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IN THE MIDST OF ALARMS

ROBT. BARR, IN LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

CHAPTER II.—(CONTINUED.)

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter. I have it somewhere. He returned me the prepaid envelope and reminded me that United States stamps were of no use in Canada, which of course I should have remembered. But he didn't pay the postage on his own letter, so that I had to fork out double. Still, I don't mind that, only as an indication of his meanness. He went on to say that of all the members of our class you—you!—were the only one who had reflected credit on it. That was the insult. The idea of his making such a statement, when I told him I was on the New York Argus! Credit to the class, indeed! I wonder if he ever heard of Brown, after he was expelled. You know, of course. No? Well, Brown by his own exertions became President of the Alum Bank in New York, wrecked it, and got off to Canada with a clear half-million. Yes, sir. I saw him in Quebec not six months ago. Keeps the finest open and carriage in the city, and lives in a palace. Could buy old Scragmore a thousand times and never feel it. Most liberal contributor to the cause of education that there is in Canada. He says education made him, and he's not a man to go back on education. And yet Scragmore has the cheek to say that you were the only man in the class who reflects credit on it!"

The professor smiled quietly, as the excited journalist took a cooling sip of the cobbler.

"You see, Yates, people's opinions differ. A man like Brown may not be Principal Scragmore's ideal. The Principal may be local in his ideals of a successful man or of one who reflects credit on his teaching."

"Local? You bet he's local. Too darned local for me. I would do that man good to live in New York for a year. But I'm going to get even with him. I'm going to write him up. I'll give him a column and a half, see if I don't. I'll get his photograph and publish a newspaper portrait of him. If that doesn't make him quake he's a cast-iron man. Say, you haven't a photograph of old Scrag that you can send me, have you?"

"I have, but I won't lend it for such a purpose. However, never mind the Principal. Tell me your plans. I am at your disposal for a couple of weeks, or longer if necessary."

"Good boy! Well, I'll tell you how it is. I want rest and quiet and the woods for a week or two. This is how it happened. I have been steadily at the grindstone, except for a while in the hospital, and you will admit, is not much of a vacation. The work interests me, and I am always in the thick of it. Now, it's like this in the newspaper business; your chief is never the person to suggest that you take a vacation. He is usually short of men and long on things to do, so if you don't worry him into letting you off he won't lose any sleep over it. He's content to let well enough alone every time. Then there always someone who wants to get away on pressing business,—grandfather's funeral, and that sort of thing,—so if a fellow is content to work right along his chief is quite content to let him. That's the way affairs have gone for years with me. The other day I went over to Washington to interview a Senator on the political prospects. I tell you what it is Stilly, without bragging, there are some big men in the States whom no one but me can interview. And yet old Scrag says I'm no credit to his class! Why, last year my political predictions were telegraphed all over this country, and have since appeared in the European press. No credit! By Jove, I would like to have old Scrag in a twenty-four-foot ring with thin gloves on, for about ten minutes.

"I doubt if he would shine under these circumstances. But never mind him. He spoke, for once, without due reflection, and with perhaps an exaggerated remembrance of your college references. What happened when you went to Washington?

"A strange thing happened. When I was admitted to the Senator's library I saw another fellow, whom I thought I knew, sitting there. I said to the Senator, 'I will come when you are alone.' The Senator jumped up in surprise, and said, "I am alone.' I didn't say anything, but went on with my interview, and the other fellow sat there all the time. I didn't like this, but said nothing, for the Senator is not a man to offend, and it is by not offending these fellows that I can get the information I want. Well, the other fellow came out with me, and as I looked at him I saw he was myself. This did me a trifle more as strange at the time, but I argued with him all the way to New York, and tried to show him that he wasn't myself at all, and I wrote up the interview while the other fellow interfering all the while, so I compromised, and half the time put in what he suggested and half the time what I wanted in myself. When the paper editor went over the stuff he looked alarmed. I told him frankly just how I had been interfered with, and he looked none the less alarmed when I had finished. He sent at once for a doctor. The doctor metaphorically took me apart, and then said to my chief, 'This man is simply worked to death. He must have a vacation, and a real one, with absolutely nothing to think of, or he is going to go to pieces, and that with a suddenness that will surprise everybody.' The chief, to my astonishment, consented without a murmur, and even upbraided me for not going away sooner. Then the doctor said to me, 'You get some companion, some man with no brains, if possible, who will not discuss politics, who has no opinion on anything that any sane man would care to talk about, and who wouldn't say a lively thing if he tried for a year. Get such a man to go off to the woods somewhere. Up in Maine or in Canada. As far away from post-offices and telegraph offices as possible. And, by the way, don't leave your address at the Argus office.' This happened, Stilly, when he described the man so graphically, I at once thought of you.

"I am deeply gratified, I am sure," said the professor, with the ghost of a smile, "to be promptly remembered in such a connection, and if I can be of service to you I will be very glad. I take it, then, that you have no intention of stopping in Boston."

"No, not I haven't. I'm in for the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks, bearded with moss and green in the shelving or other—I forget the rest. I don't mean lying on paper and lie on my back, spread-on the sward or into a hammock. I'm going to avoid all boarding-houses or fashionable summer resorts and go in for the primeval forest."

"There ought to be some nice places along the lake shore."

"No, sir. No lake shore for me. It would remind me of the Lake Shore Railway when it was a dam long Branch when it was enough. No, sir. The woods, the primeval woods. I have hired a tent and lots of cooking-things. I'm going to take that tent over to Canada to-morrow, and I propose we engage a man with a team at somewhere into the woods, fifty or twenty miles away. We shall have to be near a farm-house, so that we can get fresh butter, milk, and eggs. This, of course, is a disadvantage; but I shall try to get hold of some one who has never even heard of New York.'

"You may find that somewhat difficult."

"Oh, I don't know. I have great hopes of the lack of intelligence in the Canadians."

"Oh, is the narrowest," said the professor, "are those who think themselves the most cosmopolitan."

"Right you are!" cried Yates, skimming lightly over the remark and seeing nothing applicable to his case in it. "Well, I'm back in about half a ton, more or less, of baggage, and have brought an empty jug."

"An empty one?"

"Yes. Among the few things worth having that the Canadians possess is good whiskey. Besides, the empty jug will save trouble at the custom-house. I don't suppose Canadian rye is as good as the Kentucky article, but you and I will have to scrain along on it for a while. And talking of jugs, just press the button once again."

The professor did so, saying,

"The doctor made no remark, I suppose, about drinking less or smoking less, did he?"

"In my case? Well, come to think of it, there was some conversation in that direction. Don't remember at the moment just what it amounted to; but all physicians have their little fads, you know. It doesn't do to humor them too much.—Ah, boy, there you are again. Well, the professor wants another drink. Make it a gin fizz this time, and put plenty of ice in it but don't neglect the gin on that account. Certainly: charge it to room 518."

CHAPTER III.

"What's all this tackle?" asked the burly and somewhat red-faced customs-officer at Fort Erie.

"This," said Yates, "is a tent, with the poles and pegs appertaining thereto. These are a number of packages of tobacco, on which I shall doubtless have to pay something into the exchequer of Her Majesty. This is a jar used for the holding of liquids. I beg to call your attention to the fact that it is at present empty, which unfortunately prevents me making me a libation to the rites of good-fellowship. What my friend has in that valise I don't know, but I suppose a gambling-outfit, and would advise you to search him."

"My valise contains books principally, with some articles of wearing-apparel," said the professor, opening his grip.

The customs-officer looked with suspicion on the whole outfit, and evidently did not like the tone of the American. He seemed to be treating the customs department in a light and airy manner, and the officer was too much impressed by the dignity of his position not to resent flippancy. Besides, there were rumors of Fenian invasion in the air, and the officer resolved that no Fenian should get into the country without paying duty.

"Where are you going with this tent?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps you can tell us. I don't know the country about here. Say, Stilly, I'm off up-town to attend to this jug. I've been empty too often myself not to sympathize with its condition. You wrestle this matter out about the tent. You know the ways of the country, whereas I don't."

It was perhaps as well that Yates left negotiations in the hands of his friend. He was quick enough to see that he made no headway with the officer but rather the opposite. He slung the jug ostentatiously over his shoulder, to the evident discomfort of the professor, and marched up the hill to the nearest tipling tavern, whistling one of the lately popular war-tunes.

"Now," he said to the bar-keeper, placing the jug tenderly on the bar, "fill that up to the nozzle with the best rye you have. Fill it with the old familiar juice, as the late poet Omar saith."

The bar-tender did as he was requested.

"Can you disguise a little of that fluid in any way so that it may be taken internally without a man suspecting what he is swallowing?"

The bar-keeper smiled. "How would a cocktail fill the vacancy?"

"I can suggest something better," replied Yates. "If you are sure you know how to make it."

The man did not resent this imputation of ignorance. He merely said, with the air of one who gives an incontrovertible answer,—

"I am a Kentucky man, myself."

"Shake," cried Yates, briefly, as he reached his hand across the bar. "How is it you happen to be here?"

"Well, I got into a little trouble in Louisville, and here I am where I can at least look at God's country."

"Hold on," protested Yates. "You're making only one cocktail."

"Didn't you say one?" asked the man, pausing in the compounding.

"Bless you, I never saw one cocktail made in my life. You are with me on this."

"Just as you say," replied the barber, as he prepared enough for two.

"Now, I'll tell you my fix," said Yates, confidentially. "I've got a tent and some camp things down below at the custom-house handy, and I want to get them taken into the woods where I can camp out with a friend. I want a place where we can have absolute rest and quiet. Do you know the country round here? Perhaps you could recommend a spot."

"Well, for all the time I've been here I know precious little about the back country. I've been down the road to the Falls, but never back in the woods. I suppose you want some place by the lake or the river?"

"No, I don't. I want to get clear back into the forest,—if there is a forest."

"Well, there's a man in to-day from somewhere near Ridgeway, I think. He's got a hay-rack with him, and that would be just the thing to take your tent and poles. Wouldn't be very comfortable travelling for you, but it would be all right for the tent, if it's a big one."

"This will suit us exactly. We don't care a cent about the comfort. Roughing it is what we came for. Where will I find him?"

"Oh, he'll be along here soon. That's his team tied there on the side-street. If he happens to be in good humor he'll take your things, and as like as not give you a place to camp in his woods. Hiram Bartlett's his name. And, talking of the old Nick himself, here he is.—Say, Mr. Bartlett, this gentleman was wondering if you couldn't tote out some of his belongings. He's going out your way."

Bartlett was a somewhat uncouth and wiry specimen of the Canadian farmer, who evidently paid little attention to the subject of dress. He said nothing, but looked in a lowering way at Yates with something of contempt and suspicion in his glance.

Yates had one receipt for making the acquaintance of all mankind. "Come in, Mr. Bartlett," he said, cheerily, "and try one of my friend's excellent cocktails."

"I take mine straight," growled Bartlett, gruffly, although he stepped inside the open door. "I don't wonder you Yankees mixtures in mine. Plain whiskey's good enough for any man, if he is a man. I don't take no water, neither. I've got trouble enough."

The bar-tender winked at Yates as he shoved the decanter over to the new-comer.

"Right you are," assented Yates, cordially.

The farmer did not thaw out in the least because of this prompt agreement with him, but sipped his whiskey gloomily, as if it were a most disagreeable medicine.

"What did you want me to take out?" he said at last.

"A friend and a tent, a jug of whiskey, and a lot of jolly good tobacco."

"How much are you willing to pay?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'm always willing to do what's right. How would five dollars strike you?"

The farmer scowled and shook his head.

"Too much," he said, as Yates was about to offer more. "Tain't worth it. Two-and-a-half would be about the right figure. Don'no but that's too much. I'll think on it going home and charge you what it's worth. I'll be ready to drive in about an hour, if that suits. That's my team on the other side of the road. If it's gone when you come back I'm gone, an' you'll have to get somebody else."

With this Bartlett drew his coat-sleeve across his mouth and departed.

"That's him exactly," said the bar-keeper. "He's the most cantankerous crank in the township. And say, let me give you a pointer. If the subject of 1812 comes up,—the war, you know,—you'd better admit that we got thrashed out of our boots; that is, if you want to get along with Hiram. He hates Yankees like poison."

"And did we get thrashed in 1812?" asked Yates, who was more familiar with current topics than with the history of the past.

"Blest if I know. Hiram says we did. I told him once that we got what we wanted from old England, and he nearly hauled me over the bar. So I give you the warning, if you want to get along with him."

"Thank you. I'll remember it. So long."

This friendly hint from the man in the tavern offers a key to the solution of the problem of Yates's success on the New York press. He could get news when no other man could. Flippant and shallow as he undoubtedly was, he somehow got into the inner confidence of all sorts of men in a way that made them give him an inkling of anything that was going on for the mere love of him, and Yates often got valuable assistance from his acquaintances which other reporters could not get for money.

The New-Yorker found the professor sitting on a bench by the custom-house, chatting with the officer, and gazing at the rapidly-flowing broad blue river in front of them.

"I have got a man," said Yates, "who will take us into the wilderness in about an hour's time. Suppose we explore the town. I expect nobody will run away with the tent till we come back."

"I'll look after that," said the officer; and, thanking him, the two friends strolled up the street. They were a trifle late in getting back, and when they reached the tavern they found Bartlett just on the point of driving home. He gruffly consented to take them if they did not keep him more than five minutes loading up. The tent and paraphernalia were speedily loaded on the hay-rack, and then Bartlett drove up to the tavern and waited, saying nothing, although he had been in such a hurry a few moments before. Yates did not like to ask the cause of the delay, so the three sat there silently. After a while Yates said, as mildly as he could,

"Are you waiting for any one, Mr. Bartlett?"

"Yes," answered the driver, in a surly tone. "I'm waiting for you to go in for that jug. I don't suppose you filled it to leave on the counter."

"By Jove!" cried Yates, springing off. "I had forgotten all about it, which shows the extraordinary effect this country has on me already." The professor frowned, but Yates came out merrily with the jug in his hand, and Bartlett started his team. They drove out of the village and up a slight hill, going for a mile or two along a straight and somewhat sandy road. Then they turned to what Bartlett said in answer to a question by the professor was the Ridge Road, and there was no need to ask why it was so termed. It was a good highway, but rather stony, the road being, in places, on the bare rock. It paid not the slightest attention to Euclid's definition of a straight line, and in this respect was rather a welcome change from the average American road. Sometimes they passed along avenues of overbranching trees, which were evidently relics of the forest that once covered all the district. The road followed the ridge, and on each side were frequently to be seen wide vistas of lower-lying country. All along the road were comfortable farm-houses; and it was evident that a prosperous community flourished along the ridge.

Bartlett spoke only once, and then to the professor, who sat next to him.

"You a Canadian?"

"Yes."

"Where's he from?"

"My friend is from New York," answered the innocent professor.

"Humph!" grunted Bartlett, scowling deeper than ever, after which he became silent again. The team was not going very fast, although neither the load nor the roads were heavy. Bartlett was muttering a good deal to himself, and he now and then brought down his whip savagely on one or the other of the horses, but the moment the unfortunate animals quickened their pace he hauled them in roughly. Nevertheless they were going quickly enough to be overtaking a young woman who was walking on along. Although she must have heard them coming over the rocky road, she did not turn her head, but walked along with the free and springy step of one who is not only accustomed to walking, but who likes it. Bartlett paid no attention to the girl; the professor was endeavoring to read his thin book as well as a man might who is being jolted frequently; but Yates, as soon as he recognized that the pedestrian was young, pulled up his collar, adjusted his necktie with care, and placed his hat in a somewhat more jaunty and fetching position.

"Are you going to offer that girl a ride?" he said to Bartlett.

"No, I'm not."

"I think that is rather uncivil," he added, forgetting the warning he had had.

"You do, oh? Well you offer her a ride. You hired the team."

"By Jove, I will," said Yates, placing his hand on the outside of the rack and springing lightly to the ground.

"Likely thing," growled Bartlett to the professor, "that she's going to ride with the like of him."

The professor looked for a moment a Yates, politely taking off his hat to the apparently astonished young woman, but he said nothing.

"Fur two cents," continued Bartlett, gathering up the reins, "I'd whip up the horses and let him walk the rest of the way."

"From what I know of my friend," answered the professor, slowly, "I think he would not object in the slightest."

Bartlett muttered something to himself, and seemed to change his mind about galloping his horses.

Meanwhile, Yates, as has been said, took off his hat with great politeness to the fair pedestrian, and as he did so he noticed with a thrill of admiration that she was handsome. Yates always had an eye for the beautiful.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Saved From Drowning.

A physician owning a country-seat in Muskoka where his family were accustomed to spend the summer months, taught his boys to swim as soon as they were out of the nursery. His farm bordered upon a lake, where the greater part of the boys' time was taken up with boating, fishing, and swimming. One was nine and the other six years old, and they were expected to take care of themselves.

One day the younger child was seized by a cramp while he was in the water, and after screaming for help sank out of sight. The brother swam out boldly and got an arm under him before the third downward plunge.

The younger was unconscious and helpless, but the older one contrived to keep him afloat with one arm while striking out with the other for the shore. He drew the little fellow out of the water, white, motionless and apparently dead.

The rescuer had heard his father describe the treatment for resuscitating persons taken from the water when nearly drowned. He could not remember it in detail, but he was impressed with the necessity of prompt action.

He did not attempt to summon help from the house, which was a long way off. Placing the boy on his face with his wrist under the forehead he paused a moment and then turned the body on the side.

The crude attempt to restore respiration was repeated several times, until he was delighted to find the lips moving and the eyes opening. The young physician had not made a strictly scientific application of the rules for artificial respiration, but the little fellow's breath was restored.

Then two additional rules mentioned by the father were remembered. The body was briskly rubbed, and then bundled up with the jackets and dry clothes which were on the bank.

With these measures for restoring circulation recovery was well-nigh complete. Then taking the child on his back the rescuer started for the house where the mother received them with open arms and anxious face.

The patient was put to bed and the father summoned from town, but precautionary measures were hardly necessary. The nine-year-old physician had done his work so successfully that scarcely more than a sleeping draught was required for the night.

The father was proud of the boy, and he had a right to be.

"I could not have done better myself," he said to the lad. "You must be a doctor when you grow up. Indeed you are one already."

Every manly boy who has the opportunity learns to swim as a matter of course. But there are few men or boys who have their wits about them, and know what to do in an emergency when a drowning person is to be resuscitated.

Sometimes a brave rescuer, after risking his life, is baffled on shore by his helpless burden. It is an art that is readily acquired.

Building From the Top Downward.

A great building of twelve stories in course of construction in Chicago presents a sight that would dumfound an architect of the old school. The steel skeleton framework is finished up to the twelfth story, and the stonework is done from the foundation up to the first story. Then there is a skip of two stories, and the exterior walls of terra cotta, in imitation of stone, have been started at the third story and are being run up from that point. In other words, the exterior of the upper part of the building is being completed while the lower stories are mere skeletons of uprights and cross-pieces, but being of iron, they furnish a strong enough support for the operations of the builders. This method of construction is becoming very common in Chicago, and it is thus explained: According to contract, the building must be ready for occupancy by next May, and the contractors can not afford to waste any of the brief time allowed them. The walls of the first three stories are to be of stone, and as this portion of the work will not be completed for two months yet, the contractors started the terra cotta section of the walls where the stone will leave off and are travelling upward, leaving the stone work of the lower stories to follow. The terra cotta blocks are so made that they fit exactly around the big upright steel beams. At the same time steel rods, or anchors, as they are called, run through the wings of the beams, thereby anchoring the former to the latter. It is these anchors that hold the terra cotta wall in place and furnish the supports for the blocks to rest upon.

Ten thousand tons of salmon, 30,000,000 cans, were pickled this season in the canneries on the Fraser River, B.C.

AGRICULTURAL.

Cellar for Storing Roots.

Fourteen hundred bushels of roots will require between 2,150 and 2,200 cubic feet of storage-room. The main object in storing roots is to keep them at a uniform temperature as little above the freezing point as practicable. One of the best ways to do this is simply to pile them in long, narrow piles on well-drained ground, convenient to the place where they are to be fed. Make an excavation about a foot deep and place a layer of clean straw beneath the roots. When the pile of roots has been made, cover thickly with straw and then with a foot of earth. At distances of six or eight feet along the apex of the pile, a draintile should be inserted to give ventilation. For a permanent cellar, in many cases the most convenient arrangement is simply to partition off a corner of the barn basement by setting up 10 to 12-inch studs, boarding on both sides and stuffing the interstices with chaff or cut straw. Often a very convenient root cellar may be made in a gravelly or sandy bank adjoining the barn cellar, says American Gardening. This arrangement is especially convenient where the root-cellar can be so built that it can be filled from the driveway in the second floor of the barn. Where a cellar is built in this way, grout walls, cemented on the inside, should be used, both as a protection from cold and against rats. The relative advantages and cost of these various ways of storing roots will, of course, depend entirely upon circumstances and surroundings.

The Pig Pen.

If you see a good thing written by some hog man that has given it thought and study, on improved feeding and care, don't stay in the old rut and say you know better.

The essential feature of the proper care of hogs at this season of the year is the giving them as great a variety of food as possible until they are ready to go into the fattening pens.

If you commence crowding hogs you must continue until maturity or the hog will be unequally proportioned. The safest plan is to push the growth and market as soon as ready.

One of the processes conducive to fattening an animal is laziness, rest. Contented happy, well fed hogs lay on flesh (fat) much faster if kept where they are undisturbed, have no means of rambling and no occasion for crying for food.

Eating Wool.

When sheep eat their wool it indicates either that they are suffering from indigestion and an abnormal appetite, as cows are at times when they eat wood, or that they are suffering from some irritation of the skin which compels them to bite themselves and thus pull off the wool. Marsh hay alone is such poor food for sheep that that may be reasonably excused if they do try to improve their rations by adding even a mouthful of wool, dry as it is, to the poor feeding. It is quite probable, too, that these sheep are pestered by ticks, which are a great torment to them, burrying their heads in the flesh and sucking the blood. The remedy is to give the sheep better food, as some grain, oats being the best, and if possible roots of some kind, as with the marsh hay alone sheep cannot be kept in a healthful condition. Then sheep should be examined to discover if they are troubled with ticks, and if so they should be freed from the pest immediately.

Poultry for Market.

For scalding poultry the water should be as near the boiling point as possible, without actually boiling. The advantage to this is, the outer skin becomes cooked or set, and so does not peel off with the feathers and thus be ragged. The fowl being held by the legs, should be immersed and lifted up and down into and out of the water three or four times, then, continuing to hold in the same way with one hand, pluck off the feathers with the other without a moment's delay after taking out of the water. If skillfully handled, in this way the feathers and pin-feathers may all be removed without breaking the skin. Wherever the skin is broken exposure of the flesh to the air injures its appearance and consequently injures of the poultry.

Too Much Hay.

It is an acknowledged fact that farmers feed too much hay to their horses, says National Stockman. Agricultural writers tell them to feed less, but they do not tell them how to keep them from eating their bedding. If they do not have hay enough they will eat it up clean as far as they can reach. Now, I do not like to have my horses lie on the bare floor, neither do I like to have them eat too much hay. It is not good for them and there is too much money in it this year, so I give each horse about a bushel of hay and a large one of straw as fresh feed, giving enough so that what is left in the manger will be eaten well at night. Horses kept in this manner will look well, feel well and sleep comfortably. I have learned by costly experience that it pays to keep salt by the horses all the time and to feed a little oil meal every day.

Practical Pointers.

Time is money, to the farmer if it is to any man under the sun.

It is estimated that a person will eat 35 pounds of butter per annum.

There is little or no real profit in an "average" crop.

It is poor policy to feed high-priced grain to a low-priced horse.

Pick up the old roofing, pickets, boards or anything that contains old nails. They are dangerous.

A majority of farmers consider what the family use is no part of the farm profits.

Prof. A. J. Cook criticises some of the published formulæ for kerosene emulsion as unavailable in case of "hard" water.

The way to destroy next winter's ticks, lice and scab is to soak the sheep in some approved sheep dip this fall.

One of the costliest "middle men" farmers have to support is an indifferent stallion, of which there are vastly too many in the country.

Keep the poultry house clean and in good sanitary condition. Otherwise there is no profit in the business, for loss by disease over-balances the income.

Every farm should have a well kept lawn and flower garden. It costs little work and less money, and will be a source of joy to all.

The creameryman should be an evangelist; he should talk business to the patrons and tell them the best way to succeed in dairying.

The winter quarters of the germ of innumerable destructive insects are in the piles of old rubbish, half rotted wood, etc.; burn them.

It is not the old tool or machine that deserves to be thrown away, but the worn out one; and it may not be in the last state even if old; it all depends on the care it has received.

Water drowns plants as it does animals. It prevents access of the air, which is as needful to plants as it is to animals. It so also dilutes and weakens the plant food in the soil that the roots cannot take in enough for their support.

Fences are a necessary evil, to be dispensed with if possible, and to be made as inconspicuous as possible if you must have them. No dooryard was ever enclosed with a paling fence without marring its beauty.

To be sure, there are apple trees on most farms, but apples are but one kind of fruit, and there is not one bushel of pears, cherries or plums, not to mention grapes and berries, grown where there ought to be one hundred, and could be, too, with but little effort.

It is well, first of all, for farmers to engage in a political enterprise. They should study the science of government, questions of the tariff and currency. Family, neighborhood or grange discussions of these subjects would be a good exercise for the winter evenings.

The butter made on one farm differs from that made on the next, and this difficulty is one that is objected to by dealers. On large dairy farms, where butter is a specialty, and the modern appliances are used in order to manufacture a high grade of butter, competition with creameries can be successful.

As a rule, a small orchard is best set conveniently near to the dwelling; but not until good drainage is secured, either by tiling or open ditches. Fruit trees do not like to have wet feet. It makes them discouraged. The plot selected ought first to be cultivated and well fertilized for two or three seasons.

The race-horse has become a commercial asp-sucker, drawing on all the resources known to man. Races are not so much a matter of speed, as of tricks and fraud that are known to the silk cap fraternity and are used to beat the horse that has the most money bet on him.

Not one farmer in 20 is handled right. I have often talked with travelling tree peddlers and canvassers for nurseries, and one of my questions to them is: "How can you sell so many fruit trees every year, as I have seen you and others doing for 30 years and more, and still keep at it?" Their answer is, most frequently: "Oh! not one tree in 20 ever amounts to anything, the way farmers handle them."

A CANADIAN FROM JAPAN.

Some of the Interesting Experiences of Capt. Frank Brown of Yokohama and Oakville.

Capt. Frank Brown of Oakville, master of one of a line of fine steamers running between Japan and China, was in Toronto last week. His six months leave of absence is drawing to a close, and he will shortly be leaving for Vancouver, whence he sails on the Empress of India for Japan. Twenty years ago Capt. Brown was well known on the Canadian lakes, but about that time took a trip to England, which resulted in his engaging in undertakings that have kept him away from Canada, save for occasional visits, ever since. While in England he was engaged by the Church Missionary Society to superintend the construction on the Clyde of a steamer which it was the purpose of that organization to place at the disposal of the late Bishop Crowther to enable him to better prosecute his mission work among his fellow-Africans. When the steamer was constructed Capt. Brown was entrusted with the task of

TAKING IT TO AFRICA,

picking up the celebrated African at Sierra Leone, and then proceeding up the Niger River until the country which was to be the scene of Crowther's labor was reached. Capt. Brown has a curious story to tell of this trip. As they proceeded up the river the party found it necessary to propitiate the chiefs of the various tribes by whose territory they passed. They were greeted on one occasion by a fierce looking chief, the head of a powerful tribe, who marched under the shelter of a huge umbrella supported above him by a dozen or so of his subjects. The missionary asked Capt. Brown to be sure and find something as a gift for the chief that would please him. The captain thought for a moment, and then determined to make the chief a present of a fine uniformed waistcoat, with scarlet lining and big brass buttons. The chief was without a waistcoat; in fact his dress consisted only of a cloth around his loins. The waistcoat was turned over to the chief, who

WAS DELIGHTED WITH IT,

and decided to put it on there and then. The article of attire was new to him, however, and he was not properly instructed in its uses. Before Dr. Crowther and Capt. Brown realized what he was doing, the chief had thrust his legs through the armholes of the waistcoat and was buttoning it around himself. The sailor and the missionary looked gravely on, and the chief felt pleased and proud at his fine appearance.

After Capt. Brown had finished his mission with the Crowther steamer he was employed by the Royal Geographical Society to explore the Niger River. A year or two later, or fifteen years ago, he became an officer of the Japan Steamship Company, and has remained in their service ever since. The captain has a great store of interesting information and experience about the empire of the Mikado. He thinks much might be done in the way of opening up a larger trade between Canada and Japan, but admits that freight rates stand somewhat in the way, England's great traffic with the east enabling her steamers to bring freight at a very low rate to Japan.

Capt. Brown is a hale and hearty sailor of perhaps 50 years of age, and hopes to end his service in the east in the course of a few years, when he looks forward to spending the rest of his days in Canada.

SHIP CANALS.

The Struggle of the Manchester Canal Co. —An Enterprise Which Dwarfs All Previous Ones.

The chairman of the Manchester ship canal has written to Lord Rosebery, foreign secretary, asking him to instruct the British consuls and agents abroad that a new port will shortly come into existence. The canal has been opened to Weston Point for two years; it is now complete to the London & Northern railway crossing at Acton. The railroads get $500,000 alleged damages; they claimed $2,750,000. The award seems to Manchester a large sum to be mulcted in for the privilege of a ship navigation, for which the corporation of Manchester has put up $22,500,000 in addition to the $50,000,000 furnished by private capital.

The enterprise, says the New York Sun, has had a tough struggle for existence against the combined opposition of Liverpool and the railroads running that port. But that struggle is now won, and the struggle for traffic will shortly begin. During the last half year 708,169 tons of merchandise have been carried over the opened portion of the ship canal, as against 123,579 tons so carried during the corresponding period of the year before. Recently a vessel, laden with 4,000 tons and drawing twenty-one feet of water sailed from the canal for Calcutta.

Amsterdam has had an experience not wholly dissimilar from that of Manchester. At last, after twenty years of struggle against the jealousy of neighboring cities, she has established better communication by the Merwede canal with the Rhenish provinces of Germany. Even now she has had to put up with a less satisfactory route than that contended for; the canal has only a minimum width on the bottom of 65½ feet and a minimum depth of 10½ feet. Transit that formerly needed from sixteen to eighteen hours is now done in seven. The canal is free of tolls.

The opening of the Corinth canal was noted not long since. This is not strictly a selfhelp canal, having been constructed by a private company which got most of its capital in France. This canal does not cross the isthmus at the narrowest spot or even the lowest. The question of surface drainage was mainly considered in choosing the line. It transpired that almost the identical course chosen by Nero's Roman engineers had been followed, for at a distance one from another of 151 feet two parallel lines of shafts were found, forming part of an excavation 229 feet wide between them. A similar system to Nero's was followed on the modern work.

French political enterprise in Siam has been quickly followed by engineering projects. The canal which the English declined undertaking is now likely to be built across the Malay peninsula. The selected point is in the Samsam provinces, where the canal could be connected with the inland sea, which could easily be rendered navigable. The French wish, it is said, to secure thirty miles of territory on either side of the water way. This scheme, if carried out, would allow ships to take a short cut to Saigon without passing through the straits of Malacca and would be important from a political as well as from a commercial point of view.

All of these projects, except that of Manchester, are dwarfed by the new seaway between the North sea and the Baltic now under construction by Germany. The total length of this noble work is about sixty-one English miles, the width at the water line is 197 feet, and at the bottom, at the top of the slopes, seventy-two feet; the total depth is nearly twenty-eight feet. It is shown that not only will two of the largest Baltic merchant vessels pass one another without difficulty, but also that there is room for a vessel of this type to give way to one of the finest ironclads of the German navy, such as the Koenig Wilhelm, with a displacement of 9,757 tons. Special passing stations have, however, also been arranged at intervals, similar to those on the Suez canal. The cost of the work was originally estimated at $39,000,000. It promises to be completed within the estimate.

A Stratagem.

Mr. Minks: "That girl was decent enough to black the stoves before going, I see."

Mrs. Minks: "No, I blacked them myself, and it's lucky I did."

"Lucky?"

"Yes, indeed. Mrs. de Fashion and Mrs. de Style called right in the midst of it, and so I just put a little more blacking on my face and went to the door and told them I wasn't in. They said they would call again."

"What horrible smell is that?" he asked as he unpacked his winter clothes. "That's the stuff I used to keep the moths out of them," his wife answered proudly. "Well, it must have answered the purpose. I know it'll keep me out of 'em."

MERRY MOMENTS.

"Train robbers are after big game out west." "Yes; they're tackling the porters now."

"Billy was too much bent on getting that girl." "Yes; and the first he knew he was broke."

"Is she well married?" "I should say so. She's been trying for years to get a divorce and can't."

Clara—"Mr. Nicefello said my face was classic. What is classic?" Dora—"Oh, most anything old."

"You say you pity me, but cannot love me." "Yes." "But pity is akin to love, is it not?" "Yes but only a poor relation."

Gunson—"Another increase in your family, eh? Son or a daughter?" Bilboe (gloomily)—"Son-in-law."

He—"It makes me a better man every time I kiss you, darling." She—"Oh, my, Charlie! How good you must be now."

Visitor—"Do you regret the past?" Convicted counterfeiter—"Oh, no. It's what didn't pass that I feel bad about."

"Didn't you promise to love, honor and obey me?" "Yes; but the minister has drawn me all my life, and he knew I didn't mean it."

A.—"It was Lawyer Townsman that won my lawsuit for me." B.—"Why I thought he was on the opposing side." A.—"He was."

"Well, Johnny, how are you? Do you find dollars scarce, as everyone else does?" "I'm worse off than that. I even find half dollars scarce."

Mr. Lingalate (jocosely)—"Oh, well, Miss Marie, in this age, you know, everything goes." Miss Marie (glancing wearily at the clock)—"Some things don't."

After the Honeymoon—He—"Everybody says you married me for my money. She—"And everybody says I paid an exorbitant price for it."

Stranger—"What makes that man stop every second and act like a woman who is 'shooing' chickens?" Gothamite—"Oh, he is an ex-park policeman."

"What shall I do in such a plight?" He shouted, sore dismayed.

"I have to make a speech to-night."

"And my scrapbook I've mislaid."

"My friends were right about John," sighed the young wife. "They said that after I married him I would find him out, and so I do—out every night."

He dreamed he'd found the lost north pole

And round it tried to hover.

He woke to find the blankets gone,

His wife's house plants to cover.

Colored preacher (to his sable congregation)—"My death bredderen, dere will be a meetin' in dis yer house to-morror night, de Lawd willin'; next night wedder or no."

"This here is a funny head in the paper," said old Mrs. Jason. "It says, 'Women Who Are Talked About.' Why didn't they just say 'women' an' save their ink?"

She—"As I am to be a poor man's wife, don't you think I ought to get a cookbook?" He—"Wait a little, my pet, until we make sure