

MARY THE MAID OF THE INN

A Story of English Life.

By JOSEPH HATTON.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

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"There is an ancient opening in the ground, a drain, or conduit, just outside the abbey, north of the aisle, we can bury it there."

"Why bury it?" asked Foster. "That we may have the chance of escape you dream of."

"Yes, you are right," said Foster, "the horse will give the alarm. If the body is not found for a day or two our retreat will be covered by the doubt and delay."

"Come, then," said Parker, and the two men proceeded to lift the body. The moon came out from behind a scudding bank of clouds as if to bear witness against the deed of blood; but at the same moment it shone upon the graceful figure of Mary Lockwood as the heroine of the Star and Garter hurried through the meadows to the abbey—buried not from fear, but in order that she might pause in the familiar ruin to think of Dick, and more particularly to think of him upon the very spot where last they had sat together, and he had urged her to accept his proposals of a secret marriage.

As Mary entered the wide aisle, a shaft of moonlight pierced the gloom and disappeared as a flash of lightning might have done. It startled her for a moment, but hardly had she reached the stone seat beneath the old elder tree than the moonlight came streaming in upon her with a calm and steady radiance. She took this for a good omen, which may be noted as evidence of the utter unreliability of superstitious interpretations of natural phenomena; for at that moment the awful shadow of the murderers and their victim had been struck by that same moonlight right across the abbey foot-path.

The next moment Mary was holding her breath and creeping into the furthest shadows of the elder tree. A muttered curse had held her spell-bound, so strange, so unexpected, so ferocious was it. She turned to look in the direction from which it had come.

Two dark figures carrying a helpless burden met her startled gaze. She wondered if this were some rude test of her courage, but this idea was quickly dispelled by the tremendous earnestness of the actors.

No two men could have played the part of bogies as these played. As they approached her she saw that they labored with the weight of their ghastly load.

She saw the dead man's arms swing to and fro, and the poor head move helplessly from side to side.

As the first ruffian bore his share of the body, with his back towards her, the other stooped low and muttered curses not loud but deep.

The moon disappeared while the awful procession passed her hiding place, and it seemed to her a procession of magnitude, so long did it appear to be passing.

Mary had never felt fear until then. Her heart stood still. And yet it seemed to her as if her breath came and went with the noise of 20 people. She clutched the elder tree with a silent prayer of gratitude for the sound of the rustling ivy overhead, which seemed to assist in shielding her from observation.

The wind had stopped, as if to listen to the tale of blood; stopped dead, as if it had never rustled an ivy leaf, much less uprooted an oak. But the next moment it stormed through the open spaces on the towers, moaned in the hollows of the crypt. When the moon once more emerged from the stormy clouds the ruffians paused with their load, and the foremost of the two muttered: "Curse the wind," as his hat was blown along the aisle, stopping almost at Mary's feet.

"Would he follow it?" was the thought that once more terrified her. She shrank to the furthest corner of her shallow retreat, and clinging to the trunk of the rugged elder in an agony of despair. But the second man said with an oath: "Come on; you can get the cursed bait when the job is ended," and they took up their load afresh and disappeared beyond the abbey walls.

The moment she could no longer see the ruffians, the awful fascination in which they held her abated.

She crept from her hiding place, closed the door, and with the speed of a hunted hare bounded into the open and set irrespective of dead or living.

She had recovered all her sense of freedom now, that she was in the meadows. She knew that she could outstrip pursuit, even if she were followed by the murderers. She ran on, and the moon shone upon her path.

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FARM AND GARDEN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO AGRICULTURISTS.

Some Up-to-date Hints About Cultivation of the Soil and Yields Thereof—Horticulture, Viticulture and Floriculture.

Shrinkage of Corn.
The value of any variety of corn must be determined by a number of things other than the yield per acre. It has generally been supposed that the relative value of two kinds of corn could be determined at harvest time. Thus, if one variety gave 80 bushels per acre and another 85 bushels it seemed an easy arithmetical problem to determine which corn was the best. Old corn raisers, however, know that this does not prove the case unless the corn is to be sold immediately after harvest. The fall weightings of corn and the spring weightings differ enormously. The difference runs from 6 to 25 per cent of the whole weight of corn harvested. Even greater differences have been noted, especially in prize crops to be harvested at a certain time. In such a case it was only natural that the grower should plant his corn as late as possible and have it get sufficiently ripe to harvest at the appointed time. In such a case the corn is certain to contain an unusual amount of water and to weigh the maximum. If that same corn could be seen about the end of the following March, every kernel on the cob would be seen standing by itself. The shrinkage would then be well up to 35 per cent.

In relation to the shrinkage we must consider the size of the cob. The cob in one variety of corn may be 13 per cent of the whole and of another variety 20 per cent. Yet the corn on the larger cob may shrink so little in comparison with the corn on the smaller cob that the large-cobbed corn may be the most economical to raise. Especially may this be so if the corn is to be held over six months or a year. We do not assert that this is true as a rule, but it has been found to be so in some cases. What all are aiming to do is to secure or develop a variety of corn that will have a small cob and that will shrink little in thoroughly drying.

It has seemed to the writer that prizes awarded for acre yields of corn should be for total weight of dry matter. The shrinkage of corn in drying and the variability of such shrinkage constitute a very large problem as to the real yields of corn grown under stimulation of money-prize awards. It will also be understood that the farmer that has corn to sell in the fall can afford to let it go at several cents less per bushel than he can get for it six months after.

Orchard Planting.
From the Farmers' Review: One of the questions often asked and as often answered by: When shall I plant my orchard and what varieties are most profitable? My method of planting trees is simple and has always proved to be good. My advice to the would-be orchardist is: don't plant your trees too early in the spring when the ground is wet and cold. Wait instead until your trees will need pruning with a sharp knife. All broken and split roots should be cut off, leaving them, however, as long as possible. Then cut back the top and limbs in proportion to the root pruning. When your tree is ready for setting put it into a grub hole (a hole filled with thin mud and water). Leave it in the grub hole for three to twelve hours, according to the dryness of the roots and weather. This will do for the life of the tree. The next step is to have your orchard well plowed and the distance between rows marked off. Then dig a hole for each tree large enough so that the roots will not be cramped; fill in fine dirt around the roots, tramp it down lightly, then add more and tramp again, and so on until the tree stands perfectly solid. I usually put the largest root to the southwest to hold the tree straight. Apple trees should always be planted the same depth that they stood in the nursery.

Now we come to the sticking point, what to plant. If I were going to plant an orchard of one hundred trees I would set 75 Ben Davis, 5 Stark, 5 Jonathan, 5 Newtown Peppin, 5 Grimes Golden, 1 Snow, 1 Dyer, 2 White Rambos, and 1 Early Harvest. This would give the earliest and best fall apples, the finest flavored early winter fruit and the ever-bearing money-maker, the Ben Davis. It has more good qualities than any other apple in cultivation, and you cannot go wrong on it, though you may on some other varieties. I have two orchards and about thirty varieties and the Ben Davis yields more money than any other variety 2 to 1. I will not give any figures in this article, but if it is attacked by some one who "has it in" for the beautiful red-cheeked Ben Davis, with trunk like an oak and branches as tough as a hickory, its roots reaching in every direction, hunting for the moisture with which to feed its luscious fruit, that smiles on and gladdens the heart of the man who planted it near his cot, I will come again and show that the Ben Davis is king.—A. T. Doerr, Montgomery County, Illinois.

California's State Interest.
The average annual consumption of raisins in the United States for the last five years has been about 20,000,000 pounds, or not far from one pound per capita of population. Practically the total supply was produced in this country. In contrast the average annual consumption in California is about 100,000,000 pounds, or about 10 pounds per capita. The California raisin industry is the largest in the world.

Olga's Ash Beetle.
The beetle here shown is probably the largest beetle in this country, measuring two and a half inches in length in mature specimens. Some are even larger. It attacks ash trees, and can be checked by spraying with Paris green. Another method is to

jar the trees, causing the beetles to fall, when they may be destroyed singly. The thorax and wing covers are of a pale olive-brown, spotted with black. The legs are shining black. These insects are quite easily kept in check, from the fact that they seldom appear in very large numbers. They give off a very offensive odor, which is very noticeable when there are a number of them in a locality.

The Clover Root Borer.
One of the greatest obstacles to the growing of clover is the clover root borer, an immigrant from Europe. Destructive as has been this pest in the United States, in Europe it is an insect of no consequence. Indeed the Europeans are not at all certain that it ever feeds on the roots of the clover plants. In this country it not only feeds extensively on the clover plant, but multiplies beyond anything ever known in its European history. It illustrates the same general law that seems to apply to both weeds and insects coming to this country from beyond either ocean, namely, an increase in profligacy and a change in kind of food preferred.

So destructive has this insect become in this country that in some states some years half of the clover fields have been ruined. White clover seems to be free from the attacks of this insect, while Mammoth clover suffers most severely. Common Red clover is freely fed upon, while Alsike clover is attacked to some extent. The root borer prefers the large, succulent tap root, which may be why White clover escapes entirely and Alsike to some extent.

Attempts have been made to kill the root borer by putting chemicals on the ground in the shape of fertilizers; but no favorable results have been obtained. Plowing under and reseeded have given little reason for trusting in that method. The only method that seems to promise anything is to abandon clover growing for two or three years on ground where the pest has established itself.

It is believed, however, that the borers will gradually lose their voraciousness and aggressiveness, and perhaps sink to a position in this country similar to that occupied by them in Europe. The foundation of this hope lies in the reported fact that where the pest was most destructive a dozen years ago, clover is now grown without trouble.

Should Plums Be Thinned?
It pays to thin most fruits, but it is an open question if it pays to thin all fruits. Thinning affects different fruits differently. When peaches are thinned the remaining peaches make enough extra growth to about make up for the loss of the ones that have been taken off. Moreover the ones that are left bring a higher price. This is true to a less degree with apples and pears. But when we get down to plums the same law does not seem to hold good. Professor Goff of Madison last year thinned his plums and made the following observations: Thinning to one inch apart decreased the yield 35 per cent and thinning to 2 inches apart decreased the yield 61 per cent. The professor says: "Where the market does not discriminate in price between medium-sized and large plums thinning will not pay unless the trees decidedly overbear." In thinning, all plums stand by the crucible should be removed. Early thinning is desirable, but late thinning is better than none. The plums should be left not nearer than 18 or 20 inches apart. Plums on most of the American trees should be thinned to prevent the trees from

being overgrown, and the next season to be imported from southern Europe. As we had no native grapes suitable for the production of raisins, varieties of raisin grapes had to be imported from Spain twenty-five years ago, but the industry did not reach commercial importance until 1858-59. Production that year amounted to 2,400,000 pounds against 2,500,000 pounds the previous year, and imports declined about 25,000,000 pounds. The industry increased rapidly until the high mark was reached in 1895 with a production of 103,000,000 pounds, and that same year imports fell to 15,921,373 pounds. Since that time the production of raisins in California has declined, but this, it is claimed, has been due to adverse climatic conditions and not to any decrease of interest in the industry. Production, however, has been almost equal to the demand, and although imports have not wholly ceased, they are practically offset by exports of California raisins, which are now sent in small and, it may be said, experimental quantities to all parts of the world.

Olga's Ash Beetle.
The beetle here shown is probably the largest beetle in this country, measuring two and a half inches in length in mature specimens. Some are even larger. It attacks ash trees, and can be checked by spraying with Paris green. Another method is to

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jar the trees, causing the beetles to fall, when they may be destroyed singly. The thorax and wing covers are of a pale olive-brown, spotted with black. The legs are shining black. These insects are quite easily kept in check, from the fact that they seldom appear in very large numbers. They give off a very offensive odor, which is very noticeable when there are a number of them in a locality.

The Clover Root Borer.
One of the greatest obstacles to the growing of clover is the clover root borer, an immigrant from Europe. Destructive as has been this pest in the United States, in Europe it is an insect of no consequence. Indeed the Europeans are not at all certain that it ever feeds on the roots of the clover plants. In this country it not only feeds extensively on the clover plant, but multiplies beyond anything ever known in its European history. It illustrates the same general law that seems to apply to both weeds and insects coming to this country from beyond either ocean, namely, an increase in profligacy and a change in kind of food preferred.

So destructive has this insect become in this country that in some states some years half of the clover fields have been ruined. White clover seems to be free from the attacks of this insect, while Mammoth clover suffers most severely. Common Red clover is freely fed upon, while Alsike clover is attacked to some extent. The root borer prefers the large, succulent tap root, which may be why White clover escapes entirely and Alsike to some extent.

Attempts have been made to kill the root borer by putting chemicals on the ground in the shape of fertilizers; but no favorable results have been obtained. Plowing under and reseeded have given little reason for trusting in that method. The only method that seems to promise anything is to abandon clover growing for two or three years on ground where the pest has established itself.

It is believed, however, that the borers will gradually lose their voraciousness and aggressiveness, and perhaps sink to a position in this country similar to that occupied by them in Europe. The foundation of this hope lies in the reported fact that where the pest was most destructive a dozen years ago, clover is now grown without trouble.

Should Plums Be Thinned?
It pays to thin most fruits, but it is an open question if it pays to thin all fruits. Thinning affects different fruits differently. When peaches are thinned the remaining peaches make enough extra growth to about make up for the loss of the ones that have been taken off. Moreover the ones that are left bring a higher price. This is true to a less degree with apples and pears. But when we get down to plums the same law does not seem to hold good. Professor Goff of Madison last year thinned his plums and made the following observations: Thinning to one inch apart decreased the yield 35 per cent and thinning to 2 inches apart decreased the yield 61 per cent. The professor says: "Where the market does not discriminate in price between medium-sized and large plums thinning will not pay unless the trees decidedly overbear." In thinning, all plums stand by the crucible should be removed. Early thinning is desirable, but late thinning is better than none. The plums should be left not nearer than 18 or 20 inches apart. Plums on most of the American trees should be thinned to prevent the trees from

being overgrown, and the next season to be imported from southern Europe. As we had no native grapes suitable for the production of raisins, varieties of raisin grapes had to be imported from Spain twenty-five years ago, but the industry did not reach commercial importance until 1858-59. Production that