "color" mentioned by name must immediately name another "color" of the party. The latter replies simply, "Here, sir." Any mistakes or hesitation in giving replies is punishable by a forfeit.

Here is an example of the game:

Painter—I am commissioned by my noble patron, the Marquis of Carabas, to paint a picture of Hamlet and Ophelia. I have made my design and shall begin to set my palette.

All the colors—Colors! Colors!

Painter—I intend astonishing the critics by the brilliance of my colors.

All—Here we are!

Painter—I can't employ you all at once—too heavy a task for a single pencil.

All—Brush! Brush!

Painter—Silence, or I'll exterminate you with a dose of turpentine!

All—Help! Help!

Painter—Be quiet, or I won't employ one of you! I'll begin with the eyes of Ophelia. They ought to be black. (If the painter names a color not in the collection he pays a forfeit.)

Black—Green! Green!

Green—Here, sir!

Painter—No. She was called "the fair Ophelia." Her eyes must have been blue.

Blue—Orange! Orange!

Orange—Here, sir!

Painter—As she was in trouble, her cheeks ought to be pale, almost white.

White—Purple and cherry color!

Purple and cherry (together)—Here, sir!

Painter—All the colors——

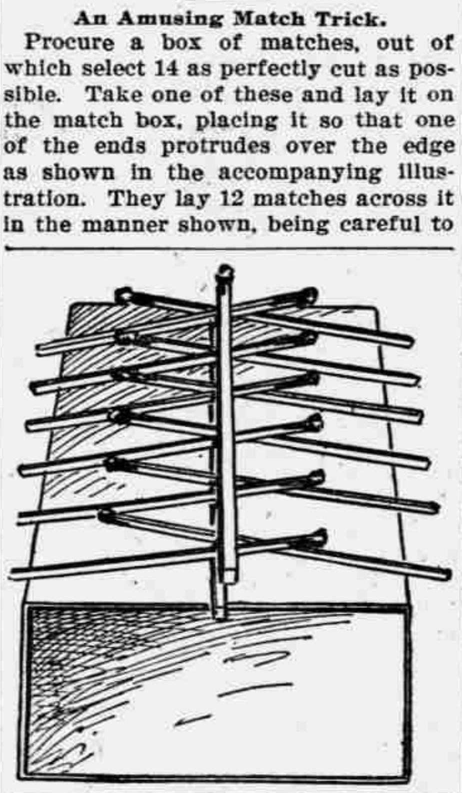
All—Here we are!

Painter— —of the rainbow shall be employed, etc.

And so the game goes on, another member of the party taking the place of the painter when one of them makes a mistake.

An Amusing Match Trick.

Procure a box of matches, out of which select 14 as perfectly cut as possible. Take one of these and lay it on the match box, placing it so that one of the ends protrudes over the edge as shown in the accompanying illustration. They lay 12 matches across it in the manner shown, being careful to



make both sides even. When you have done this lay the fourteenth match right on the top of the bottom one, only it will not rest on the latter, but on the 12 upper ones, being careful not to let it protrude over the edge of the box. Then carefully catch hold of the bottom match, lift it gently, and if you have done the trick correctly you will find that you have been enabled to lift 13 matches with one.

An Explosive Fruit.

A very curious fruit has been discovered growing wild in Batavia, and a sample has been sent to a French professor of botany at Paris. It appears to be a species of bean, resembling a cigar both in form and color, though only about an inch in length. But it has a peculiar characteristic that renders it a very unique and interesting object, and this is the exceedingly energetic manner in which it scatters its seeds. If one of these little fruits be thrown into a basin of water it will rest quietly on the surface for from two to five minutes, then it will explode with violence, hurling most of its contents into the air with a noise and splash for all the world like a small torpedo. It is hardly necessary to say that this phenomenon is caused by the pressure of the elastic substance of its interior, which overcomes the resistance of its hard outer shell.

The fruit usually splits open lengthwise. If plucked before maturity and allowed to ripen in a warm spot, it opens gradually from apex to base, making, as it were, a pair of diverging horns starting from the same point. If left to ripen on the plant, since the process is quicker and the internal moisture greater, the opening is sudden and accompanied with a slight noise, though this is much less than that which takes place when it has been placed in water. In this case the dry but porous tissue of the surface of the fruit quickly absorbs the liquid, especially at the grooves caused by the junction of the two valves or outer shells of the fruit. The internal tissue, being very elastic, exerts upon the latter a tension that soon results in the violent bursting already described. The curious property of explosion is given the little plant for the dissemination of its seeds, which would otherwise stand a poor chance of propagating its species.—Montreal Witness.

Papa's Idea of Heaven.

"Mamma," said small Tommy, "hasn't papa got a queer idea of heaven?"

"I'm sure I don't know, dear," replied his mother. "Why do you think he has?"

"Because," answered Tommy, "he said the two weeks you spent at grandma's seemed like heaven to him."

Wanted the Lord to Persevere.

Much to the astonishment of her mother, a little 4-year-old miss recently concluded her evening prayer as follows: "Please, Lord, make me a good girl, and if at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Financier in Embryo.

Mamma—Now, Willie, here's your medicine, and here's the dime your papa left to pay you for taking it.

Willie (aged 5)—Mamma, you take the medicine and I'll give you half the money.

Ethel's Moist Eyes.

One day little Ethel was watching her father grating horseradish, when she suddenly exclaimed: "I can't watch you any longer, papa; it makes my eyes sweat."

A New Definition.

"Mamma," said little Willie, as he watched her transforming one of his father's old coats into a new one for himself, "is that what they call a cutaway coat?"

WINTER FUN IN THE OLD DAYS.

Reminiscences of Good Times Boys Used to Have.

"Boys don't see fun in winter nowadays, as we used to," an elderly farmer-lawyer, or lawyer-farmer, maintained. "Why, when I was a boy, out in the country, we used to set snares and catch as many as twenty rabbits every night. I remember one prank I played with rabbits' heads about that time. My uncle had a blacksmith's shop and I had to work nearly all day in it just making horseshoe nails—awfully tiresome work for a boy who would rather be out in the woods setting rabbit snares.

"One day I had thirty rabbits' heads—the proceeds of two nights' snares; not quite as many as usual. I had heard my uncle say that Farmer Hobbs was coming in the afternoon to get his horse rough shod. So at the noon hour I slipped off down the road, out of sight of the shop, taking my bag of rabbits' heads with me. In the road I made a big pyramid of those heads, the long ears all sticking out 'every which-a-way.' It didn't look like anything that human eyes had ever beheld—it rather scared me, I remember, although I knew I had made it myself. Then I hid in the fence corner—old rail fence, mind you—and waited for Farmer Hobbs. I knew he rode a rather skittish little black mare—Kitty.

"Well, sir, Kitty came pacing along very decently, and all of a sudden she stood on her hind legs and pawed the air, then jumped off the road sideways, then whirled around and tried to run away. Farmer Hobbs had a hard time of it. He whipped Kitty and he said bad words at her, but go ahead she wouldn't and didn't. He had to dismount, tie her to the fence—the very corner behind which I crouched, snickering in a whisper. Then he walked up the road to the rabbit monstrosity, which he inspected and then kicked all to pieces, saying more bad words. Even then he couldn't lead the mare past the scattered rabbits' heads, so he had to tie her up again, until he had picked them all up and hidden them in the woods.

"Of course," continued the farmer-lawyer, according to the Detroit Free Press, "I slid off through the bushes and was hard at work making horseshoe nails long before he got to my uncle's shop."

Beyond Classification.

The dodo will bite, the worm will turn.

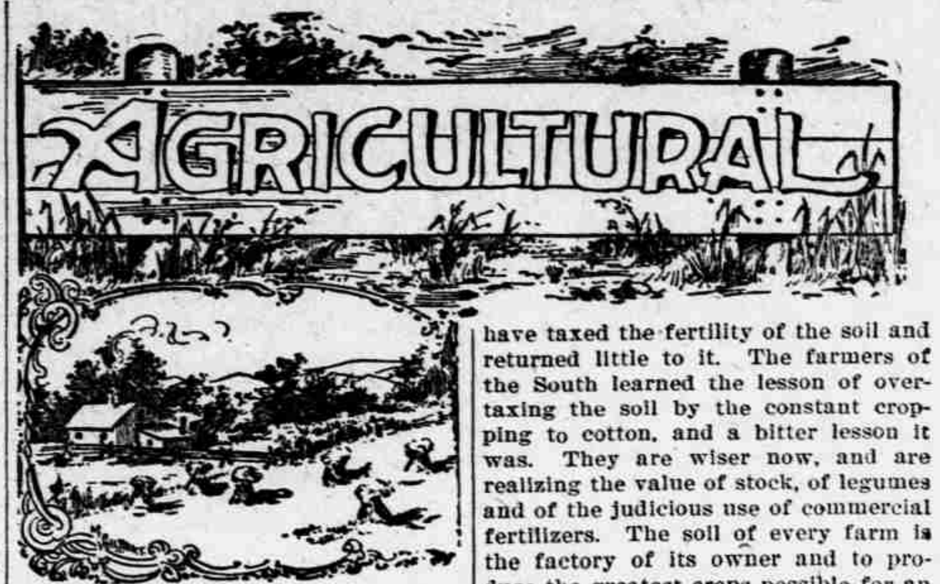
At one fashionable boarding house a young lady who daily ate hash with the other guests acquired quite a reputation for odd table manners. They were unique. She would haul any dish she fancied up to her place and eat it, regardless of the ugly glances of the others. They might cry out, "Help, help, help, or help wanted," despairingly, but they never got it. One morning at breakfast her mamma saw a stern look of disapproval on the face of a new boarder, a swell young man. "Mr. Hightone," she began, suavely, "I trust you will pardon my daughter's bad manners."

"Bad manners," exclaimed the indignant dude, "why, she hasn't any manners at all!"—Louisville Times.

Could Not Stand Cigarettes.

An educated Indian girl has left her husband and returned to savagery because he would persist in smoking cigarettes. How curiously does the feminine mind work!—Buffalo Express.

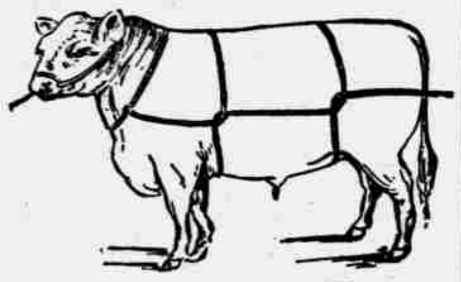
Only a cowardly painter would desert his colors.



AGRICULTURAL

Throwing the Bull.

Put a halter on. Take a sound ordinary cart rope, make a loop at one end and pass it over the head and let it rest close around the neck, low down, like a collar; bring the rope to the near side, pass it over the back just behind the shoulders, bring it underneath the chest and pass it under and then above the rope, so as to make a loop around the chest; carry the rope back, pass it over the loins and bring it underneath the belly, close to the flanks; make another loop as before and carry the rope straight behind the animal and tighten up the loops, one close to the elbows, the other close to the hind flanks. All being ready, instruct the man who holds the halter shank to pull forward, and at the same time the men who have hold of the loose end of the rope to pull straight backward, and down the animal goes, generally without a struggle. Keep the head down and the rope firm, and as a rule the animal lies quietly until such time it is desired he should get up, when slacken the rope and up he gets, none the worse for the casting. The heaviest bull may be cast in this way, but of course no one would think of casting an in-calf cow or heifer either this or any other way.—Exchange.



HOW TO THROW A BULL.

Effects of Freezing Seeds.

Prof. A. D. Selby of the Ohio station has tested the effects of extreme cold upon certain seeds, including corn, wheat, rye, flax, sunflower, castor bean, cucumber, mimosa, yellow lupine, sain foin and pine. They were taken right from the temperature of the room and immersed in liquid air, for six, twelve, twenty-four and forty-eight hours for each lot. The liquid air represents a temperature equal to 310 degrees below zero, certainly an extreme test, for it is not often that the coldest portion of the United States reaches much more than 50 degrees below zero. The seeds were germinated by the side of lots not subjected to treatment, and there was no essential difference in the proportion that germinated. The corn was not of high grade, and the starchy portion cracked badly, but the germ did not seem to be affected. The extreme cold seemed to be favorable rather than otherwise to the flax and rye. Of course the seeds were properly dried, that is air dry, before being subjected to the test, but with this precaution the farmer need not fear injury to seeds from freezing weather. If the castor bean, native of a tropical climate, could endure such cold, our garden beans and peas should do so, and we see no good reason why squash, pumpkin and melon seed should not endure cold as well as cucumbers, or clover, cabbage, turnip and others of the same size as well as lupine and flaxseed.—American Cultivator.

Growing Corn.

Secretary Wilson said, after returning from his inspection of the corn crop last fall, that there were many fields injured by the heat withering the tassels so that they failed fertilize the silk; but this was much less noticeable where there was an abundance of organic or vegetable matter from plowed-under grass roots. Shallow cultivating frequently, so as to maintain a dust mulch of two or three inches on the surface, also seemed a benefit where it was practiced, as it prevented evaporation of moisture below, as also the organic matter helped to retain moisture in the soil. Much of the bottom land is too wet in the spring, causing the corn roots to spread out too near the surface, and also to dry up when the drought came. Such land should be underdrained, that this surplus moisture may be carried away, the ground be ready to work earlier, and the roots to strike down deeper.

Meeting Farm Competition.

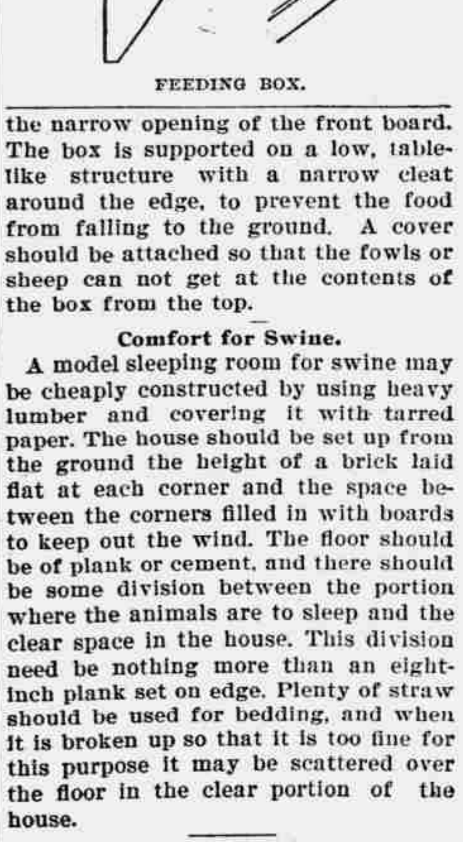
Time was when the farmer needed only to keep close watch of what other farmers in his own county or State were doing in order to meet competition fairly. Now he must keep his eye on competitors in every State in the Union and even then he frequently finds himself running behind. The remedy lies largely in change of methods and the building up of soil fertility. Many of the farms in the West, and in the great corn-belt sections at that, are not producing corn to compare in quality and yield per acre with many of the cornfields of the East, on farms that have been worked, some of them, for more than a century, because the owners of these Western farms have taxed the fertility of the soil and returned little to it. The farmers of the South learned the lesson of overtaxing the soil by the constant cropping to cotton, and a bitter lesson it was. They are wiser now, and are realizing the value of stock, of legumes and of the judicious use of commercial fertilizers. The soil of every farm is the factory of its owner and to produce the greatest crops possible for an indefinite period it must have constant care, study and improvements, otherwise, like any wornout machine, it will fail to produce results.—Indianapolis News.

Use of Preservatives.

The committee of the British Local Government Board has been for two years investigating the subject of preservatives and coloring matter in foods, and their report does not indicate the danger from their use that had been feared by the alarmists. They name as these preservatives four classes, borax or boric acid and its compounds, sulphurous acid and sulphites, salicylic acid or its soda salt, which is more soluble, and formaline or formaldehyde (made from wood alcohol). Of these the last is the only one in which they could find any proof of injury caused by their use. Yet as milk that is clean and properly cared for needs no preservatives, they would run no risks in an article of food so largely consumed by young children and recommend that the addition of preservatives or coloring matter to milk offered for sale in the United Kingdom shall be an offense under the "sale of food and drugs" act. They would have the use of formaldehyde and its preparations absolutely prohibited, and that salicylic acid should not be used to over the amount of one grain in a pint or pound of food. There is no evidence that it is hurtful in this small quantity. For butter, cream and margerine only boric acid or borate of soda should be allowed to be used, and that only to amount of one-fourth of one per cent in cream and one-half of one per cent in butter.

Handy Feeding Box.

The feeding box will prevent the greedy or stronger individuals from getting more than their share of food. Chopped roots, cabbage, etc., are placed in the box and by the shape of the backboard kept in motion as the supply at the bottom is eaten through the narrow opening of the front board. The box is supported on a low, table-like structure with a narrow cleat around the edge, to prevent the food from falling to the ground. A cover should be attached so that the fowls or sheep can not get at the contents of the box from the top.



FEEDING BOX.

Comfort for Swine.

A model sleeping room for swine may be cheaply constructed by using heavy lumber and covering it with tarred paper. The house should be set up from the ground the height of a brick laid flat at each corner and the space between the corners filled in with boards to keep out the wind. The floor should be of plank or cement, and there should be some division between the portion where the animals are to sleep and the clear space in the house. This division need be nothing more than an eight-inch plank set on edge. Plenty of straw should be used for bedding, and when it is broken up so that it is too fine for this purpose it may be scattered over the floor in the clear portion of the house.

Make the Cow Comfortable.

A cow is a great deal like a person. She enjoys a good and comfortable place to eat and sleep as well as any man. Do you think that you would enjoy standing out on the south side of a barbed wire fence to eat your meals when the wind is blowing at the rate of forty or fifty miles an hour from the northwest in the winter? No, I guess not! Can you expect a cow to make you money when served in that way? Then, summing up all of this, the cow must be at perfect ease and comfortably situated and have kind treatment in order to give good results.

How Much Grain.

The amount of grain fed should vary with the individuality of the cows, says Prof. D. H. Otis. A cow giving thirty-five to forty pounds of milk daily will need from twelve to fifteen pounds per day, while a cow giving fifteen to twenty pounds of milk will probably not need over six to eight pounds of grain. The amount of grain should vary with the yield of milk. Give the cows all the grain they will consume at a profit.