

"WHEN A'NT JERUSHY DIED."

Now, A'nt Jerushy Higinboom was middlin' well ter do. And of all her near relations was bereft. So everybody wondered, when they heard that she'd got through. Where the money was a-goin' that she left. But, sakes alive! she hadn't more'n been measured fer her shroud. When relatives sprung up from fur and wide. On the cars and on the steamboat they kep' comin' in a crowd. And they got here soon as A'nt Jerushy died. There was her grand-nephew Silas that had jest got outter jail. There was Huldly Ann, her niece, from Tennessee. There was Cousin Job, the parson, and his sister Abigail. And her ma's ha't sister's husband, Ezry B. There was Cap'n Isaac Goober, who lives some'eres down in Maine—He's a cousin on his wife Maria's side—He was goin' ter sail fer Chiny but, instead, he took the train. Fer these diggin's, soon as A'nt Jerushy died. Well, the fun'ral was a big one, and the weep was deep and grand. When them relatives was weepin' o'er the dead. But, although they was heart-broken, they was every one on hand. In the parlor when the will was bein' read. And there they sot and listened, like a pack of sheepish fools. And their tears most awful suddenly was dried. Fer they found she'd willed her fortune tew the furin mission schools. So they all got left when A'nt Jerushy died. If yer reckon that that fixed 'em, why, yer jest don't know their sort—That was only the beginnin' of the mill. Fer they each one got a lawyer and they rushed right inter court. And they tried their best at bustin' up the will. So they fought it and appealed it, while the years was slippin' past. And 'twas heard and heard, and tried, and tried, and tried. But the lawyers was the only ones that got a cent at last. Of the money left when A'nt Jerushy died. —Joe Lincoln, in L. A. W. Bulletin.

The "Spell" at Six-Mile

By J. L. Harbour

CYRUS DRAKE had come over to our house to see if I would go with him to "the spell at Six-Mile." Cyrus was 16 and I was about the same age. We lived at this time, which was long ago, in the west, in a rural neighborhood. Cyrus and I walked two miles to school together four months of the year. That was all of the "schooling" we could get, because our fathers were poor men, with large families to support, and we were needed at home. Few boys of our age ever attended any but the winter term of the school. The Drake farm adjoined my father's, and Cyrus and I were bosom friends. We sat together in the little old brick schoolhouse in one room, in which 45 or 50 boys and girls, of from five to nineteen years of age, were crowded together during the winter term of the school. The school district next to ours was called the "Six-Mile district." I hardly know why it was given this name, but it may have been because it was about six miles from the nearest town. Our social opportunities were extremely limited. Indeed, there was so little "going on" at any time that a spelling match or a singing school at the schoolhouse partook of the nature of a social gathering, and was hailed with delight by the entire district. It was seldom that anything more exciting occurred than a spelling contest between the pupils of Six-Mile and those of our district. There had been a good many of these contests, and the honors had been about equally divided. "They're going to have a spell over at Six-Mile," said Cyrus, when he came over to our house. "I've just heard about it. I guess it's for them to kind of practice up so they'll have a better chance of winning when they come over to try and spell us down next week. But that's no reason why we shouldn't go if we want to." Nor was the fact that we lived four miles from the Six-Mile schoolhouse and the night was stinging cold any reason why two sturdy, country-bred boys should stay away from the spelling school, although we would have to walk both ways. Father said I might go, and he added: "I have to go away over to Squire Hagan's to-night on a matter of business, and I'll try to come by the schoolhouse at about the time the spell is over with, and you can ride home with me in the pugg."

stretch of wood on the other side of which lay the Six-Mile schoolhouse. Homemade candles set in the windows sent forth a cheery light when we reached the schoolhouse. A number of sleds and sleighs stood outside the schoolhouse yard, the blanketed horses emitting vapor from their nostrils. "I think there's a good many here," said Cyrus. "I think so, too, judging from the sleighs and sleds outside. There's Jonas Keightly's queer old cutter." "Oh, you may be sure that old Jonas is here," said Cyrus; "catch him missing a spelling bee! We'll find him inside in his old black coat, with his ancient blue-backed spelling book in his hand watching and listening as if the result were a matter of life or death." Jonas Keightly was one of the "odd sticks" of the neighborhood in which we lived. He was an eccentric old man, who lived entirely alone in a small frame house on the finest farm in the neighborhood. He was reputed to be very wealthy, although his manner of life would indicate that he was a poor man. The four or five rooms of his cheap little house were carpetless, and better furniture could be found in the homes of some of the poorest farmers. Queer stories were told of old Jonas Keightly's generosity and of his parsimony. He was always shabby in his dress and lived in such seeming poverty and discomfort, but when Margaret Crane was left a widow, with five little children, and was about to have the mortgage on her home foreclosed, Jonas Keightly had come forward and paid the thousand dollars due, and would not even take the widow's note for the money, saying briefly that she could pay it when she "got good and ready." When Cyrus and I entered the schoolhouse there sat Jonas near the teacher's desk, with a tallow candle in his hand, ready to light when the spelling should begin. Jonas never missed a spelling bee in our district or in his own. It was his conviction that orthography was the foundation stone of all education. There were others who held to this belief, and more attention was given to spelling than to anything else in the rural schools of that day. The little Six-Mile schoolhouse was filled with pupils and their parents when it came time for the spelling to begin. It happened that Cyrus and I were the only persons present from our district, and I had a feeling that we were not very welcome, because, as Cyrus had said, the "Six-Milers" had met to "practice up" for a contest with our school the following week. However, when it came time for them to choose sides, Cyrus and I were chosen along with the others, and the spelling began. First we spelled with "trappers," then we "kept tally" and "spelled across," and then the teacher, a sweet-voiced and pretty young woman, announced that we would "spell down." At this juncture of the proceedings Jonas Keightly arose to his feet and amazed everyone by saying: "There has been some good spelling done here to-night, very good, and I'm delighted to see you improving so much. But I want to see you do still better, so just to encourage you and kind of put you on your mettle, I'll tell you what I'll do." He thrust his hand down into his pocket and drew forth a twenty-dollar gold piece. Holding it on the palm of his big, rough and toil-worn hand, he said: "I'll give that to the one who stands up longest in the spelling-down contest we're going to have now. Yes, I will! I'll hand it right over to the one that spells all the rest of you down." This unexpected announcement created great excitement. Twenty-dollar gold pieces were extremely rare in the neighborhood, and it is certain that not a pupil of the Six-Mile school had ever owned one, while Cyrus and I never owned even five dollars at one time. Jonas added before spelling began: "I'm doing this for the encouragement of the young, and I don't want anyone but those of school age to come into the contest. That will make it fairer for the boys and girls." This caused a number of young men and women and some older persons to take their seats, rather unwillingly, and the contest began. Now, I was not a very good speller, and, to my chagrin, I missed the first word that came to me, and had to sit down. Cyrus, by whose side I stood, giving me a sharp poke with his elbow, indicative of his disgust at my stupidity, before I took my seat. Cyrus was what some people called a "natural-born speller." He seemed to spell by intuition, and not because he studied harder or longer than any of the other boys. He could "out-spell" almost any boy in the school, while, on the other hand, he was lamentably weak in mathematics and was helpless in the face of any problem involving compound fractions. Jonas Keightly's offer certainly put one boy on his mettle, and that boy was Cyrus Drake. He spelled boldly and confidently. Twenty dollars in gold meant so much to him. His eyes had sparkled and a look of determination had come to his face when Jonas Keightly had held the gold piece out

in his palm. Cyrus had whispered to me: "I'm going to try for that." The contest went forward amid suppressed excitement. No one whispered, and the silence was so intense that the lowest-voiced speller could be heard in every part of the room. When all but six of the contestants had missed the words pronounced to them and had sat down, Cyrus was still standing. Miss Ware, the teacher, now began pronouncing the most difficult words in the book, and ten minutes later every contestant had been spelled down but Cyrus and his cousin, Louis Drake, a boy about the age of Cyrus. This was rather a singular coincidence, and one with a sorrowful side to it, for, although Cyrus and Louis were own cousins, they were at bitter enmity and did not speak to each other. Their fathers, who were brothers, had quarreled over the division of their father's property several years before the time this story opens, and the quarrel had extended to the members of both families. They held no communication with each other, although each brother, in the calmer reflection that had come after the quarrel, had seen wherein he had been in the wrong. But they nursed their bitterness and gave no token of regret or of a desire for a reconciliation. Cyrus and Louis looked defiantly into each other's faces. They held their heads erect, with their arms folded on their breasts. The enmity existing between the two families was known to everyone in the room, and the perfect silence gave way to excited whispers and a general stir as the two boys faced each other. In the midst of the excitement Miss Ware pronounced the word "tessellate" for Cyrus to spell. He spelled it while the whispering and general murmur of excitement were still unabated, and Miss Ware, holding up her hand, as a signal for silence, said: "Silence, please!" When perfect silence reigned she said to Cyrus: "I am not quite sure that I understood you when you spelled the word 'tessellate.' Did you spell it with one or two 's's'?" Cyrus was silent for a moment. He hit his lip and then replied: "I spelled it with two 's's'." "That was right," said Miss Ware. "Louis you may spell 'propylon.'" Louis hesitated an instant, and then spelled it slowly and distinctly, "p-r-o-p-y-l-o-n." "Next," said Miss Ware, a little sadly. Cyrus spelled the word correctly, and Louis sat down with a frown on his face, and a darker frown was on the face of his father, who was in the room. "Well, boy; I guess you have won the prize fairly and squarely, and here 'tis. I'm a little sorry it had to go out of our own district, but I said I'd give it to the one that stood up longest, and I'll keep my word." "Thank you, sir," replied Cyrus as he took the money. Then he turned to me and said: "Come, Ted; let's go home. There's father over by the door. I think he's been to my Aunt Martha's, and stopped for us to go home with him. Come on." He pushed his way through the crowd, and I followed him. But when we had reached the open door he turned suddenly and walked over to the little platform at one end of the room. Seizing the teacher's little bell on her desk he stood on a chair and rang the bell violently. All eyes were fixed upon him, and those who had left the house hurried in again. When all was silent, Cyrus stood up boldly and bravely, and his voice rang our clearly and steadily, as he said: "I want to say something. I did not tell the truth when I said I spelled the word 'tessellate' with two 's's'. I spelled it with but one, although I knew as soon as I had done so that I had made a mistake. But I missed the word, and this gold piece belongs to my cousin Louis. I want him to come and get it, and I beg his pardon and your's for my unfairness." The dead silence that followed this manly confession of his fault was broken by John Drake, Cy's uncle, stepping on to the platform and taking Cyrus by the hand, while he said: "Good for you, Cy! I'm prouder of you for this than I am of Louis for winning the prize. You wouldn't be my brother's son if you had kept what didn't belong to you. We Drakes have our faults, but we're honest people and we tell the truth. I'm proud to have so brave a nephew, and your father ought to be proud to have so brave a son." "I am, John," said Mark Drake, Cy's father, stepping forward and holding out his hand toward his brother. For the first time in five years they clasped hands, and the hands of everyone in the room clapped approval of this public reconciliation of the two brothers. They rode home together, with Cy and Louis and I "snuggled up" in the straw and robes in the bottom of the sled behind them. Old Jonas Keightly probably told the truth when he said afterward: "I guess I never invested \$20 to better advantage."—Golden Days. Seed Some Covering. Mistress—Why, Bridget, the chairs are covered with dust! Servant (coolly)—Well, mem, they want something to hide their shabbiness.—Fun.

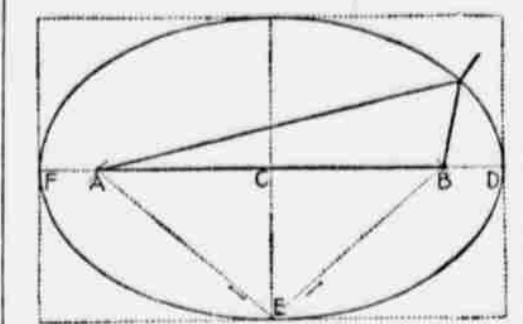


ELLIPTICAL FLOWER BED.

It Forms Quite an Attractive Feature for the Farmhouse or City Ornamental Garden.

A bed in the shape of this figure would be called by some an oval, but it is not. It is the figure known in mathematics as an ellipse. To describe it on the surface of the ground plant two stakes firmly as at A and B. Stretch a double cord as tightly as possible by a pointed stick or any convenient marker, and, keeping it at its utmost tension, move it around the line AB, and it will describe the curve of the ellipse. If the length of the doubled cord be only slightly greater than the distance from A to B, the ellipse will be long and narrow. If the cord be considerably longer than the line AB, the figure will be hardly distinguishable from a circle.

As the outlines of the bed may become obliterated in course of time by



HOW TO DESCRIBE AN ELLIPSE.

wearing away from storms, or by the encroachment of grass and weeds, it would be well to leave the stakes at A and B in position permanently. Keeping a memorandum of the length of the doubled cord, the curve can be retraced at any time, and its symmetry of shape restored. Very good stakes for the purpose can be made from an old broom handle. Painted and projecting but a few inches above the surface of the ground, they will not disfigure the bed.

As it may sometimes be desirable to make a bed of known dimensions we have added to the sketch the dotted lines shown. The bed described is in the proportion of 8 by 12 feet. Lay out an oblong of the desired size, divide the length and breadth into halves and measure from center C to point D, and with this distance describe from E the arc of a circle to intersect the line F D at the points A and B. Place the stakes at intersections A and B and take a string around A B E, then using E as a marker, describe the desired figure.—American Gardening.

EARLY GARDEN WORK.

Plow the Soil Deep and Thoroughly and Apply Manure That is Evenly Rotted.

It is essential that the soil of the garden be rich to have early crops and tender vegetables. It should be a loam and be well drained so that it will dry out readily, warm up early and be easily prepared in good time for the reception of the seed.

If a quick germination of the seed is secured the soil must be in a good tilth so that the seed will come in close contact, as with all seeds a certain amount of heat and moisture are essential to germination and contact with the soil is necessary if a good growth is to be maintained.

Plow deep and thorough and then work into a good tilth. When manure is applied, have it thoroughly rotted and fine and then incorporate well with the soil.

Applying fresh coarse manure is inadvisable, because it increases the labor of preparing the soil in a good tilth, it contains more or less weed and grass seed that make the work of cultivation more difficult, and the plant food not being in an available condition, cannot be used by the growing plants. Rather than use coarse, fresh manure, it will be better to purchase and use commercial fertilizers.

Wood ashes and poultry manure can nearly always be used to a good advantage in the garden, especially as a top dressing, and with some crops, like radishes and lettuce, rotten chip manure from the wood pile can be used to an advantage. When either of these is used a good plan is to prepare the soil in a good condition for the reception of the seed and then apply these as a top dressing, working well into the surface with a good garden rake. Poultry manure being a concentrated fertilizer, should be applied carefully, as too much will burn the plants and prove detrimental.

Some crops, like onions, lettuce, radishes, beets and the early varieties of peas, may be sown as soon as the soil in the garden will work readily into a good tilth, then later plantings can be made on through the season.—National Rural.

Warm milk from the cow does not absorb odors. While cooling keep it in a pure atmosphere.—Illinois Dairy Report.

OREGON'S TIRE BILL.

A Long Step Toward the Securing of Good Roads and Their Permanent Preservation.

Though the wide-tire movement moves slowly, it is very gratifying to know that it does move, at least, in spots. One of these favored spots is the enterprising state of Oregon, which has passed the following bill:

"Bates' bill, to encourage the use of wide tires on wagons, which has passed with only one negative vote, reads as follows:

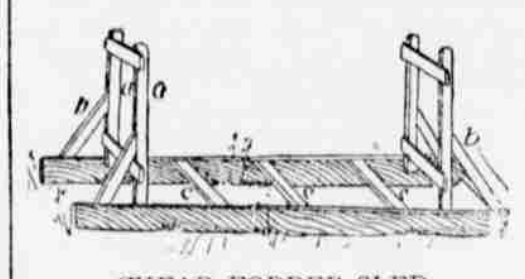
"That from and after the first day of January, A. D. 1900, the county court or county board of each county within this state is hereby authorized to make a rebate each year for four years, on the road tax of each person within its county who shall own and have in habitual use on the highways of this state wagons or other vehicles for the transportation of freight and other heavy articles the tires of which are not less than three inches in width, of \$1 for each wheel of such vehicle; and, provided, further, that the owner of each vehicle having tires of not less than four inches in width, upon which there is a difference of at least eight inches in the length of the front and rear axle, so constructed that the front and rear wheels will not come in contact with the same road surface while the vehicle is moving in a straight line, shall receive, in addition to the aforesaid rebate, a further rebate for four years in his or her road tax as aforesaid, of \$2 for each vehicle of this class for each and every year during said period that said vehicle is habitually used upon the highways of this state."

This bill promises to induce farmers to do, in a voluntary way, what a compulsory bill would force them to do unwillingly. It is a well-understood fact that if a few wagons in each locality are fitted with wide tires, they will serve as a most potent object lesson. Oregon has taken a long step toward the securing of good roads and in keeping them good.

HANDY FODDER SLED.

Useful in Many Places About the Farm, and a Great Saver of Labor and Trouble.

Hauling shocked corn fodder or cane from the fields is a hard and tedious job where the hauling is done with a wagon and rack—the usual method. Then, too, the tearing down of the shock, the throwing of it upon the rack and the unloading of it again break off the leaves and dry stems. This job is greatly simplified and much is saved in fodder and labor if a sled is built for the hauling. The runners of the sled



CHEAP FODDER SLED.

are made of 2 by 8's, 16 feet long. The standards (a) at each end are placed far enough from the ends of the runners to bolt on braces (b). The cross-braces (c) are made of 2 by 8's. No tongue is required unless the hauling is to be done on snow.

The sled is driven along the shock row as near as possible to the shock, which is tipped over onto it without breaking the tie band. The sled will hold from four to six large shocks. The fodder hauled in this way is in good shape for rickling if desired, and loses little if any in transportation. This sled comes handy in many places about the farm, saving much lifting on and off wagons.—American Agriculturist.

LITTLE DAIRY POINTERS.

If the butter is too soft feed the cow some potatoes.

If the butter is mottled work it a little after salting.

Whitewashed stables mean fewer flies and more milk.

Stringy milk can be cured by feeding the cow clean hay.

Wash all the milk vessels with cold water before scalding.

Crosses are usually better for farmers than pure breeds.

Whenever possible test the cow's milk before buying her.

A cow that tests below three per cent. is not worth keeping.

Many dairymen like an ounce of salt to the pound of butter.

Cows and horses should not be allowed in the same pasture.

Richer feed does not mean richer milk; it means more milk. Do not wet your hand when milking; if you do you flavor the milk. You waste 25 per cent. of your butter in summer by not using a separator. Heating milk to 160 degrees Pasteurizes it. Stir it continually while hot. If the butter takes too long to come add one to two fresh cows to the dairy. Adding hot water to cream while churning is the worst of all practices. When the butter is poor do not blame the cow. Blame your own want of skill.